Podcast Intro and Episode Overview

Hi, you're listening to the Baby Manual Podcast, the podcast that helps you feel confident as a new parent. I'm your host, a pediatrician and mom, and the author of the baby manual, Dr.

Carol Keim. Hello and welcome to this week's episode of the Baby Manual Podcast. This is episode 14, all about infant development. I'm gonna talk about the different types of developmental milestones that we look for, then go through the developmental different milestones, that your baby should have at each checkup that you see them for.

So depending on their age. And then I'll talk how to play with your babies in a way that will help boost their development, and lastly we'll take a little bit about screen time and how that affects development So first off, the types of developmental milestones we look for.

There's gross motor skills, which are those that use really large muscle groups like the central muscles in the body. Then there's fine motor skill. Those are the small muscles like hands and the fingers especially.

And then there are verbal and social skills and that is their interaction with family members and eventually with peers. If you have a baby that has a delay in one of these areas, especially if it's just one or two things, it is usually nothing to worry about.

But if your baby has delays in two or three of these areas, or if they have multiple delays within one of the categories, that is sometimes a red flag and something worth bringing up with your pediatrician at their next checkup.

Developmental Milestones by Age

Now, there's no advantage to pushing your baby's motor skills, especially gross motor skill, things like walking, crawling, and sitting. There are no advantages to babies who do those things earlier and there are some disadvantages.

Because once babies start moving around, they can hurt themselves, fall down stairs, get into cabinets and potentially grab sharp objects or pull things off of stoves.

So there are some definite disadvantages if they're ahead in motor skills, actually. It doesn't necessarily mean that they are going to be sports players or anything like that later in life.

However, if your baby is advanced in verbal and social skills there is some benefit to that and it does show that the are more likely to do well in school later and then to better later life, so we're going talk about how to boost those kinds of skills especially.

Now, at a newborn visit, your baby really is not doing a whole lot. They're mostly just sleeping and eating. So they should be having brief periods of being awake.

You should seeing all four of their limbs moving fairly equally. so they shouldn't have one preference for one side or the other, but you should see the arms and legs both moving equally on both sides.

Your baby at a newborn age should be responding to parents' voice or touch. So you should notice some change when you talk to them or when your touch them.

And then they will look at you briefly. It's normal for them to have cross eyes or to one eye that drifts in or out at this time. it takes a little while, at least a few weeks, sometimes a couple of months for babies to coordination of both of their eyes.

That is not a problem if your baby's eyes are not lining up all of the time at the newborn. Your baby should also be moving in response to hearing or seeing something.

So if you have someone slam a door or a fire alarm goes off, something loud and startling like that, your baby's should startle to that. And that's a sign that they're able to hear.

The same with visual stimuli. They should respond a little bit to different changes in lights. Now, babies cannot see very far when they are first born.

There really can only see clearly for about a foot, which is about the distance between the breast and the mom's face. So if your baby is noticing things that are up close, that's good.

And they're not necessarily supposed to be noticing thing that is farther away than that. We also look for some reflexes in the newborn. One is the rooting reflex where if you stroke their cheek they'll turn their head to the side and open their mouth and try to suck onto something.

There's the suck reflex, where when they get something in their mouths they suck on it. The moro reflex is their startle reflex. Where the arms go out and the legs tuck up.

And that should be even on both sides. So we don't want to see like one leg being pulled up for example or just one arm going out. And then there's the grasp reflex, which is one of my favorites to check for.

On their hands, if you press your finger into their palm, they will grab your fingers, and it also works on their feet. So if your press on the pad of their foot, their little toes will curl down around your fingertips.

Those are all newborn primitive reflexes that they should have at this age. At the one to two week visit, your baby should be turning towards you when they hear your voice and it should also make them feel more calm.

They should, also be communicating to you, when their unhappy for some reason, so either that they have a wet diaper or they're hungry or their tired.

But generally, the cry is about the same for all of these. Some parents will notice a different type of cry at this age. But typically, when they're only one to two weeks old, it sounds about this same.

For everything, you just know that something is wrong. They should be able to look at you and fix on your face briefly. So again, their eyes may still be deviating or crossing, but they should able look you in the face and notice like you'll see that they'll lock eyes with you for a second.

They can also follow to midline at this age. So it's kind of interesting if you take a toy from one side of them and you pass it across their field of vision to the other side, they lose interest when it gets halfway over and that will go away again as they get a little bit older.

