

#	Age & Stage	Theme	Title
8	5-6 months	Listening to your baby	Did you know that listening to your baby's cues helps your baby's brain to develop?

Every baby is unique. They each react and learn differently. If only babies could talk, it would be so much easier for us to understand what they need!

- ◆ Temperament in babies is established very early on. Some babies are peaceful, others are active and some are very aware of everything going on around them. Temperament will affect a baby's reaction to the environment.
- ◆ Your response to your baby's reaction will also shape the way your baby learns to interact with the world. Watch for your baby's cues:
 - Watch your baby's posture, hands and eye movement. Is your baby alert or is your baby sleepy? Is your baby moving a lot or very calm?
 - Does your baby get tired quickly or want to stay awake for long periods of time?
 - Does your baby need a strict routine or can your baby adjust to changes easily?
- ◆ Get to know your baby's likes and dislikes. Let your baby lead you to the things that will be exciting or soothing.
- ◆ When your baby looks at something, it shows interest. Respond to your baby's interests and follow your baby's curiosity. This will help your baby be interested for a longer period of time and more learning can take place. By following your baby's cues, you can learn what your baby likes.
- ◆ Some babies are more sensitive to their environment. Some will be upset with certain noises or the feel of certain blankets or toys. Try to make their environment comfortable for them.
- ◆ Help your baby grab things. Make sure their environment is safe and that they are not able to reach unsafe objects.
- ◆ Let your baby take the lead, and try to add to the experience. For example, if they show interest in a red ball, tell them the words "red", "ball", "soft", etc. Show them how it can be rolled back and forth, how it can bounce, etc. As long as it is a safe object, let them feel it, smell it, put it in their mouth, etc.
- ◆ Some babies need more comforting than others. It is important to provide them that comfort, to reduce stress.

In families with more than one child, each child needs special attention and interaction to pursue their interests, at least some of the time.

Links

- ◆ *Can You Change Your Child's Temperament?* TVO Parents. tvoparents.tvo.org/article/can-you-change-your-childs-temperament-child-psychiatrist-weighs
- ◆ *Temperament.* Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development. www.child-encyclopedia.com/en-ca/child-temperament/how-important-is-it.html
- ◆ *Respond with Sensitivity.* Attachment Parenting International. www.attachmentparenting.org/principles/respond.php