

Let's **GROW** ...with your 7-9 month old | ISSUE FOUR

Catch Me If You Can!

What a companion your seven-month-old is becoming. She is very aware of herself and the world around her. She prefers to be around people and enjoys interactive games like "pat-a-cake".

As your child starts to move around, she becomes more independent and curious about the things around her. Encourage this more active stage, but be sure to maintain constant supervision.

By eight months this independence grows and she may want to feed herself. This can be messy but also very entertaining. She may now resist doing something that she doesn't want to do, such as putting on a coat or snowsuit.

Her sense of humor is blossoming. She likes to laugh and she likes you to laugh with her. Separation anxiety may become stronger by nine months of age. She may find it easier to separate from you if familiar caregivers are used. Your very social and charming nine-month-old loves to explore. She likes to copy you and everyone else! You may be surprised to see a reflection of your behaviours through the eyes of your child. She'll remind you of how good it feels to laugh. Play with your baby. Sing with your baby. Catch her if you can!

Let's Grow ... Together!



Make a memory with your children,
spend some time to show you care;
Toys and trinkets can't replace
those moments that you share.

~Elaine Hardt

Parenting your 7 to 9 month old - “How Far Can I Go?”

Limits help your baby understand the world around her and how it operates. As your baby begins to crawl and explore, she needs a safe place to practice her new skills and will need more supervision.

She also has no sense of danger or caution at this age. She counts on you to keep her safe. Here are some ideas that might work for your family:

- Give her a safe place to play. Attach locks to cupboard doors, cover electrical outlets, and use safety gates. Get down on the floor and check out one room at a time. Remove any objects that may harm your baby.
- Keep valuable and breakable objects out of your baby’s reach or put them away for a while. It is too early to teach her to learn “not to touch”.
- Use distraction: if your baby is doing something that you want her to stop, give her something else to play with. **Save the word “no” for potentially dangerous situations.** Use distraction instead.
- Avoid physical punishment (slapping hands, spanking, etc.). It will only teach your baby to hit. She trusts you to teach her right from wrong but, not to hurt her. She will imitate **everything** that you do.

Choosing Child Care

If you know that you are returning to work or going back to school when your baby is a little older, it is a good idea to look into child care early. Often child care facilities will have waiting lists, especially in their infant programs. This means spending time checking out your options so that you will have enough time to make the best choice for you and your child.

There are several different options for child care:

1. **Licensed child care centres** – offer balanced programs of activities for infants, toddlers, pre-school and school-age children. The centre must meet standards relating to such areas as the physical setting, emergency and fire procedures, cleanliness and nutrition and meet the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act.
2. **Licensed home day care** – home child care in a family-like setting. Licensed home day care agencies are inspected at least once a year by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. They may care for up to five children. These caregivers are supervised by home visitors employed by the agency. Licensed home day care providers must also meet the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act.
3. **Unlicensed home day care** – anyone who offers to care for your child in their home but who are not employed by an agency. They will not be supervised and you, as the parent, will be responsible to be sure you are satisfied with the care they provide.



Questions to Ask Yourself

- Do I need full or part-time care?
- Do I need care for more than one child?
- Who can I afford to pay each month?
- Am I eligible for child care subsidy?
- Do I prefer centre or home-based care?
- What program hours do I need?
- Does my child have special needs that may limit my choices?
- Do I want a program that is close to school, home, or work?

When visiting child care facilities, here are some things to be looking for:

- Is the setting clean and safe (surfaces disinfected, smoke alarms, safety gates, cleaners and medicines locked away?)
- Is there space for indoor and outdoor play?
- Is there a variety of age appropriate toys and are they in good repair?
- Is the menu posted with a variety of nutritious meals and snacks?
- Does the environment feel welcoming and comfortable?
- What kind of training and support does the caregiver have?
- What are the behaviour guidance policies?
- Is the caregiver (or staff) attentive to the children?
- How many children will the caregiver be looking after?

