



Ages and Stages: 5 to 8 Months

Your child is gaining more body control and is eager to explore his or her surroundings. Children at this age are no longer content to just sit quietly and look around. They are generally cheerful and energetic and interested in everything. Sitting up, playing, babbling, touching things, and moving around help children learn about their world.

When your child is around 5 months old, he or she may:

- recognize his or her own name.
- reach for and hold on to objects.
- stand firmly when held.
- watch your mouth and try to imitate you when you talk.
- cry when strangers are near.

When your child is around 6 months old, he or she may:

- roll from the back to the stomach.
- sit with little support.
- look around when he or she hears sounds.
- begin to understand some words by your tone of voice.
- babble, squeal and listen to his or her own voice.
- reach for things and put them in the mouth.

When your child is around 7 months old, he or she may:

- have some teeth.
- sit for a few minutes without any support.
- creep on his or her stomach, pulling with arms and legs.
- smile and talk to him or herself in the mirror.

When your child is around 8 months old, he or she may:

- crawl and pull him or herself up by holding on to things.
- sit up alone for 5 minutes.
- be very curious and explore everything nearby.
- pick up small objects with the thumb and first two fingers.

Your child wants you to know several things. He or she may:

- require lots of patience. Children this age will try to grab everything they see. That's how they learn!
- be shy and sometimes afraid of strangers, so stay with him or her when strangers are around.
- begin to have strong feelings about what he or she wants to do and doesn't want to do. Be patient with him or her.
- enjoy being hugged and cuddled.
- like to be talked to and called by name.
- need to practice creeping and crawling on a clean surface or floor.
- feel close to you when you play with him or her. Describe what you touch, see, smell, hear and feel.
- eat better if you have lots of patience. Mealtime is fun when it's relaxed and pleasant.
- need loving time with you, including lots of play, and affection.
- need your careful attention. Every child is different. If you watch your child closely, you will get clues about how to help him or her grow.

Your child is an active learner who:

- can remember what he or she just did.
- will look for dropped objects.
- will concentrate on one object or toy at a time.

Your child is learning to connect with other people and may:

- look to you to see how to react in unfamiliar situations.
- recognize the meaning of familiar facial expressions.
- begin learning about feelings.
- cry or become upset when toys are taken away.

Play helps your child learn. He or she may:

- play pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo, and wave bye-bye.
- enjoy toys that make noise.
- become more curious in his or her play.

Your child may enjoy toys and activities such as:

- Soft dolls
- Textured balls
- Toys that make noise when batted, squeezed, or mouthed
- Teething toys
- Pictures of faces
- Unbreakable mirrors
- Finger plays
- Simple songs

* The information is considered typical for this age. If you have questions about your child's development, contact your pediatrician or health care professional. If we do all we can do to help children develop and grow now, they will have the best chance to succeed in life.

Adapted from Alabama Cooperative Extension System by Traci Johnston. Originally developed by Ellen Abell and H. Wallace Goddard.