



Your Trusting Relationship Dance with Your Baby

I was born ready to communicate and connect with you.



Figuring It Out Together

Your baby was born ready to communicate and connect with you. She is ready to be your partner in a trusting relationship.

Your relationship is like a dance. At first, your baby totally depends on you to take the lead. However, it won't take long for you to see she is your partner. It may be subtle at first. As a newborn, she may turn her head towards you when she hears your voice.

By the time she is 2 months old, she may wait a minute or two after waking up from her nap without crying because she knows you are coming to feed her.

Over time, she will begin adding more steps of her own to your dance. Your steps will influence your child's and vice versa. Together you will create your own dance of trust.

Getting to Know You

Your newborn will welcome care from anyone. This can be good because, in the busy first weeks of life, you can hand her over to someone you trust when you need a break.

Between 1 and 6 months, she will begin to let you know that she knows you and other familiar adults in her life and wants to be with you. For example, you may notice that she does the following:



Turns her head towards you when she hears your voice.



Follows you with her eyes around the room.



Fusses to get your attention.



Coos or smiles and looks into your eyes when you talk or sing to her.



Kicks her legs and reaches towards you when you come near her.

Understanding Her Sounds and Movement

Babies communicate through their different cries, the expressions on their faces, and how they move their bodies. They begin to understand the meaning of words before they can speak them. You may see this, for example, when a baby laughs at a silly song or gets excited when her adult asks if she wants a bottle.



Over time, you will understand more of what your baby is communicating. This gives you the information you need to decide how best to respond to her.

For example, is it late in the morning and is she rubbing her eyes? Knowing she is tired, you decide to get her ready for a nap. Does she squeal and smile when you start a game of peek-a-boo? Knowing she is excited and happy, you may decide to play again. But, if she turns away and starts to fuss, you know she is telling you she has had enough. It is time to stop the game.

By tuning in and trying to understand what she is communicating, you build trust between you. Here are some ideas to help you understand her:



Be a detective looking for clues.

Pay attention to her face, her gestures, and her crying and look for sounds and words.



Ask yourself, "What is she feeling?" "What is she saying to me?"

As you watch her from the outside, try to figure out what is happening on the inside for your child. Is her face relaxed as she plays? Tight? Is she smiling? Frowning and about to cry?



Listen and look for patterns.

Have you noticed that the sound of her crying when she is wet differs from how she cries when she is hungry? Keep listening, and you will discover that what the crying sounds like can tell you many things.



Tell her in a gentle, calm voice:

"I am trying to understand what you are saying." This may lead to a calming moment of connection that will help you understand what she is saying.



Compare notes with others who know her well.

Check in to learn what other adults who are regulars in her life notice as they try to figure out what she is communicating.



Be patient with yourself.

You will miss some of what she is saying; count on it. Sometimes this may lead to upset – for one or both of you. It's part of life. Keep trying. Over time, your baby will learn she can trust you to be there for her.



Another idea you want to try?
