

Dear Mother and Dad:

By the last quarter of the first year, your baby has a personality all his own. He's a full-fledged member of your family. And it's hard to do much without his insisting that he be in on it too! He's quite a handful in more ways than just his size.

He trails around after Mother, creeping or beginning to walk. He horns in on every conversation and laughs gustily, whether he's in on the joke or not. He cries if someone is upset with him, and shows in other ways how sensitive he is and how much he wants to be the center of attention. But he may shyly hang his head if he thinks you find him foolish.

He's into everything, poking, dumping, licking, squeezing, tossing, climbing. He may begin to be choosy about his food, and is very apt to pour his milk or cereal on the tray table, splashing in the foods. He plays with the light cord or fiddles with the television. He won't even stay dressed, taking off his shoes the minute you get them on.

Sometimes, he deliberately teases! He heads straight for the trash basket to upset it, making sure you notice! He reaches for dad's newspaper or glasses, mischief in his eyes, waiting to hear "no, no." At such moments you find yourself joining the age-old dilemma of parenthood, wondering when to stop the child and when to laugh and enjoy his newest success; when to encourage and when to forbid. The whole knotty question of teaching a child to behave—or discipline—has always been a challenge to parents.


THE QUESTION OF DISCIPLINE

You can't separate discipline from the whole business of just living with your child. The relationship between the two of you is the outgrowth of everything that you do for and with him. And it's from this relationship that good discipline springs. Your child grows to love and trust you, he wants to please you and behave to suit you. Obedience or discipline, then, is not so much a matter of making the baby mind as it is a process of making it easy for him to do the right thing.

You make it easy for your baby to be good when you don't ask too much of him! If he sees something bright and pretty, he must investigate it. His curiosity is boundless, and he can only learn about things by tasting and feeling them. Merely looking at them tells him little.

Of course your baby has to be kept from doing things which are dangerous to himself or to others. The dangers that can't be avoided can be handled quickly and firmly. Distract him with another interesting object or activity, or pick him up and take him elsewhere. Give him words to use instead of a flat "no." You say "hot," "tastes bad," "stop." He learns from your voice and facial expressions as well as your words.

Some parents reinforce their commands with a sharp tap on the child's hand. Surely nothing more than that is necessary. Even



**You and
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Your Baby
LOVE**

9 to 12 months

EXTENSION BULLETIN E-734-D • HOME & FAMILY SERIES • JUNE 1972

then, you run the risk of teaching your child to slap you if he doesn't like what you do. *You're trying to teach your baby what is dangerous, not to punish him for his natural curiosity or lack of knowledge.*

You're teaching your child good discipline when you simply recognize and accept his behavior as part of his babyhood. Give him simple toys and safe places to play. Allow him as much freedom as you safely can. Cheerfully accept his awkward attempts to do things, and don't punish him for his accidents. Meantime, stop him promptly from getting into danger, everytime, consistently..

Be patient, gentle and understanding about the many things he needs to learn, but keep showing him what you expect. As for his mischievous tricks, perhaps you can laugh with him over these, to let him see that you, too, have a sense of humor.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Help your baby learn through play. Encourage him to use and increase his capabilities. Your creeper-crawler will enjoy fetching a rolled ball, a part of the vacuum cleaner, a shoe.

You may be surprised how much time your baby will spend filling and emptying. He may put all his small toys in a pail, empty them out and repeat the activity for fairly long periods of time.

Hide-and-seek can become more complicated. Teach him to search for an object inside a container. Put a toy in his pail or a paper sack. Then help him find it. With a few experiences he will catch onto the idea of exploring things.

Now your baby may be ready to play Peek-a-Boo. First put his hands over his eyes and then progress to hide and seek with the whole body going out of sight.

When your child can handle small objects in his fingers, it's time for blocks. Begin with a few. Show him how to use his stacking ability to place blocks one on top of another. They will topple over, but soon he will be able to build a straight tower. Add more

blocks as he's ready for them. If you're handy with wood tools, perhaps you'll enjoy making blocks for your baby. Sand them well to prevent splinters.

