



BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

9 MONTH VISIT

Here are some suggestions from Bright Futures experts that may be of value to your family.

✓ HOW YOUR FAMILY IS DOING

- If you feel unsafe in your home or have been hurt by someone, let us know. Hotlines and community agencies can also provide confidential help.
- Keep in touch with friends and family.
- Invite friends over or join a parent group.
- Take time for yourself and with your partner.

✓ YOUR CHANGING AND DEVELOPING BABY

- Keep daily routines for your baby.
- Let your baby explore inside and outside the home. Be with her to keep her safe and feeling secure.
- Be realistic about her abilities at this age.
- Recognize that your baby is eager to interact with other people but will also be anxious when separated from you. Crying when you leave is normal. Stay calm.
- Support your baby's learning by giving her baby balls, toys that roll, blocks, and containers to play with.
- Help your baby when she needs it.
- Talk, sing, and read daily.
- Don't allow your baby to watch TV or use computers, tablets, or smartphones.
- Consider making a family media plan. It helps you make rules for media use and balance screen time with other activities, including exercise.

✓ DISCIPLINE

- Tell your baby in a nice way what to do ("Time to eat"), rather than what not to do.
- Be consistent.
- Use distraction at this age. Sometimes you can change what your baby is doing by offering something else such as a favorite toy.
- Do things the way you want your baby to do them—you are your baby's role model.
- Use "No!" only when your baby is going to get hurt or hurt others.

✓ FEEDING YOUR BABY

- Be patient with your baby as he learns to eat without help.
- Know that messy eating is normal.
- Emphasize healthy foods for your baby. Give him 3 meals and 2 to 3 snacks each day.
- Start giving more table foods. No foods need to be withheld except for raw honey and large chunks that can cause choking.
- Vary the thickness and lumpiness of your baby's food.
- Don't give your baby soft drinks, tea, coffee, and flavored drinks.
- Avoid feeding your baby too much. Let him decide when he is full and wants to stop eating.
- Keep trying new foods. Babies may say no to a food 10 to 15 times before they try it.
- Help your baby learn to use a cup.
- Continue to breastfeed as long as you can and your baby wishes. Talk with us if you have concerns about weaning.
- Continue to offer breast milk or iron-fortified formula until 1 year of age. Don't switch to cow's milk until then.

9 MONTH VISIT—PARENT

SAFETY

- Use a rear-facing-only car safety seat in the back seat of all vehicles.
- Have your baby's car safety seat rear facing until she reaches the highest weight or height allowed by the car safety seat's manufacturer. In most cases, this will be well past the second birthday.
- Never put your baby in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger airbag.
- Your baby's safety depends on you. Always wear your lap and shoulder seat belt. Never drive after drinking alcohol or using drugs. Never text or use a cell phone while driving.
- Never leave your baby alone in the car. Start habits that prevent you from ever forgetting your baby in the car, such as putting your cell phone in the back seat.
- If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Don't leave heavy or hot things on tablecloths that your baby could pull over.
- Put barriers around space heaters and keep electrical cords out of your baby's reach.
- Never leave your baby alone in or near water, even in a bath seat or ring. Be within arm's reach at all times.
- Keep poisons, medications, and cleaning supplies locked up and out of your baby's sight and reach.
- Put the Poison Help line number into all phones, including cell phones. Call if you are worried your baby has swallowed something harmful.
- Install operable window guards on windows at the second story and higher. Operable means that, in an emergency, an adult can open the window.
- Keep furniture away from windows.
- Keep your baby in a high chair or playpen when in the kitchen.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CHILD'S 12 MONTH VISIT

We will talk about

- Caring for your child, your family, and yourself
- Creating daily routines
- Feeding your child
- Caring for your child's teeth
- Keeping your child safe at home, outside, and in the car

Consistent with *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition

For more information, go to <https://brightfutures.aap.org>.

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