

Language Development after Discharge

Language development begins in all babies before birth. These language connections can be interrupted when a baby is born early, and their language can take longer to develop.

Understand why, when, and how to communicate with your baby.



photo: Unsplash

Why? Your baby learns about language and communication by listening and watching you.

Talking often to your baby supports this early learning.

When? Learn the signs that your baby is ready to communicate, or needs a rest:

Ready!

- Making eye contact
- Looking alert, calm
- Not hungry or tired
- Bringing hands towards mouth



Needs a rest.

- Closing eyes, looking away
- Fussy, irritable
- Hungry or looking tired
- Staring, yawning



Important to know.

Talk to a health professional if you're concerned about your baby/child's talking and communication.

Your baby is ready to communicate from birth through eye-contact, babbling, and smiling, and other facial expressions like 'sad', including crying.

How? Talk, read books, or sing songs to your baby. As your baby gets older you can increase the amount of time you communicate, while watching carefully for signs that they may need a rest.



Hello baby!

Your baby loves to listen to your voice. When you are talking, watch for signs that your baby is trying to talk back to you.



Talk or sing anywhere.

While doing diaper changes, baths, feeds, or holding your baby, talk to them about what you are doing, they will love to hear your story.



Go softly.

Speak or sing softly with a happy voice, in whatever language you feel most comfortable.



Connect with your eyes.

Eye contact is a form of communication that also helps with attachment and can reduce crying.



Stay face to face.

Pay attention when your baby is babbling or making other sounds, and respond. This shows that you are interested in them.



Repeat! Repeat!

Repeat your baby's name often because they will start to respond. Babies also learn from hearing the same words, stories and songs over and over.



Read books everyday.

Reading to your baby early creates connections, supports language development and creates a routine that your baby will love.



Skip the screen time.

Babies learn from watching your face and holding eye-contact. Phones and screens are distracting for both of you, and break this connection.



Visit us online for more information on **Language Development**, plus other useful resources and programs focused on premature babies and their families.

CPBF  Canadian Premature Babies Foundation
canadianpremies.org



CHILD-BRIGHT Network  Réseau BRILLEnfant