As you play with your baby, talk to him. Tell him what you're doing and what he's doing. Your talking will help him want to learn to talk *with* and *to* you. It's all a part of the way he should develop.

MORE ON EATING

Whether he has teeth or not, a baby is ready to eat foods of a coarser consistency, anywhere from 7 to 9 months of age. There's no need to wait for teeth. His gums enable him to soften many kinds of food.

For some months you've probably been giving a full range of strained or soft foods. Now nudge him into accepting food in a more adult form. If you wait too long, he'll get accustomed to his smooth diet and may balk at lumps.

Chopped foods may be commercially prepared from foods you cook for family meals. Cook vegetables, mash them rather finely with a fork, but leave some larger pieces. Let him pick these up himself or offer him mixture on a spoon.

Give your baby a piece of food—bits of ground meat; a cooked vegetable—such as a carrot or greenbean; or a slice of raw fruit—banana, peeled apple or pear,—or a piece of cheese. Let him gnaw off as much as he wants. Introduce uncooked fruits slowly. They tend to make baby's bowels loose.

Babies enjoy bits of meat—sucking and chewing on its goodness. Chopped crisp bacon or dry breakfast cereal will please him, too!

Gradually you will be able to feed him what you prepare for the rest of the family.

Sometimes it's hard to think of appropriate protein foods if your baby does not chew well yet. Try cheese sticks, luncheon meats, hot dogs, canned tuna fish, scrambled eggs, peanut butter or mashed cooked dried beans, such as navy or pinto beans.

You may notice your baby's appetite de-

creasing as he approaches his first birthday. This is due to his slower growth rate at this age.

Because he's eating less, be certain he gets foods daily from the four food groups: milk, meat, vegetables and fruits, and cereals.

Babies need plain, nourishing food to help them grow—food to build muscle, bones, blood and sound teeth. They need food which provides the tremendous amount of energy they use in pushing, shoving, walking, exploring. They need food which helps to keep them well. There's no room in their stomachs for foods which do not serve these purposes!

Babies and children don't have to learn to like sweets as they do other foods. They accept them instinctively. More than any other food, desserts should be individualized. They may be appropriate for large active babies with appetites and caloric needs beyond those met by reasonable amounts of milk, meats, vegetables, fruits and cereals. Some small babies with poor appetites and poor food acceptance may be better off without dessert. Let your doctor direct you.

Feeding problems begin at this early age when parents are tempted to use food as either a bribe or reward for good behavior. Praise is a more appropriate reward, regardless of the child's age.

Be you're proud of your child's first teeth! To be certain these teeth stay healthy, you will want to provide snacks low in sugar. Sticky, sugary foods can cause cavities—even in baby teeth. Snacks which promote good teeth are crispy fruits and vegetables, such as carrots and peeled apples.

Don't "prop" your baby's bottle. If he falls asleep with it in his mouth, the bacteria which cause tooth decay have several hours to grow on the sugar in the milk or juice.

Remember, healthy primary teeth are the ticket to healthy permanent teeth!

SAYING REAL WORDS

Children normally say their first real word somewhere between nine months and a year and a half. Reward your baby's efforts to use a word. Be sure to show enthusiasm. Make him feel extremely proud of his first words. Give him a smile or a hug to show him how happy you are. If his attempts to talk are not appreciated, he will not try very hard to learn new words.

When your baby begins to use words meaningfully, it's time to stop imitating exactly what he says. Instead, supply him with the correct word. If he says, "Aw, gaw," you say, "All gone."

His first words will normally be one-word puzzles for you to figure out. He may say "go." He may mean "where did daddy go?," or "I want to ride in the car." With one word he is trying to tell you a complete thought. Help him to combine gestures with his single words to make himself more understandable.