But yeah, at his age they're only following to Midline. And then they should be able to lift their head briefly if have them in tummy time or if they have on your chest.

If you're leaning back with baby on the chest, you want them to be lifting their heads away from you. That's helping to develop the back of the neck muscles.

At the one month visit, your baby should respond to calming actions when they are upset. So what that means is when your Baby is crying, if you rock them or shush them, or talk to them that should help them to calm down and soothe them.

At one month, they're going to be following past midline. So they start to follow you around the room with their eyes, and they also start see a little bit farther away.

Now, it's still typically only about half a room distance that they are noticing things. And as they get older, you'll see them noticing thing farther and farther way, which is really fun to notice.

But at this age, there's only seen really a few feet very clearly. A one-month-old should be able to recognize familiar voices, so they will calm down with parents' voices but not necessarily with strangers who come to visit.

They also start to have a responsive smile around a month of age. So before that, they'll smile spontaneously sometimes, but by one month they're really consistently smiling, and if you smile at them, it will typically make them smile back.

If they are not quite laughing yet, that comes later at four months. At one month of age, they're also able to lift their head all the way to get their chin off the ground during tummy time or while on your chest, so they should be able lift the head away.

And they start to communicate their needs a little bit better at one-month-of-age, again with crying and fussing and things. By two months of age, your baby starts losing some of those primitive reflexes.

So the grasp reflex, the rooting, and the moral reflex start to go away around two-months-of-age. They just get a little more subtle. And then by six- months- of- age they should be gone.

At two month, they look at the parents and really look their faces and notice them. The should have a social smile, so they're smiling when they see you and not necessarily only in response to when you smile.

And they start to comfort themselves at two months of age. So you might notice them sucking on their hands or sucking out a pacifier and being able to keep it in their mouth.

They start have different types of crying at 2 months at age, so you're starting to recognize which cry means that your baby is hungry and which one means they need to have their diaper changed or that they just want to be held.

We also start cooing at the age which is so sweet. It's that sweet little kind of noise that And then they can start to show signs of boredom, which is really interesting.

And we'll talk a little bit later about how to keep babies entertained at this time. It's not very much that you have to do, but they start show sign that they are bored at two months.

At two months when they're doing tummy time, it should be on the floor at this point and they should able to lift their chest off the ground, but just briefly and then it'll fall back down.

So they are having better head control. They are able lift the head all the way off and look side to side with their head. And then part of their test starts to come up.

And then they should have some head control while they're sitting with support. So if you're a sitting baby in your lap, their head is not necessarily flopping to the side.

It doesn't last very long. Sometimes it's just for a few seconds or few minutes, but they do start to have head-control at this age. At four months of age, your baby will start to elicit social interactions.

So that means they're going to ask you for attention at this age. They also start laughing, which I just love so much. At 4 months, the baby's going be watching you walk around the room and they'll follow you with their eyes.

And they are typically able to comfort themselves when they'r sad. they can suck on their hands usually or thumbs at the age They start babbling a little bit at this age.

It's more like an expressive cooing, so kind of this, you know, up and down tone with the voice of, ooh, or squealing or laughing. And they also start responding to affection.

So this is the age where if you give them a kiss, they will smile. That's really sweet. You can also to notice when they're happy and sad at four months.

And during tummy time, they're able to push up onto their elbows, which means that they are able lift their chest all the way off the ground when they in tummy-time, but just onto the elbows not full straight arm push-ups yet.

They should have good head control at this age, Which means if you have them in a laying down position and you take their hands and start to sit them up, their head will stay mid-line.

It won't flop back anymore. But it's not quite at the point that their leaning forward with it and helping you out. That happens at 6 months. At four months, a lot of babies will start rolling.

It's usually front to back because we're doing tummy time. And sometimes it's a little unintentional. Their heads are pretty heavy at this age. So sometimes you'll notice that their head and chest comes off the ground, flops to the side, and that kind of pulls their whole body over into a roll.

They also start to reach for things. So if you hand them a baby toy or a rattle, they can reach out and grab it. And if they're bottle feeding, They can start holding a bottle at four months of age.

Now you should never prop a model for your baby, meaning never have them laying down with something holding the bottle. You should always, if You are giving a Bottle, always have baby in your arms at a slight angle and you Should be holding onto the BOTTLE.

