

# Language in the 1st Year

Infants are expert language learners, learning best through face-to-face social interactions.



## TALK TO ME, BABY!

Language skills begin to develop before birth and continue throughout early childhood. This stage of development is the sensitive period for language learning.

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### TRY THIS!

Talk with your baby in your home language, or languages. If you speak two languages at home, use them both. Infants and young children are language learning experts and can easily learn the languages they are exposed to!



## SOUND IT OUT

During the first year of life, infants learn common speech patterns in their language. This helps infants become sensitive to the specific sounds of their native language.

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### TRY THIS!

Parentese, the sing-song tone of voice adults often use to speak to infants, helps babies learn. Parentese uses real words and correct grammar. To speak parentese, elongate your vowels, use a higher pitch, and slow your tempo.



## LET'S FACE IT

Infants learn best through social interactions. Face-to-face interactions in which caregivers and children take turns are particularly important for language learning.

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### TRY THIS!

Sit face-to-face at mealtime and have a conversation. Respond to coos and gestures with language. Use full sentences, like, "Yes, sweet potatoes are orange!" or, "Really? I didn't know you like peas!" Be sure to wait for their response.

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