**Your baby 7-12 months**

**Your baby is becoming more mobile and will take a more active part in family life.**

Your baby is becoming more mobile and will take a more active part in family life. They will be able to recognise important, familiar people in their world and may worry when they can't see or feel you nearby.

Your baby will begin to have their own desires for example, wanting to be picked up or given a particular toy. As your baby becomes more mobile and starts to assert themselves try to adapt to these changes.

What you do with your baby now will make a big difference to them later. The more you talk, play and respond to your baby, the better your child’s speaking skills will be at age 3. When you show your baby love with praise and cuddles it builds their self-esteem and confidence.

The following information provides general information about the different stages of your baby’s development and some tips for what you can do to support your baby. Your baby may do some things earlier or later than described here. Most differences are normal.

There is more detailed information about your baby’s development in the [**‘Bump, Baby & Beyond’ book**](http://www.healthchallengewales.org/infantfeeding-publications) (External link). This also provides information about feeding your baby, teething, vaccinations, your baby’s health and making your home safe. If you are worried about your child’s development – ask your GP or health visitor.

**At 7 - 8 months your baby may be able to:**

* Sit up for a few minutes, without your help;
* Roll over and move across the floor by sliding, shuffling or rolling;
* Look at where sounds are coming from quite accurately;
* Babble and respond to you with noise;
* Respond to his own name when you call it;
* Explore objects with their hands and mouth; and
* Enjoy playing peek–a–boo (you hide your face for a minute then uncover it and say Peekaboo!)

Your baby may become clingy and anxious around unfamiliar people. Your baby may become upset if you or your partner leaves the room. Your baby is not old enough to understand that you will come back.

**At 9 - 10 months your baby may be able to:**

* Use a finger to point at small objects;
* Babble with recognisable sounds such as ‘mama’ and ‘dada’ and copy noises you make;
* Understand some words like ‘no’, ‘bye–bye’ and ‘dinner’;
* Clap and wave;
* Copy things you do to make the same thing happen e.g. shaking a toy to make it rattle; and
* Look for something if they see you hide it.

Your baby may still be a bit clingy with new people. Your baby may also be getting more independent, for example, your baby may stiffen their body when you try to get them dressed.

**At 11 - 12 months your baby may be able to:**

* Understand simple phrases like ‘do you want a drink?’;
* Follow simple directions with familiar objects, like ‘bring me teddy’;
* Recognise people they know;
* Show affection with kisses and cuddles;
* Point at objects;
* Push, throw and knock down everything in sight and give toys to others;
* Use gestures like pointing and waving and understand more of what you are saying;
* Move around. Some children learn to crawl, while others move around on their tummies or their bottoms. Others will roll to wherever they want to go; and
* Walk around, but don’t worry if your baby hasn’t done this yet. It happens any time between 8 and 20 months.

**Tips to encourage and support your toddler's development**

* [**Give lots of cuddles, smiles and praise**](https://gov.wales/parenting-give-it-time/guidance-and-advice/parenting-tips/tips-for-guiding-childrens-behaviour/make-time-for-praise)**.**
* [**Keep things the same as much as possible**](https://gov.wales/parenting-give-it-time/guidance-and-advice/parenting-tips/tips-for-guiding-childrens-behaviour/make-time-to-create-order-and-structure-to-your-day)**.** It will help your baby feel more secure if you have a routine. Feed, bath and put your baby to bed at similar times each day. Find the routine that works for your family.
* **Tell your baby what you are going to do next.** “We are washing our hands”. This let’s your baby know what to expect.
* [**Talk about the things you see and the things you do**](https://gov.wales/parenting-give-it-time/guidance-and-advice/parenting-tips/tips-for-guiding-childrens-behaviour/make-time-to-listen)**.** When you’re on the bus, in the car, walking to the shops or in the supermarket point out the things you see. When your baby points at objects you can say things like, 'yes, that's a dog'.  When your baby does things, you can say things like “You are touching the cat”.
* [**You can speak some words in Welsh too**](https://gov.wales/cymraeg-education/pre-school)(External link). Even if you only know a little Welsh, speaking some words to your baby gives them the best start to a bilingual life. You and your child could also sing along to a range of Welsh nursery rhymes on **[Mudiad Meithrin’s website](http://www.meithrin.cymru/project-nursery-rhymes/)** (External link). These songs include many simple words making it easy for young children to learn the Welsh language.
* **Try to stay calm and patient.** When you are calm and relaxed, your baby is more likely to feel calm too.
* **Plan Ahead!** Put things away which are dangerous or could break. Put up a safety gate on the stairs and latches on drawers and cupboards. This will keep your baby safe and you won’t have to keep saying no.
* **Use distraction.** When your baby is turning the TV on and off try distracting them with a different toy or activity.
* **Avoid too much television and other devices like tablets or smart phones.** These can be entertaining for your toddler, but limit their use to no more than half an hour each day. The National Literacy Trust has tips on [**Making the most of TV**](https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/2017_07_06_free_ELY_resource_-_televisionblank_pPD4WKD.pdf) (External link).
* **Share a book.** Your child will love this special time with you and it can help them wind down before bed time. The [**National Literacy Trust**](https://literacytrust.org.uk/) (External link) has tips on sharing books with your baby or you can ask for suitable books at your local library.
* [**Play!**](https://gov.wales/parenting-give-it-time/guidance-and-advice/parenting-tips/tips-for-guiding-childrens-behaviour/make-time-to-listen)Try to give your baby interesting and safe things to look at, touch and explore. You can make sounds to go with what’s happening, like “brmm, brmm” as you push a car along. You don’t need expensive toys – babies need interaction with other people much more than with toys. There are ideas for songs, books and play activities on [**Words for Life**](http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/baby) (External link) and [**Read on Get on**](http://readongeton.org.uk/) (External link).
* [**Sing songs and rhymes with your baby**](https://gov.wales/parenting-give-it-time/guidance-and-advice/parenting-tips/tips-for-guiding-childrens-behaviour/make-time-to-listen)**.** This helps your baby learn to talk and it also helps strengthen your relationship with your baby. [**Words for Life**](http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/baby) (External link) have lots of ideas of songs and rhymes. You can also sing Welsh rhymes. **[Mudiad Meithrin](http://www.meithrin.cymru/heno-heno/)** (External link) have some popular ones you could try.

**Dads matter too.** Research has shown that Dads have a big impact on their child’s development. Getting involved in daily activities like dressing, playing, bathing and reading create lots of opportunities to encourage your baby’s development.

**What doesn’t work**

* **Getting angry with your baby.** Your baby is not old enough to do things on purpose yet. Your baby doesn’t do things to upset you but they are beginning to know what they like and don’t like. For example your baby may crawl away when you try to change their nappy. Your baby doesn’t do this to annoy you. Your baby is making their feelings known. Getting angry will only upset and confuse them.
* **NEVER shake your baby.** Shaking can damage your baby’s brain and the injuries can last forever.

It’s OK to ask for help. If you are worried about feeling stressed, low or depressed talk to your health visitor or GP.