And even once they're able to hold it at four months, they often can't hold for a whole feed, so they still need your help holding it. The next visit is at six months and at 6 months they start to really be socially interactive.

They start taking turns babbling and they are doing the mature babble. So things like ma ma, ma ba ba, la la ba. that sort of thing. They also, if you make sounds, will try to mimic them, which is really cool.

And they start to recognize familiar faces and get stranger anxiety at six months. they also recognize their own name. So when you call their name, they'll turn their head and look at you and they should be rolling both directions at 6 months of age.

so front to back and back to front. and if it's not happening right at Six months, it should Be happening very soon. They can sit for short periods of time at six months, but they typically sit in a tripod position where they'll be sitting and have their arms in front of them also supporting them.

They start to show some pre-crawling at this age, so they will get up to their knees and kind of rock back and forth. Or do what's called an army crawl or I like to call it swimming on land where they're kind of just, you know, moving across the floor.

They're getting themselves from one place to another. So at six months is the age where if you leave them in tummy time and you walk away for a minute and come back, they might be across.

And so you need to be extra careful at this age and start baby proofing at the stage. Babies at this age will also be able to turn their head side to side and even their upper body to look at things while they're seated.

And you may notice that when they are breastfeeding, they tend to their turn head quickly and kind of pull your breast with it. So that's happening at six months of age.

It can be a little tricky. Try to minimize distractions if you can. That's my best tip for not getting hurt while you're breast feeding your baby at 6 months old.

They also will bring objects into their mouth. So if you hand them a toy, they'll take that toy and put it into the mouth and they can also transfer objects from one hand to the other.

When they go to pick something up at six months, the do it with a raking grasp. They use all four of their fingers and kind of keep the thumb to their side and use the four fingers to grab things and pick them up.

And also when they are putting things in their mouth, they kind of miss a lot at this age. It doesn't always go straight to the mouth. Sometimes they'll hit themselves in the face while they're trying to get it in there.

I noticed that six months that diaper changes are getting really tricky, and that's because they were trying roll. So if you think of it from the baby's perspective, it's almost a little offensive to them that you're just making them stay in one position for so long.

But yeah, I'd say try to work with them on it. If they're rolling over or flipping in the middle of diaper changes, you can put the diaper on upside down, backwards if need to, or try and move with their body as they are moving.

Maybe get one side on, let them roll, and then fasten the other side, for example. At nine months of age, babies typically will have stranger anxiety and will look for their parents to be comforted.

They're using their repetitive consonant and vowel sounds more maturely at this age and typically are saying mama and dada or whatever is the natural one in your language for that.

And I find that actually in a lot of cultures, mama is for mother and that's one of the first sounds that babies are able to make. Yeah, you should be hearing some of these words and they might call both parents by the same name at this age and that is normal.

They start pointing at stuff at nine months of age when they get excited about something or if you ask them, if your reading a book together, which one is the dog or which is a circle, they start to be able to point to things.

They also really like interactive games at this age. So if you play peek-a-boo with them, they love that. And they also, have object permanence, which means if take something away from them and hide it, They're gonna go looking for it.

That's why peekaboo works too, because you're covering your face up, and then when you uncover it they knew it was back there and they just get so excited to see it again.

If you do it younger than this, before they have Object Permanence they get kind of scared. if cover your faced up they're like, oh no, my parent is gone.

But yeah, at this age, they love it. They also at nine months are really exploring their environment. Their starting to move around a little bit more.

Typically they're crawling at the age and they are using their eyes to look around all over the room. You can see across the whole room they use their hands to touch things and also use the mouth to explore things.

I find a lot of families that have dogs at this age, the babies will get into the dog food and eat a piece and that's okay. There are not really any diseases that transfer from dogs to humans other than intestinal worms.

So it's typically not a problem if your baby gets into dogfood and eats a peace or two. Of course it is not designed for them, but it probably won't hurt them.

They have a three-finger grasp at this age. So when they go to pick up something small, like a raisin or a piece of cereal, they'll use three fingers to take it up.

That's their thumb, index finger, and middle finger to get it. And they start pulling themselves up to stand. You might notice them starting to cruise along things like coffee table or couch where they will hold on to it and then kind of walk sideways along it, or they'll be pulling themselves up in the crib sometimes.

So if you have not already lowered your crib at nine months, this is the time to do it, to make it lower down so that they can't pull themselves and then over the edge.

