

0 - 3 Months

Babies are born relationship ready and in their first three months of life are actively trying to make sense of their world. Before they can even speak, babies communicate with their facial expressions, voices and body language. As caregivers and babies get to know each other, babies will depend on their caregivers to recognize their cues and respond to their needs in a sensitive, timely and consistent way. This is the beginning of a trusting relationship that will extend to the wider world in later years. Babies' relationships and experiences lay the foundation for their mental health now, throughout their childhood, and well into their adult years.

Over the first three months, a baby will:

- **Gaze at her caregiver's face and look in the direction of her caregiver's voice.**
Baby's caregivers should bring their faces close so that baby can see their features and expressions. Baby may not initially make eye contact since her vision has not fully developed, but she will enjoy looking up and seeing her caregivers' faces.
- **Smile spontaneously.**
By 2 – 3 months, a baby's social smiles are signs that she knows her caregivers.
- **Recognize a familiar voice.**
For months before baby was born, her mother's voice was what she heard most. She will follow that voice, turning her head in that direction, and will prefer it over others.
- **Make cooing sounds when she is happy, contented and communicative.**
- **Be soothed when picked up and comforted (most of the time).**
- **Express her emotions and needs through her cries and actions.**
Baby will find a way to let her caregivers know that she needs attention when hungry, tired or uncomfortable, e.g., in need of a diaper change.