



You are  
your  
baby's  
best toy

Learn and have fun  
together at home

# You are your baby's best toy

Everything you do together helps your baby's brain develop. It's never too early to start - from bump, to babies to toddlers. Your baby even recognises family voices before they are born.



Twinkle  
twinkle..

You can do all these things together with your bump and baby:

Reading	Cuddling
Talking	Chatting
Copying	Laughing
Singing	Dancing

**Let's have some fun!**

# Everyday things

To have fun and interact with your baby you can also play together with everyday things you have at home:

**a cardboard box** - you can draw on it use it as a pretend car or train, or anything you want it to be

**a plastic bowl** - pick it up, make a noise by banging it

**a squishy sponge** - let your baby feel the texture

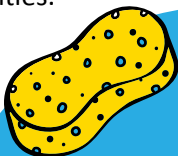
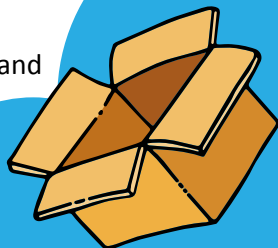
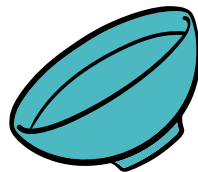
**a metal pan** - bang the pan like a drum

**a silk scarf or fabric** - play peek-a-boo

**a wooden spoon** - pretend it's a puppet or a magic wand

The most important thing is **you**.

Your baby will learn so much from these simple activities.



Babies can't reach or grab things until they are about four months old. When they reach out it shows they are interested and want you to play or talk to them.

# What works well?

- **Playing and talking face-to-face**
- **Doing things again and again - babies and toddlers like to repeat things**
- **Copying your baby's sounds and babbles**
- **Waiting for your baby to respond - they need time to form their responses**
- **Playing for short periods of time and looking for signs that your baby needs a change of activity**

If your baby is looking or pointing at something, pay attention to what they are looking at and make a sound or facial expression to let them know you have noticed the same thing. Take turns, allowing time for your baby to respond.

Reward your baby's interest with encouraging words and gestures. Name what your baby is seeing or playing with as this makes important connections in their brain even before they can talk or understand. Use the language you are most confident in.



This type of playing and communicating together helps give your baby the best start. It is called “serve and return interaction” and it helps support your baby’s:

- Brain development
- Ability to learn to speak and understand
- Co-ordination
- Happiness and confidence

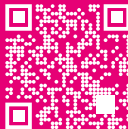
For more information on serve and return, visit:  
[tinyurl.com/serve-return](http://tinyurl.com/serve-return)

Babies and toddlers are growing and learning every day and the little moments you share can make a big difference. Check out:

**Big Little Moments**



**Moments that Matter Bradford**



Better Start Bradford runs over 15 projects for expectant families and families with children aged 0-3 in Bowling and Barkerend, Bradford Moor and Little Horton, including support before, during and after birth, reading, play, healthy cooking and eating, English language skills and much more.

We are supported by the The National Lottery Community Fund to help children get the best start in life. Find out more at:

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To stay up to date with all our activities and events, download the free Better Start Bradford App from Google Play or the App Store. Search 'Better Start Bradford' or scan the QR code below.