I also noticed that diaper changes are really hard at nine months because of all of these extra movements they're trying to make, they are trying stand and roll and pull themselves up and sit up on their own.

So I recommend doing these 3D diaper change where they let them stand holding on to you or try to work with them in whatever position they want to be in rather than forcing them to lie down.

And nine-month-olds are usually pretty upset when I lie them down during the examination. So I always tell them what I'm going to do now. And that seems to really help.

Like, hey, I am just going lay you back for a second. They are understanding a lot more than you think they are at this age. If you just go and lay them flat on their back, they get really mad because they're trying to all these cool things with their bodies and you're just doing against that.

And then at one year of age, this is where babies often will start to walk and talk, but also it's not a red flag until it is 15 to 18 months if they are not doing these things.

One-year-olds will imitate activities, so if you hand them a baby in a bottle, they will typically try to feed it, or if hand something that looks like a phone, try talk on it.

They'll also hand you things to play with at a year. So they'll hand your books or toys. They can typically wave bye at one year of age, and they start to have a really strong parent attachment at this age and have separation anxiety.

This is the age where if you go to the bathroom and close the door, they tend to cry because they really miss you. They have what's called proto-declarative pointing, which is where they point out things that they are interested in.

So if they see an airplane or bird or a fire truck going by, they're going to be really excited and point at it. And this is a great time for you to name those things, that are pointing out, because they like to imitate sounds.

How to Play and Support Development

Now, typically, there are only speaking one or two words at a year of age, in addition to mama and dada. It's usually mama, dade, and hi, something like that.

but they can imitate sounds, and so you might notice your baby is making sounds like, you know, dog sounds and cat sounds in typical animal sounds. And that's totally normal at this age.

Also, if your Baby is doing any sign language, those sign-language words also count as words. So I always ask about that because some parents are concerned that their babies aren't speaking yet, but if they're communicating in some way, then that counts.

They start to jabber with inflection, which means that they're just babbling, but like in an up and down, it sounds like a conversation. So you might hear them going like that, that that.

And then you may hear an occasional word thrown in there or an actual sound of something. They can also identify people at this age. If you show them a photo, you can ask, who's mama, whose data?

They usually point those things out and they bang things together. if you hand them two cubes, they'll knock them together at one year of age, A one-year-old can typically stand alone at least for a few seconds.

So if you stand them up, they should be able to hold themselves there. And they start to have a two-finger grasp, which is the mature pincer grasp. They use their thumb and index finger to pick up small things like raisins or

pieces of cereal, things And they can also follow simple directions at a year.

So things like get me that book or put this piece of clothing into the hamper. Those are things that a one year old can usually do as long as they're, you know, walking.

How to play with your baby at various ages. So at all ages, the best way to boost their social and verbal development is to talk to them. Just narrate your day, say what you're doing, name things that you can see, point at things, and talk about them with your baby.

And they start to really get a good grasp of language long before they're actually speaking, so they can understand so much more than you think, even at newborn age.

So up to one month of age, from newborns up the first month, you should be helping them develop regular sleep and feeding routines. At less than a month you're swaddling the baby typically and placing them face-up to sleep, so flat on their back in a crib or a bassinet, and that should in the parent's room for safe sleeping, but a different surface than the parents are sleeping on.

And then use dim lighting and quiet voice at night so that they know that nighttime is really just about business. It's just, you know, feed, change, go back to sleep.

But then during the day you help them stay a little bit more awake by picking them up and undressing them sometimes before feeding can wake them. You can use a wet wipe if they're not waking up completely during day and just water on a washcloth or wipe and rub that on their face or chest or feet.

And that will wake up a bit. And then you're doing tummy time on your chest, typically, in the first month of life. You can do tummy-time on the floor, like on a flat blanket, and while you are watching the baby the whole time.

But a lot of times they're just so little and so much fun to be holding and snuggling them that a lots of parents just do it on their chest. So that just means lean back with the Baby on you chest and you want them to lifting their head away from you.

That's the point of tummytime at this age. So by one month of age, it starts to get a little bit awkward because they're awake like most of the time during the day and they are just kind of staring off into the distance.

So what I like to recommend at this age babies love looking at things like ceiling fans or leaves that are blowing in the wind or bold patterns. If you have anything like that that they can look at, you can face them towards the window so they see the leaves rustling on the trees.

or you can turn on the ceiling fan for them to watch. They just love it at this age. Also, you want to be developing consistent routines for sleep and eating.

