

Building Connections: Finding an Early Rhythm

Helping Babies Feel Understood

Babies use their bodies and voices to tell us what they want, feel, and need. Parents also use their bodies and voices to help babies feel empathized with and understood. Being in tune with each other adds to the sense of connection between the baby and parent and strengthens their relationship. Babies brain develops best when there is this sense of connection.



When I ...



You Can ...

<i>When I ...</i>	<i>You Can ...</i>
Look into your eyes	Nod, smile, and talk to me.
Reach towards you	Reach towards me too and pick me up if you think I want to be held.
Babble	Imitate my sounds and wait for me to respond back.
Turn away from a feeding	Stop feeding me and say, "It looks like you are all done."
Show interest or delight	Look at me with delight in your face. You can also say, "You feel so happy!"
Make fussing sounds or cry	Show me your loving face and gently pick me up or pat me. Make soothing sounds or also use words to help me understand what it is I'm feeling: "Oh, you must be sleepy (or hungry or scared, etc.)."

Building Connections: Finding an Early Rhythm

Comforting Babies When Upset

Babies can have many different types of upsetting feelings like feeling hungry, tired, frustrated, scared, or over-excited. These strong feelings are new to them. Babies need parents to stay connected by being physically and emotionally available to them. Through this sense of connection, parents can help soothe babies' feelings and also begin to teach them how they can comfort themselves.



When you ...



Then I ...

<p>Stay near me and help me feel your calming presence</p>	<p>Know I can trust you to help me get through the hard feelings.</p>
<p>Show me by your face and gentle touch that you care about me</p>	<p>Can feel comforted and begin to be able to calm down.</p>
<p>Make soothing sounds or use words to describe what I am feeling</p>	<p>Begin to understand about my feelings.</p>
<p>Help me to suck on my fingers, snuggle with my blankie, or give me other ways I can calm myself</p>	<p>Begin to learn to calm myself.</p>
<p>Help me find something to do after I feel calm again</p>	<p>Can feel less stressed and know that it is safe to explore and be curious about my world.</p>

