

# At Home Learning Guide for Infants (0–1 years old)

Week of April 20, 2020



Babies in our centers would typically spend this week continuing their exploration of the natural world through the theme of gardens. Even though you're at home, you and your baby can do lots of fun things to learn about all the growth and change that come with spring.

This week, our activities for babies include:

- Experiences that help your baby build muscle strength and coordination.
- Ideas about how to turn any moment into a teachable moment.
- Opportunities to develop language and literacy skills, creative expression, and executive function—all while having fun and staying home!

**Developmental Domains** are the areas of focus that support development of the whole child. Interested in learning more? Click here to [discover the six developmental domains](#).

# This Week's Theme: Growing Gardens



## What you'll find in this guide...

We've organized this content the way your baby would be learning it in their center, but you can choose your own adventures and do the activities in any order.

### MONDAY

#### Let's Chat! (Language and Literacy)



**Talking About Spring** Talk with your baby about the changing weather and how it impacts your daily choices, from what to wear in the sunshine to how to stay hydrated when it gets warm.

### TUESDAY

#### Growing Flexible Brains (Executive Function)



**"Is It Springtime?"** Sing a fun song about flowers blooming in the spring and notice your baby's reaction while you sing.

### WEDNESDAY

#### Get the Wiggles Out! (Physical Development and Wellness)



**One Block, Two Blocks** Your baby practices purposeful movements by holding blocks and putting them in a basket.

### THURSDAY

#### Express Yourself! (Creative Expression)



**Painting with Spring Colors** Your baby observes colors and uses artistic tools to explore colorful materials.

### FRIDAY

#### Get the Wheels Turning (Cognitive Development)



**Exploring Spring** Your baby explores the new sights, smells, and textures that come along during springtime.

## EVERYDAY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Pick an activity to weave learning experiences into your everyday routines—no preparation needed!

### Getting Ready for the Week: Materials to Gather

- Soft blocks or other small objects a baby can hold in their hands
- A basket or bucket
- Different colors of paint or finger paint
- Paint brushes (optional)
- Paper

**Tip:** At the beginning of your week, gather materials and place them in a container so you're ready to go!

## FOCUS ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Center on the Developing Child from Harvard University just released an infographic titled, "[What is COVID-19 and How Does it Relate to Child Development?](#)" In coming weeks, we will continue to release weekly activities and tips on social emotional learning to support families while at home.



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**MONDAY**

Let's Chat: Talking About Spring



**Length of activity:**  
10-15 minutes\*

\*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

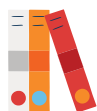
**Level of Engagement  
Required by Adult: High**



**Level of Prep Required: N/A**



**What you need:**  
N/A

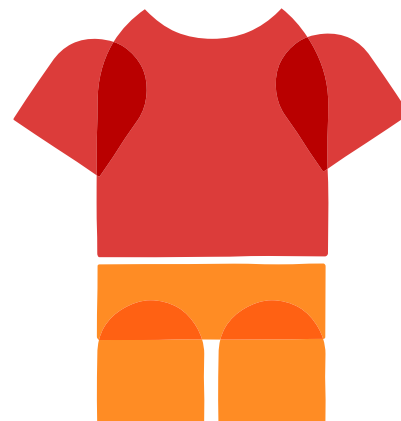


## What your child is learning:

- Listening and responding by paying attention during verbal interactions with other people
- Understanding language by using sounds and gestures to communicate their interests or needs

**What you do:** While getting your baby dressed in the morning or anytime throughout the day, talk about the weather and how it affects the clothes you're picking out. For example, you might say, "It's a warm spring day. You can wear this short-sleeved onesie." Or, "the sun is shining so brightly today. You can wear this hat when we go outside to keep the sun out of your eyes."

**If your child is ready:** Show your baby the clothing item before you put it on them. Say the item's name and pause, inviting your baby to imitate the word sound or acknowledge it by looking or pointing.



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**TUESDAY**

## Growing Flexible Brains: "Is It Springtime?"

Sing a fun song about flowers blooming in the spring and notice your baby's reaction while you sing.