So keep doing that wind down routine at the end of the night where you're feeding and then rocking them and putting them down, ideally when they're awake but drowsy.

And one month you should be doing formal tummy time now. That is on a flat surface on the floor typically with a blanket over it. You'll have them face down for 15 to 30 minutes once or twice per day.

A lot of babies do not like tummy time. And I always tell parents, you're like their personal trainer in this. So the point of tummy, time is to develop the back of the neck muscles still at one month of age and to get them starting to lift up their head and look around.

It's really up to you to make them do it. But if they're really miserable, or you can pick them up, but then just do more often so that it works out to about a half an hour per day at least.

Also, make sure you're cuddling your baby a lot at one month of age and talking to them a lots because they're

developing that attachment still. At two months of the age, you want to continue all the routines that you've been doing, all this stuff I've already mentioned, but also make that sure that your singing to your babies and you start to learn their likes and their dislikes, which is really interesting at this age.

You can see what makes them happy and what doesn't. Keep doing tummy time at two months of age and try to increase it to 30 minutes at a time, once or twice per day.

For four months at age, you're gonna continue all that stuff above all the routines, all this singing and talking. And then also you can start letting them sit supported at four-months-of-age.

So if you have a baby chair for them, it's okay to let them set in the baby-chair. They should be buckled in because when they start kicking their legs, they can wiggle themselves out of it and they fall, so that can be dangerous.

You're also starting to look for signs of food readiness at four months of age. Now, officially, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends starting solid foods or foods other than breast milk or formula at six months age, but I find that a lot of parents do start giving their baby food before that six-month visit.

So signs a food-readiness include watching you eat and getting excited when they see the food go from the plate to your mouth, sometimes reaching for it, And then also they lose something called the extrusion reflex, which means if you give them a spoon and put it into their mouth, they will suck it in versus pushing it out with their tongue.

And the last sign is that they have good head control, that their able to sit for long periods of time without their head tilting to one side or the other or tilts forward.

You can also start playing music for your baby at four months of age. Before that, I typically don't recommend putting on music with the baby just because they do get overstimulated and there's a lot going on and they're already learning so much visually at that age that a lotta times the music just gets them overstimated and then it's harder for them to wind down at night and harder to sleep during the night.

At six months of age, you're doing more playtime on the floor. So at this age you are really trying to get them to roll both ways and you can inspire rolling by using toys.

Like have them in tummy time and then put the toy a little farther away where they can't reach it or off to one side or the other and see if they roll and try to try and get it.

Or if, they start reaching for it and making movements to move towards it You can also let them sit in a high chair for meals, but also while you're doing things around the house so they can watch you.

And they could also play in high-chair at six months of age so you can give them some toys. I find that a lot of babies love to play this game where they throw stuff on the ground and you pick it up for them.

And at six months, they're starting to learn cause and effect. So my personal rule is that they get one pickup. If it's intentional after that, then that toy does not get picked up again because I do not have the patience to stand there and pick up toys all day.

if you do, that is totally fine. Yeah, you can come up with whatever rules you want, but I'd say start sticking to those rules at this age because they are starting and starting to realize, you know, okay, I can throw it accidentally, but if I keep doing it, it's not that game that we're playing.

They also start to make funny sounds, and you can make many sounds with them and they'll try to copy them. So things like, or blowing raspberries kind of sounds.

they love that sort of stuff at six months of age. And they also love interactive play with you. So things like, you can kind of wiggle your fingers and move it towards them slowly and then tickle them.

They love that sort of stuff because they can see that kind cause and effect stuff happening. you should start reading to your baby around six months of age.

And really the point of reading at this age is to let them know that books go from left to right, you know, in our culture. So just to show them what position a book goes in and which page, which way the pages turn.

That's really, the whole point it. Then also they're just listening and getting some language development there. They start noticing screens at six months of age and a six month old is able to flip through photos on a phone like swiping to one side or the other is not a very difficult skill and six-month-olds can do that.

But officially they should not be having screen time other than things like video chatting until two years of So what I recommend at this age, if your baby is really interested in the phone and wanting to play with it, you can put the camera on on selfie mode and let them look at themselves, or you could just give them a mirror.

