

Parent Resources for your 0 – 18 month-old child



Finances

Money you save and invest now can make a big difference when your baby is ready for college. There are lots of easy ways to get into good habits of spending and saving. Children learn their money skills from their parents. It's not too late to develop new skills if it's something that's been hard for you in the past. And your child will learn how to save by learning from you.

Tips:

- **Set Aside Savings:** Every month, set aside money for savings. Even small amounts will add up. Five dollars in change each week will add up to \$4680 in 18 years – or you can save \$500 a year by not buying coffee on your way to work each weekday.
- **Give Coupons for College:** Send [contribution coupons](#) to family members during the holidays so they can contribute to your child's NextGen account.
- **Save on Schedule:** Plan on making regular contributions to your child's NextGen account. You can make automatic contributions through payroll deductions or from a bank account – or mark your calendar to contribute every major holiday and birthday.*

Book Recommendations:

1 2 3 Slide, by Judith Moffatt

My Granny's Purse, by P. H. Hanson

Bunny Money, by Rosemary Wells

Benny's Pennies, by Pat Brisson

Resources:

- **Money management** from birth through adulthood. More information at <http://mymoney.gov>
- Your **local bank** is a great resource to meet with experts who can talk with you about making a plan that's right for your family.

**Dollar Cost Averaging – Dollar cost averaging and other periodic investments do not ensure a profit and do not protect against loss in declining markets. Such a plan involves continuous investment in securities, regardless of fluctuating price levels of such securities. Investors should consider their financial ability to continue their purchases through periods of high or low price levels.*

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Health

Your baby's mental and physical well being depend on you. Playing games, responding to his needs, and reading to him all help his brain develop. Baby brains are built from the bottom up, like the architecture of a house. You help lay the foundation for the house with fun activities, good nutrition and lots of love. The brain grows with interaction, nutrition, and movement.

Tips:

- **Do the Baby Boogey:** Move and dance with your child. Sing to music, follow baby's lead, and dance outside and in!
- **Be Safe from the Sun:** While outside with your child, be sure to stay protected. Dress in protective clothing and cover your child's head with a wide-brimmed hat to avoid sunburns. Always check with a doctor before using sunscreen.
- **Brush Up on Dental Health:** Daily tooth cleaning helps prevent the #1 childhood disease – tooth decay. As soon as your child gets even one tooth it's time to see the dentist.

Book Recommendations:

The Book of Baths, by Karen Gray Ruelle

How a Baby Grows, by Nora Buck

More More More Said the Baby, by Vera B. Williams

Baby Faces, by Margaret Miller

Resources:

- For **information on feeding** your baby, visit the mypyramid.gov site for breastfeeding moms or <http://www.umaine.edu/parenting/> for information on baby food making classes
- **Support learning** with lots of ideas and activities to promote your child's learning <http://www.bornlearning.org>
- The whole family can enjoy **healthy living** – visit <http://www.lets-go.org>

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Literacy

Even though your baby can't speak or read yet, she is developing the building blocks of literacy. Children are curious; long before they can actually read, they love to turn the pages of a book and enjoy listening as you read to them. Babbling is the beginning of a conversation – listen and respond to what your baby has to say.

Tips:

- **Reading all Around:** Surround your child with language in your home and out in the world. Read recipes, traffic signs, and magazines aloud and keep plenty of books in your home. Store kids books on a low shelf so your child can reach them.
- **I Spy with my Little Eye:** When out on a walk with your child (or wherever you may be), point out and name all the things you see. Use it as a chance to talk about and share names for people, places and objects.
- **Leap into Literacy:** Reading starts now! Sing to your child, look at pictures and read books together. It's all part of helping your child explore the world.

Book Recommendations:

Good Night Moon, by Margaret Wise Brown

Hush Little Baby, by Sylvia Long

Color Zoo, by Lois Ehlert

My Aunt Came Back, by Pat Cummings

Resources:

- **Raising Readers** is a non-profit organization that has wonderful resources for parents – everything from book recommendations from birth through the teen years, to tips for literacy activities to do with your child. You'll get a book at each well-child visit to your doctor, courtesy of Raising Readers. Visit <https://www.raisingreaders.org>
- **The Growing Years** is free child development information that gets mailed to your home. You'll get monthly mailings that include information about parenting concerns, child development, and nutrition. You can download current issues or sign up for the mailing at <http://www.umaine.edu/parenting/prenatal-to-age-5/>
- **MaineLibraries** is a website that allows you to search for the library nearest you and also has information on news and events -including children's programs – at libraries across the state. <http://www.mainelibraries.com>

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Science & Math

Simple play like building with blocks, looking for patterns, learning colors and shapes, and exploring differences between sizes all build the foundation for math and science. It will be a long time before your baby learns algebra or chemistry. But start now to help build a sense of curiosity in your baby.

Tips:

- **Encourage Exploration:** Explore the natural world with your child. When you're walking around the neighborhood, point out trees, colors and clouds and talk about their size and shape.
- **Easy as 1-2-3:** Count objects out loud as you give them to your child. Whether you're in the park or in the nursery, there are plenty of ways to introduce numbers and counting.
- **Demolition Derby:** Stack some cups and let your child knock them down. Babies love grabbing and stacking blocks and containers of all sizes. Your child will love seeing how things fit together and come apart.

Book Recommendations:

1,2,3 to the Zoo, by Eric Carle

Count with Maisy, by Lucy Cousins

Textures, by Joanne Barkhan

Black on White, by Tana Hoban

Resources:

- Visit places like the **Maine Wildlife Park** in Gray, or your local humane society or a local farm or petting zoo. Baby can see and hear animals up close.
<http://www.mainewildlifepark.com>
- **Born Learning** has lots of ideas and activities to promote your child's learning.
<http://www.bornlearning.org>
- Get outside and visit one of **Maine's many parks**. Baby can listen to the ocean or the river, feel the rocks and sand, and explore the trees and sounds of the birds.
<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks>

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