**Length of activity:**  
10–15 minutes\*

\*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement Required by Adult:** High



**Level of Prep Required:** Low



**What you need:**  
N/A



### What your child is learning:

- Memory skills by paying attention to people or experiences for increasing lengths of time
- Flexible thinking by noticing and reacting to changes during an experience, such as different tones of voice

**What you do:** Familiarize yourself with the song "Is It Springtime?" Sit with your baby facing you, either sitting or lying down, and sing the song. Observe how your baby responds to the song.

Does your baby smile or wiggle while you sing? Do they watch your face? If they show interest, be sure to comment on it. "I see you smiling when I sing. It looks like you are really enjoying that!" After you talk about their reactions to the song, sing it again. Revisit the song throughout the day and week.

### "Is It Springtime?"

(sung to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?")

Is it springtime?

Is it springtime?

Yes it is.

Yes it is.

Pretty flowers blooming.

Pretty flowers blooming.

Big and bright!

Big and bright!

**If your child is ready:** Explore different ways of singing the song and see how your baby reacts, such as saying it fast, slow, in a whisper, or in a deep, squeaky, or silly voice. Do they respond differently to different types of singing? Label the emotions that you see them going through when you sing in the different ways. "You looked confused when I whispered. Was it hard to hear?" Or, "Oh no! Did I scare you with my deep voice?"

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**WEDNESDAY**

**Get the Wiggles Out: One Block, Two Blocks**



**Length of activity:**  
5–10 minutes\*

\*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement  
Required by Adult: High**



**Level of Prep Required: Medium**



**What you need:**

- Soft blocks or other small objects a baby can hold in their hands
- A basket or bucket



**What your child is learning:**

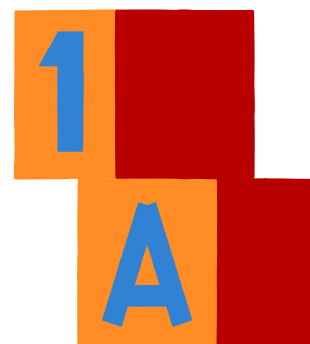
- Moving parts of their body on purpose
- Building muscle strength and coordination

**What you do:** Sit with your baby in your lap or across from you if they can sit independently. Offer them one of the blocks or other objects. While they hold it, offer them a second object. Do they let the first one drop, or hold both at the same time?

Babies are always learning new skills and they might do it differently each time. Encourage your baby to put the objects in the basket by saying something like “Here’s a basket. Can you put the block inside the basket?”

If they try, offer lots of positive praise! You can smile, nod your head, or say something like “Yay! I see you reaching to drop the block in the basket!” Continue using the rest of the objects for as long as your baby is interested.

**If your child is ready:** Instead of handing blocks to your baby, encourage them to reach for the objects on their own. Can they pick up a block and put it in the basket by themselves?



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**THURSDAY**

## Express Yourself: Painting with Spring Colors

Your child observes colors and uses artistic tools to explore colorful materials.



**Length of activity:**  
10–15 minutes\*

\*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement  
Required by Adult:** High



**Level of Prep Required:** High



### What you need:

- Different colors of paint or finger paint—no paint in stock at your house? Check this [Website](#) for simple ways to make your own paint!
- Paint brushes (optional)
- Paper



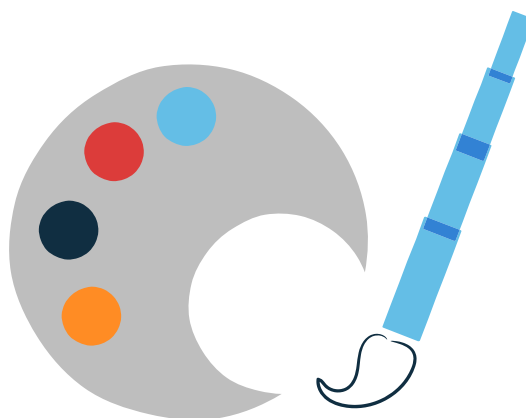
### What your child is learning:

- Noticing bright or contrasting colors
- Exploring and using materials

**What you do:** Sit at a table with your baby. Fold the sheet of paper in half and then open it. Put a few drops of different paint colors on one side of the paper. Fold the blank side of the paper over the top of the paint. Show your baby how to use your hand or finger to press against the paper.