They love mirrors at his age and they love seeing themselves. So that's one way to let him have screens. But again, try to limit it. And really, they don't need it if you have a merit that actually better than giving them the screen because of the rays of light that come out of this screen, especially the blue wavelength of life.

can, you know, tricks your brain into thinking it's the middle of the day. And if it is not the end of day, it can make it harder to fall asleep at night.

You can also hand babies things to put in their mouth at six months of age. So teething toys, rattles, things like that. Also be aware that once they are teeting, especially, they're going to want to chew on stuff.

Be extra careful with the kinds of toys you give them to make sure that is safe for them, to be putting those toys into their mouths. You can also start baby proofing your house at six months of age.

Typically they're not moving a lot yet at this age, but they are starting to roll over and sometimes we'll start wiggling a bit and get across the floor.

So you want to start, baby-proofing anything that's knee level or below, make sure that it's something that safe for them to touch or that there's nothing hanging down that they can pull off.

For example, things like cords hanging, down, that are attached to appliances. They can sometimes pull on those. At nine months of age, you want to have consistent positive discipline with your child.

And by discipline, what I really just mean is a set of rules that you follow. You don't want it, obviously never hit them or hurt them. Yelling at them is never a great idea and try to limit the use of no, but instead use words that are expressive of what they can do.

So things like, If they're, say, reaching for a knife, you say oh, let's give you a spoon instead and you kind of swap it out. Or if they are trying to get themselves into a dangerous space, just redirect them into another space.

I like to have a yes space for them at this age. A lot of times it's a playpen or sometimes it is a room. where basically anything that they are able to get to is something that is safe for them to do.

So a yes space is a place where you're not going to have to say no to them and you are not gonna have take anything away from them. They also like cause and effect toys at this age.

Now, Jack in the Boxes are kind of terrifying, but this is the types of toys that they start to understand at this age. So I know when I was little, they still make this thing, little like Sesame Street characters, where one of them you push a button, one you flip a switch, and things will pop up.

Those kind of cause and effect things. Also books with flaps, they like to see that there's something under there, although they will typically pull it, like rip the flaps off at this age because they don't quite have that control yet, but

that sort of causing effect they love at the stage.

Screen Time and Development

You want to expect them to be exploring their environment at nine months. So again, make sure that anything that they're able to touch is safe. And if you have anything like poisons under the sink or sharp objects in low cabinets in the kitchen, this is the time to move those because they can and will get into anything given enough time.

You should be reading together still at nine months of age and hand them toys that do things like make noise or squeak, you know, when you squeeze them or shake them.

So like rattles, they love that kind of stuff. Even some like musical instruments at 9 months. And then at one year, you want to be using distractions for discipline still.

So again, instead of saying no, we say what they can do instead and just swap out whatever the unsafe thing is for the safe thing. You can start acknowledging good behavior.

Now, we try to limit praise because praise in itself saying just, you know, good job is really it reinforces behavior, but it also makes them become sort of dependent on that praise.

In order to do things. So just acknowledging, just noticing, oh, I see you put your toys away. That's great. Oh, see, your holding this. I. See that you are looking at that.

You just need to acknowledge and they love being noticed. And that's enough and enough praise for them at this age. You can start considering clay groups at 12 months of age.

A lot of times they're not yet interacting with other babies, but they do notice that there are other baby. And sometimes they'll point at them and say, baby, which is really cute to see a baby calling another baby a.

Yeah, they, do like to be around peers at this age, You can also encourage them to feed themselves at a year. Now, a one-year-old is typically eating a full regular diet, just like an adult would be, but just different sized portions and often cut up if they don't have all of their teeth yet, especially if you don t have their molars in yet.

But you can encourage him to feel themselves. They can start to actually use a spoon. A lot of times they will miss with it, you give it to them. And you can also give them a cup to try to drink out of.

And again, a lot of times they will dump it or spill it, but they make a lots of baby cups nowadays that they're able to pick up and drink from without making a big mess.

You can help them start walking by holding onto their hands and walking with them or using toys that roll across the floor when they hold onto them. But remember, there's no advantage to walking early and it's okay to just let them develop that skill on their own.

You should start naming objects that they're pointing to at this age and then also name their emotions like, wow, you are sad. You are frustrated. you're happy.

Then they can start to acknowledge those emotions for themselves. They know like how they are feeling that age. So finishing up with screen time. Now again, officially only video chatting is what's recommended up until age one and a half to two years.

