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Towards the first steps of your infant

තෙවන පාඩම  
3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson



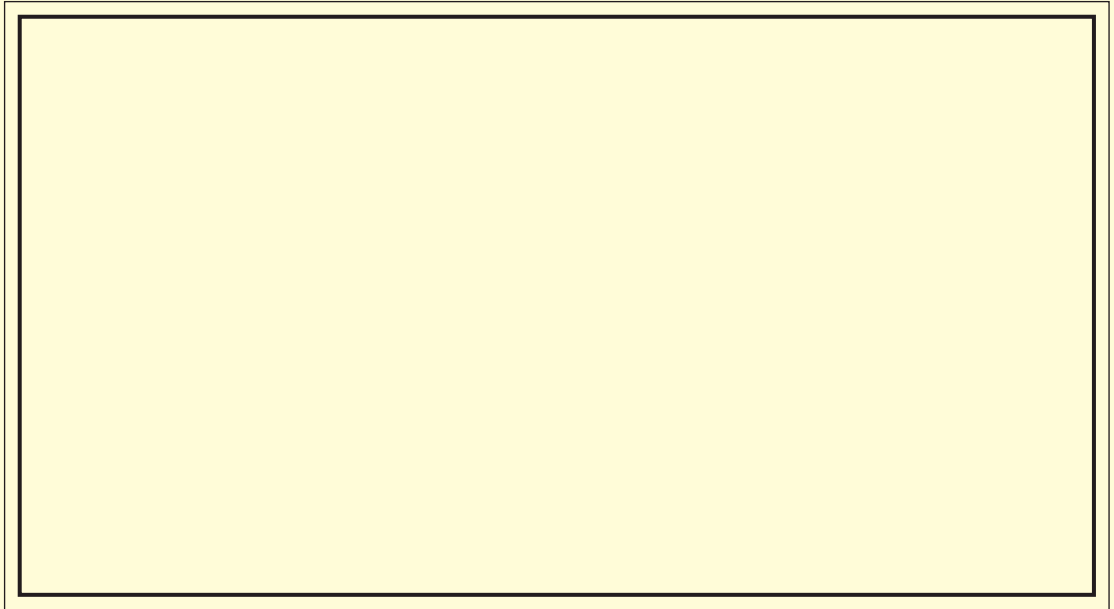
**Towards The First Steps of Your Child**  
**A Specialized Guide on Early Childhood Development**  
by  
**Samanmali P. Sumanasena**

**2018**

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**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**Lesson**

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**Art**

By Mr.Nihal Wijesinghe.

## Instructions to use this book

- The milestones your child is expected to reach within every 3 months are shown in green.

**Activities for you to carry out with your baby, are indicated by numbers.**

### Milestones

- Social and emotional
- Vision and fine motor
- Cognitive
- Language
- Motor

Instructions are grouped under the above sub headings for each age range



## 1. Introduction

**Evidence from research in the field of developmental medicine, shows that, optimum Motor, Cognitive, Language, and Social and Emotional development takes place from 0-3 years.**

**Therefore it is important to expose your infant to the best stimuli during this period to achieve the best developmental potential.**

**This book is for all newborns and infants to achieve the best developmental potential.**

If your infant was exposed to any adverse events during, the pregnancy, during the birth process or after, there is a risk of injury to the developing brain and the neural circuitries. These may result in delays or differences during the mental and physical development of the baby.

This booklet will also take you through a program of infant stimulation that will help your baby to minimize the effect of such adversities. The multidisciplinary staff in the clinic that you will be attending to obtain services will explain and demonstrate how these activities could be carried out to reach the next milestone according to the age of your child.

This booklet will give guidance on simple activities to be carried out within the natural environment of your home in addition to the instructions given by your Occupational, Physical and the Speech and Language Therapist. Continue to carry out all the advices given by the team of professionals providing interventions for your infant together with the instructions of this book.