Around his first birthday, he should be able to follow one simple direction at a time, like "come here," "get down" or "open your mouth." He will gradually associate the words you say with the correct object, feeling, action or activity they represent.

TOILET TRAINING

Advice about toilet training in your baby's first year is: Don't try! Neither the baby's mind nor his physical mechanisms are up to the complex job of combining to control a bowel movement. His second year is time enough to start testing them. Keeping dry will come even later. Babies almost train themselves, doctors say, once they achieve the ability to control the special muscles involved and discover, besides, that going to the toilet is not only a custom but also a comfort. Don't worry now about toilet training.

WALKING

Many factors enter into the age your baby walks: his weight; temperament—whether he is eager and aggressive or passive and timid; his general rate of development, or the speed at which his bones, muscles and ligaments mature. Children tend to keep the same overall pace in their growth. Some are first in the block to do everything, others take their time.

There's really not much you can do to hurry the day. It helps to encourage your baby to use his muscles freely, to kick, splash in his bath, wiggle his toes, to stretch and roll over. It helps to give him a good place to pull up (furniture to grab) and to hold him securely so he can tip-toe at your feet. You're helping your baby to walk as you give him a feeling of freedom and fun in doing things.

When your child stands alone, he plants his feet wide apart and bends his knees a little. He puts his weight on the inner part of the foot and tends to toe out. This gives him a knock-kneed appearance. As his body adjusts to standing, his stomach becomes round and protruding. The protruding stomach won't flatten out for some years, probably around the age of 5 or 6.

Your baby will take a step! Arms stretched out and up for balance. And, he will fall! Once he's mastered sitting down, he's up and down all day long. His drive to walk pushes everything else out of his mind—sleep, food, cuddling! He struggles to stay on his feet at all costs.

His energy and drive seem boundless. He scarcely notices the falls, but occasionally will check your face after a bump to see if he should cry or not. Save your sympathy for the really tough falls. It is easy to make him fearful if you rush to comfort him after each tumble.

Now your baby needs shoes! Get a well built shoe with some support in the arch, a firm sole which is flexible at the widest part, and the upper made of a soft, porous material. To be sure your baby is properly fitted, take him along. His shoes should be half an inch longer than his foot, and wide enough to allow room on the side for his foot to expand as he stands.

During the rapid growth of the first years, your baby outgrows shoes and socks quickly. So, there is no reason to buy expensive, long-wearing shoes. Be sure that his stockings are not tight enough to curl or cramp his toes. When on, they should extend a quarter of an inch beyond his toes.

As your baby becomes more proficient in walking, he'll increase his range of activity. The sights and sounds of your home and neighborhood will flood upon him and he'll develop words to express his ideas. He'll have names for everything he sees. He's a social fellow and wants to tell you all about it.

He has little sense of right or wrong. He'll depend on you to keep him out of trouble. He's not a bit cautious, so he needs your careful supervision every minute he's loose. His circle of friends grows wider and he reaches out to others as long as he knows you're nearby. He enjoys the company of grandparents, soberly watches other children at play and waves to the milkman. Somehow your circle of friends grows too, as your baby brings people closer together, linking the generations, melting barriers around the world.

Sincerely,

Your Extension Home Economist

For extra help, you may wish to order one of the following.

Your Child From One to Three. HEW Children's Bur. Publ. No. 413, Supt. of Doc., U.S.G.P.O., Washington, D.C. 20402 (20c).

Your Child From Three to Four. HEW Children's Bur. Publ. No. 446, Supt. of Doc., U.S.G.P.O., Washington, D.C. 20402 (25c).

How to Parent. Fitzhugh Dodson, 1970. New American Library, Inc., 1301 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019 (\$1.25).

Prepared by Mrs. Janice Kukar, home economist in Oakland and Wayne Counties; Mrs. Marilyn Rudzinski, home economist in Macomb and St. Clair Counties; and Irene Ott, program leader in family living education, MSU.

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