So before that, it is okay to video chat with relatives, but a lot of times babies don't understand that what they're seeing on the screen is not real or not there.

And so sometimes they can actually get really sad trying to reach for that person, you know, wanting to be picked up or touched by them. Sometimes it's helpful for them to see people that they miss.

So you can video chat with your baby at this age. You can show them selfie mode and take photos, but I wouldn't do any more than that. is really not appropriate for them to be holding.

So they really don't need it. They don' need iPads, they don t need any screens at all. There are plenty of toys and things in their environment to keep them entertained.

At 18 months, it is okay to start some educational programs, but you need to be watching with them. So a baby that is sat in front of a TV will pick up about as much as you would just overhearing a conversation in the restaurant.

You might catch some bits of it, you might hear a little bit here and there and understand a bit of here-and-there, But overall you're not as invested as if you were having a one-on-one conversation with someone.

So if you are watching shows with your baby, I would say pause them frequently, talk about the show that you're watching, and limit it to 15 minutes or less.

Some of the educational programs that I actually like for babies, PBS Kids has a great website and also an app on the smart TV where it's all shows that are safe for kids.

And I really love all the PBS kids shows. A lot of them teach really good values and I also teach things like math and other skills. PocoYo is one of my favorite programs that my daughter watched and she actually picked up a lot of words from it.

Pocoyo is P-O-C-0-Y-o and we saw that on Netflix. Also Babybus and Cocomelon are both music programs, that you can find on YouTube, Netflix, most streaming will have one those on it, And those are just typically nursery rhyme songs that your baby can learn.

And if you sing along with it or if talk about it with them, again, they will get more out of it than if just let them sit there. So overall, studies show that babies who have too much screen time tend to be developmentally delayed.

And that's because, again, that just passively hearing those conversations and not being actively engaged in them. But some babies can pick up words from that.

If you want your baby to learn another language, one way to start teaching them another is by letting them watch shows in a different language. Now remember, children of all ages are affected by sounds on the TV.

So anything scary, like any scary music, anything violent, with explosions or loud, sudden noises, will be scary to them and can actually be bad for them in the long run.

Try not to watch anything like that, try not put on a nose when your baby's in a room, and nothing scary or violent. Instead, if you are watching something and your baby happens to be in the room, keep it light and upbeat.

Or, ideally, try to limit screen time entirely and just play with your puppy. So you're your baby's primary entertainment source for the first two years of life.

And I know it feels like a lot of pressure, but also it is OK to give them toys to play with, especially cause and effect toys. I don't like electronic toys, I dont like toys that make noises because typically they only have one function.

You know, you push this button, and you get this sound. Whereas something like a car or a doll or. A handkerchief, you can do so many things with it and they can be so creative with.

That it's actually much better for their development than those electronic fancy toys.

Wrap-Up and Podcast Outro

So I really try to discourage those fancy toy is developmental toys and honestly you'll notice a lot of babies would

rather bang a pot and pan than play with a toy that is fancy and expensive and electronic.

So yes, there are plenty of ways to entertain your baby without screen time. So singing to them, talking with them playing with, them reading to, all of those things.

And if you do need a few minutes to yourself, I get it. You're the primary entertainment source but sometimes you need to recharge as well. So, if you can, maybe keep some preferred toys in their yes space, where you leave them safely, you sit a little bit away from them, but still have an eye on them and let them play kind of on their own and try to entertain themselves for a bit.

So that's all for development. Coming up next, we're gonna go through, back through the checkups and the advice that I give at the next several visits.

And so now babies are being seen every three months. The next few visits will be nine months, 12 months 15 months and 18 months Also, I want to let you know that I am working on a third edition of The Baby Manual that should be coming out soon, and another book which is going to be called The baby manual step-by-step.

That one is gonna go chronologically. It's gonna be a chapter at a time guide where you just need to read one chapter and it goes with whatever age your baby is at and whenever the closest checkup is to your babies age.

I hope this helps. Have a great day and enjoy your Thank you for listening to the Baby Manual podcast. Please hit that subscribe button below so you don't miss the new episodes when they come out.

I would also love it if you could leave me a review. If you'd like to buy a copy of the baby manual, it's on Amazon and Kindle. The author, Dr. Carol Keim, and that's spelled K-E-I-M.

You can also follow me on YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook to get some quick baby tips that will make you feel like an expert. Thanks for