Ensure you carry out activities mentioned in this booklet at least 10 to 20 minutes every two hours when your infant is awake. Make these activities part of the daily routine of your family. Your interventions should always be adult mediated interactive activities where the child as an active participant. There should never be passive learning

**Research shows that the most rapid neuron (brain cell) development takes place from birth to 3 years of children. Therefore we aim to guide you to achieve the best development of your baby during this optimum period, minimizing any defects or delays in the development of milestones.**

**This book will describe how to achieve those milestones in the Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Cognitive, Social and Emotional and Language domains.**

**Whenever you are feeding your baby or doing activities such as bathing make sure that you carry out the activities described in this book. It should be a joyful and a satisfying learning experience for the baby and you.**

## Some special messages you should always remember

- Your baby is a precious gift you have received. Therefore it is your prime duty to look after your baby with love and care.
- The main aim of this book is to provide you with ideas and suggestions on how to participate at interactive play with the child to ensure the best child - parent social interaction.
- The messages contained within this book will enable you to acquire new knowledge on how to interactively play with your child and to build up skills.
- This book will guide you to incorporate these activities to develop the milestones of your baby by making it part of your daily life routines.

## • Things you should never do

Please do not give any digital screens to your child, including mobile phones, tabs, television or any other form of audio visual stimulants.  
(mobile phones, tabs, television )

Such stimuli are proven to result in delays and deficits in child development according to research.





## • 3rd Lesson

Milestones your baby will reach from 6-12 months. As an infant grows and matures to reach the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday his skills become more complex. To achieve this complexity fine motor, cognitive, language, motor and social emotional domains should converge.

### 1. Social and emotional development

- 1.1. Displays stranger anxiety ( from 8 months )
- 1.2. Prefers certain toys (from 7 months )
- 1.3. Cries when separated from the caregiver (from 10 months)
- 1.4. Shows fear of certain situations or public places ( from 10 months )

### 2. Fine motor development

- 1.1. Moves a toy from hand to hand and takes a toy from hand to mouth (from 6-8 months)
- 1.2. Achieves the ability to hold tiny particles such as rice, using the thumb and the index finger ( from 9-12 months )
- 1.3. Tries to throw objects grasped by the hand ( from 8 -12 months )
- 1.4. Turns pages of a book and looks at pictures with interest (from 10 months )

### 3. Language and communication development

- 1.1. Makes loud responses and engages in play (from 8-12 months)
- 1.2. Child makes sounds in varying pitches (from 6 months)
- 1.3. Shows some understanding in familiar sounds and words (from 7 months onwards)
- 1.4. Tries to call familiar people and objects by name. Only the first syllable of the word is pronounced at times (from 10 months)
- 1.5. Imitates sounds and tries to imitate simple words (from 10 months)

- 1.6. Looks at familiar persons and objects when the names are called (from 6 months )
- 1.7. Tries to express the own needs by combining gestures with verbal expressions ( from 9 months )
- 1.8. Tries to participate in conversations by using many verbal expressions ( from 10 months )
- 1.9. Follows simple verbal commands (from 10 months )
- 1.10. Uses simple words meaningfully. At times may use word approximations ( from 10 months )

#### 4. Cognitive development

- 1.1. Tries to play with toys meaningfully (from 8-10 months)
- 1.2. Develops a sense of object permanence ( from 7-8 months )
- 1.3. Prefers to select toys or persons they like ( from 10-12 months )
- 1.4. Tries to express likes and dislikes by using gestures and verbal utterances ( from 10 -12 months )
- 1.5. Uses some familiar objects meaningfully ( from 10 months )
- 1.6. Shows what she likes by pointing the index finger 852 (from 12 Months)

#### 5. Gross motor development

- 2.1. Comes to sitting position from lying and maintain sitting without support ( from 8 months )
- 2.2. Stands with support ( from 9 months )
- 2.3. Stands without support ( from 12 months )
- 2.4. Walks sideways with support ( from 12 months )

## 1. Social and Emotional Development

### 1.1. Displays stranger Anxiety ( from 8 months )

“I am scared of persons I don't know ”

When the infant comes in contact with strangers they will show fear by clinging on to the caregiver tightly or by crying.

#### • Activities

1. Expose the infant to various environments or persons. Ensure safety of the baby at all times by showing him you are protecting him. Gradually provide opportunities for him to get used to the strangers.
2. Never break the trust of the infant by sudden separation from the regular care giver.



## 1.2. Prefers certain toys ( from 7 months )

“ This is my favorite teddy bear. Whenever I see it I will ask for it ”

### • Activities

1. Show the favorite toys to the infant and ensure the belongingness of those to the baby.
2. Show how to play with those toys by imitating the functional use of the toys. Bring in a variety of play routines, don't repeat the same function at all times.
3. Gradually introduce other types of toys to the infant.