Look What I Can Do!

From 7-9 Months, these are some of the things I can do:

7 Months

- I will begin to sit without support
- I will play with my feet and try to pull your hair
Watch out – I might even grab at your face
- I can transfer a toy from one hand to another
- I will throw toys on purpose
- I will let go of a toy by dropping it
- I will push away things that I do not want
- I can pick up small objects
- I have good control of both hands and I like to feed myself
- I can drink from a sippy cup
- I sit well without support
- I will become more active
- I will crawl, scoot, or roll around the room
- I will imitate your facial expressions
- I can understand short instructions and questions such as “wave bye-bye” or “where is the ball?”
- I can babble a variety of sounds such as: “ba”, “da”, “ada”, “ma”
- I may start to “make strange” when a person I don’t know comes near me
- I can click my tongue, smack my lips and blow bubbles with my tongue and lips



9 Months

Smoke Free

What is a “smoke-free” home? A smoke-free home means that no one smokes inside the home – **ever**. If baby is exposed to second-hand smoke she is more likely to get more colds, ear infections, bronchitis, and asthma. She is also twice as likely to die of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) than babies who live in smoke-free homes. If someone must smoke, they need to do so outside – this includes family and friends who visit.

You will need to make your car smoke-free as well. If you are on a long trip, schedule stops for smokers.

Young children like to do what their parents do. Now is the time to quit smoking, if you can, so that as your baby grows older he does not think smoking is a normal thing to do.

Remember that cigarette butts can kill your baby – four butts are all that are needed. Please keep cigarettes, matches, and ashtrays out of baby’s reach.

Help Baby Grow

Babies of this age love to watch what you do and like listening to what you say. They will copy you when you play with them.

They like to play with:

- Books made of cloth, plastic or board
- Pull-apart toys like large pop beads; show your baby how to pull them apart and put them in a small bin – you can say, “Oh! You pulled those apart. Do you want me to put them back together with you?”
- Plastic hammers or large plastic spoons
- Blocks to pick up and knock down
- Pots and pans to use as drums
- Toy pianos – show your baby how to push the keys to make noise and help him play
- Nesting cups – cups of different sizes to put together, take apart and stack

Watch for these Speech and Language Milestones

At 9 months of age my child:

- Uses sounds or gestures to let you know what he/she wants (e.g. reaches out to be picked up)
- Babbles like “mamama” or “bababa”
- Takes turns with you making sounds back and forth
- Uses a singsong voice when playing alone
- Responds to his/her own name
- Understands “no”

Parents usually know their child best. If you did not check all of the boxes above, please call **tykeTALK** at 519-663-0273 or toll free at 1-877-818-8255 to find out more that you can do to help your child learn to talk.



Talk

Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes

Your baby loves to practice making sounds. His voice will change levels depending on what he is feeling (angry, content, hungry). You may notice that his babbling will have a singsong pattern. You can help your baby enjoy music by singing and dancing with him. Play music that you find relaxing as well as children's songs and rhymes. Your baby will associate these fun times with good feelings about himself. What a great way to encourage his talking and self-esteem at the same time.

Sing to Me

*Head and shoulders, knees and toes,
knees and toes, knees and toes,
head and shoulders, knees and toes,
eyes, ears, mouth and nose.*



Play

Peek-a-Boo!

Your baby is starting to understand that sounds have meanings. While dressing your baby, name the items of clothing as you put them on him. "**Here is a sock. Let's put on your pants**". Your baby loves it when you talk to him. Be sure to do it often, such as, "**Here is your diaper. We will change your diaper**". Be sure to play "Peek-a-boo" with your baby. Cover your own face with a light cloth and then pull it off and say, "**Peek-a-boo! I see you. There is Michael**". Encourage efforts with a hug and say, "**You did it!**".



