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Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County

Tips on Bonding with Your Baby Throughout the First Year

0-2
Months

Pick up and soothe your crying baby. Gently touch and hold your baby. Focus on your baby during feeding.

2-4
Months

Look lovingly at your baby and make eye contact. Talk, read and sing to your baby. Respond to your baby's cries and coos.

4-8
Months

Play simple games such as peekaboo, sing songs and say nursery rhymes. Copy the sounds your baby makes. Encourage your baby to explore.

8-12
Months

Talk to your baby about your surroundings. Read, sing and play with your baby. Create a safe play area with toys or household items and play with your baby.

Tips to Prevent Distracted Parenting

Spend less time on your phone.

Bonding is most important during the first year of your baby's life.

Watch and respond to your baby's cues.

Never leave your baby alone near water.

Be aware of distractions in your daily life.

The Dangers of Distraction

A **distraction** is anything that prevents you from giving your full attention to something else.

When you combine distraction with parenting there can be dangerous and deadly results.

Growing use of cell phones causes parents and caregivers to be distracted from their children. This is referred to as "distracted parenting." Other distractions include talking with friends, caring for other children and doing household chores.

Research shows that distracted parenting can negatively impact bonding and attachment with your baby.



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www.healthysafebaby.org

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Tips to Reduce Your Phone Use:

- Track exactly how much time you spend on your phone.
- Limit social media and other apps that take time away from you and your family.
- Set a timer when you use your phone.
- Avoid checking your phone so often.
- Leave your phone in another room.
- Plan activities that really matter to you like spending time with your baby and other children.

Distractions and Forgotten Babies

Your brain has memory settings that work automatically when you are going through your regular routines.

When your routine changes, the **memory settings can fail** leading to tragic results. High stress, lack of sleep and **distraction** can affect your memory settings.

Tips to Prevent Forgotten Babies in Hot Cars:

- Put an item in the backseat next to your child's car seat so you must reach back into the car when you arrive at your destination. A shoe, keys, purse or wallet are examples.
- Remain focused on your morning tasks at hand.
- Avoid distractions until your routine is complete.



Most infant drownings happen in bathtubs and buckets.

Distractions and Drowning

Babies and young children are helpless when they are in water because they are not able to raise their heads out of the water to breathe.

- When you are giving your baby a bath, be sure to keep your eyes on your baby at all times.
- Never leave your baby alone when he or she is in the bathtub.
- When children are around water **eliminate all distractions.**



Talking to your baby builds brain connections for life.



Distractions are dangerous!

2018
51 children in the U.S. died because they were left in the car by a parent or caregiver.

Drowning happens in a matter of seconds.

Never take your eyes off your baby.