Encourage your baby to touch the paper with their finger or hand. After the paint has been spread between the two sides of the paper, open the paper up and show them the design. Talk with your baby about what you see in the painting. “Look! The yellow and red mixed together in this spot to make a new color! This is orange.”

**If your child is ready:** Provide your baby with different objects they can use to move the paint, such as a small ball or plastic rolling pin.



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**FRIDAY**

## Get the Wheels Turning: Exploring Spring

Walk or stroll outside using safe social distancing and explore the new sights, smells, and textures that come with springtime. If it's safer for you to stay inside, stand by a window where your baby can see the outdoors.



**Length of activity:**  
15-30 minutes\*

\*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement Required by Adult:** High



**Level of Prep Required:** N/A



**What you need:**  
N/A

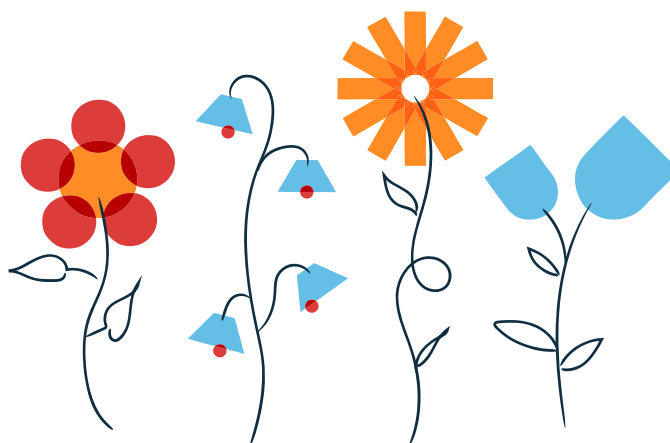


### What your child is learning:

- Observing objects and events
- Exploring objects using the five senses
- Performing simple actions to get a response from others

**What you do:** While outdoors with your baby (or near a large window where you can see outside) talk to them about the different signs of spring that you can see, hear, or smell, such as birds chirping or trees beginning to get leaves. If you are out on a walk, you might point out the different things that you can hear, smell, or touch. Look at new leaves on trees or flowers that are in bloom. Encourage your baby to point with you. Be sure to use descriptive language when pointing out the signs of spring.

**If your child is ready:** Encourage your baby to grasp an item that is safe for them to touch, such as a leaf or a flower petal. Encourage them to use their hand to manipulate the object by turning it over or bringing it up to their nose to smell.



HOME



### Everyday Learning Experiences

Try this to help your child develop the skills described today no matter what you're doing:

**1** As you go about your day, talk about the weather and how it affects the things you're doing. For example, you might turn on a fan or drink some cold water because it's warm. Does your baby notice what you're doing and pay some attention when you describe it?

**2** While talking to your baby anytime during the day, try repeating yourself one or more times. How long do they pay attention? How do they react if you change the tone or volume of your voice?

**3** During a time when you're picking up items that are safe for your baby to hold, such as toys or laundry, invite them to help you by putting the object in their hands and encouraging them to put it in its box or basket.

**4** During any mealtime, talk to your baby about the different food colors in front of them. Invite them to use a spoon or other safe utensil to explore the food. Do they notice what happens when the food gets mixed together? How do they use their utensil to explore what's on their plate?

**5** Give your baby any safe object to explore with their senses, such as a toy, bottle, or piece of cloth. Demonstrate touching, smelling, hearing, and looking at the object. Which sense does your baby seem most interested in using while they explore?





### Focus on Social and Emotional Learning

Social and emotional learning isn't just for children. It's also important that adults understand and take care of their own needs and stressors so that we are at our best for our children. For this week, we wanted to refer you to an [infographic](#) developed by the Center for the Developing Child at Harvard University that gives some quick pointers on how you can take care of yourself through this time. You can also go to their website for some great resources on child development in general that you might find interesting including, among so many other topics, brain development, play, helping your child deal with stress and build resilience, and self-regulation. Next week we'll have some targeted resources for you and your family on not just how to cope with the challenges that so many are facing, but how to use this time to build strong family bonds and help your child flourish!