Teach

Exploration

Your baby is curious about different colours, textures and sounds that toys and objects make. Give him toys that appeal to all of his senses. You can encourage him to touch things around the house such as different material, carpet, blankets, plastic containers, and bath toys. Take your baby outside and let him touch things such as leaves, trees, flowers, grass, and snow. Take care that your baby doesn't put them in his mouth. He likes to experiment and see what kind of sounds these things make. Talk to him and tell him about the things he is exploring. It's fun to explore and learn together!

Feeding your Baby

Between 7 and 9 months, you should continue to breastfeed your baby on cue, while introducing iron-rich foods. This helps maintain your milk supply and ensures that breastmilk continues to be a major source of energy and nutrients for your baby.

By 7 months, your baby has probably tried a few different foods. The order that you introduce the foods doesn't matter, just try to include a variety of foods such as vegetables, fruits, grains and milk products (with the exception of fluid milk).



Iron Rich Foods

- Beef
- Pork
- Chicken
- Turkey
- Iron-Fortified Infant Cereals
- Well-Cooked Legumes i.e. beans, lentils and chickpeas
- Eggs
- Tofu
- Fish
- Lamb



Other Important Feeding Tips for Your Baby

- Provide a variety of textures (i.e. lumpy, tender-cooked, minced, pureed) and finger foods at 6 months.
- Wait 2 days before introducing each of the following foods before you introduce another food from the same list: cooked whole eggs, milk, mustard, peanuts, seafood (fish and shellfish), sesame, soy, tree nuts and wheat products. You do not need to wait before introducing other new foods. Do not feed whole nuts as they are a choking risk.
- If the new food is rejected, it should be offered again (and again!) on a different day; some children need to taste a new food 10 to 15 times before it's accepted.
- Work up to offering your baby solid food two to three times each day, with one to two snacks, depending on the older infant's appetite.
- Offer a cup regularly; by 6 months your baby is ready to practice drinking from an open cup.
- Encourage self feeding.

Healthy Sleep for your Baby

Did you know that some of the most common questions parents of infants have are about sleep? It is important for parents to know that every child is different; some sleep a lot and others much less. Don't try to compare your baby with other infants that you know.

Babies from 6 months to 1 year will sleep an average of 14 hours in a day, including naps. Anything more or less than this can be normal. By 7 to 9 months of age, your baby should have a fairly regular routine of naptime, bedtime and wake times.

During this period, your baby may transition to having 2 naps per day; one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Every baby's napping needs are different; some will nap for 20 minutes at a time and others will nap for 3 hours.

Baby's First Tooth

Have you noticed that your baby has been drooling more, chewing more on everything, eating less and fussing more? Any of these symptoms can let you know that your baby is cutting his first teeth. This can happen anywhere between 4 and 8 months. The first teeth to arrive are usually the two in the centre of baby's lower jaw. Teething is a normal part of getting ready to eat solid food, but it might make your baby grumpy for a few days. He might even have a slight fever. This should only last a day or two and should disappear when his first tooth begins to show.

Sleeping Through the Night

Your baby will begin to comfort herself and sleep for longer stretches at night at her own developmental pace. Some babies will sleep through the night at a few months old, and for other children this can take much longer.

Sleeping through the night is a developmental milestone that your baby will reach when she is ready to. Trying to force baby to reach this milestone before she is ready may lead to problems later on.

Babies may wake at night because of hunger, illness, and teething or after developmental advances such as crawling. Give your baby extra cuddles and attention during these times.



Tips to Help with Teething

- Rub your baby's gums with a finger or finger toothbrush.
- Give your baby a cool teething ring.
- Allow your baby to chew on a cold, wet or frozen washcloth.
- Dry the drool. A lot of drool is part of the teething process but can make your baby's skin irritated. Use a clean, dry cloth to wipe your baby's chin.
- Comfort your baby with cuddles.

As soon as your baby's first tooth appears, wipe it with a soft, clean, wet washcloth after every meal and at bedtime. He doesn't need toothpaste yet.



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