1.3. Cries when separated from the care giver ( from 10 months )

“I feel very sad when I am separated from my mom”

#### • Activities

1. Try to keep the infant with a familiar adult when the mother/ main caregiver needs to attend to a task away from the infant.
2. Explain in simple language that the mother/main caregiver will return soon.
3. Engage the infant in a favorite play routine to make her forget about

1.4. Shows fear of certain situations or public places (from 10 months)

“I am afraid to go to certain places ”

Certain places may be too overwhelming for the infant due to excessive sounds or visuals.

#### • Activities

1. Expose the infant to such environments gradually. Ensure the infant is with most familiar and loving adults at all times. Make sure the infant feels protected at all times.
2. If the infant gets upset in such situations, take her away from this situation at once. You may gradually expose to such places later.

## 2. Fine Motor Development

2.1. Moves a toy from hand to hand and takes a toy from hand to mouth  
( from 6-8 months )

“ When my mom offers me toys, I like to put those in my mouth”

### • Activities

1. Offer toys of various sizes, shapes and textures to encourage the infant to reach from both hands.
2. Offer toys from both sides and various heights to encourage the eye hand coordination and hand movements in all directions.



2.2. Achieves the ability to hold tiny particles such as rice, using the thumb and the index finger ( from 9-12 months )

“ Now I can use my index finger and thumb to pick tiny particles like rice and small toys ”

#### • Activities

1. Offer toys of varying sizes to the infant. Encourage to reach, grasp and transfer from hand to hand.
2. During meal time, offer small food particles in a plate, so the infant will reach for these by using the index finger and thumb. ( particles of bread, hoppers, rice )

Meal time becomes fun with experimenting and the infant will naturally learn hand to mouth activities and independent eating habits.



2.3. Tries to throw objects grasped by the hand ( from 8-12 months )

“ I love to throw things that I grasp in my hand ”

- Activities

1. When the infant grasps an object she will look at it with interest. But soon will lose the interest and throw it away. This is called casting.

Infants cast objects because they learn to release an object they grasp, and also they learn to listen to the sound of a toy that falls down.



**Casting is a natural phenomenon. It is generally advised not to encourage casting by picking up and returning the toy to the infant. When the infant learns the meaningful use of objects they will gradually refrain from casting.**



2.4. Turns pages of a book and looks at pictures with interest  
( from 10 months )

“ Now I can turn pages of a book and I love to look at the pictures ”

#### • Activities

1. Offer books with hard pages to the infant. These should contain colourful and clear pictures.



2. Use your index finger to point at the pictures and relate simple stories. Attract the baby by making faces and acting the story while expressing the words and phrases in clear simple language.

3. Encourage the baby to respond by imitating actions and sounds relevant to the story.

Eg : who is this ?

It is a ba-by.

The baby is smiling.

Encourage the responses by gestures or sounds

## 2. Language Development

3.1. Makes loud responses and engages in play (from 8 to 12 months)

“ I like to imitate sounds that others make and play with them ”

### • Activities

1. Copy the sounds that the baby makes responsively and pretend to have a conversation by gradually bringing in a variety of sounds.
2. Expose the baby to various animal and other noises in the environment and show where these come from. Encourage to copy.

Eg :      there is a dog  
            It says “bow wow”



### 3.2. Makes sounds in varying pitches ( from 6 months )

“ I like to shout out sounds of varying loudness ”

#### • Activities

1. Speak to the infant by using sounds in varying sound intensities and pitch.
2. Sing rhymes together with the child and introduce specific actions for these.

Eg : “Clap clap clap your hands”  
“This is the way an elephant moves his trunk”

3. Read stories with colourful pictures, describe by using attractive actions and language. Get the infant to engage with you during story telling by responding with sounds and actions.



3.3. Shows some understanding in familiar sounds and words  
(from 7 months onwards)

“ Now I understand the meaning of familiar sounds and words ”

• Activities

1. Expose the infant to various sounds and noises.

Eg : Train – Chook chook  
Dog – Bow wow  
Car – vroom vroom



2. Introduce family members to the infant. Give him instructions to do specific activities with them so he will understand that each family member has a specific name.

Eg : give a hug to mom  
Say bye to dad

3.4. Tries to call familiar people and objects by name. Only the first syllable of the word is pronounced at times ( from 10 months )

“ I try my best to call my family members and name my toys using words. Sometimes I struggle to say the words, but at least I use parts of the words ”

#### • Activities

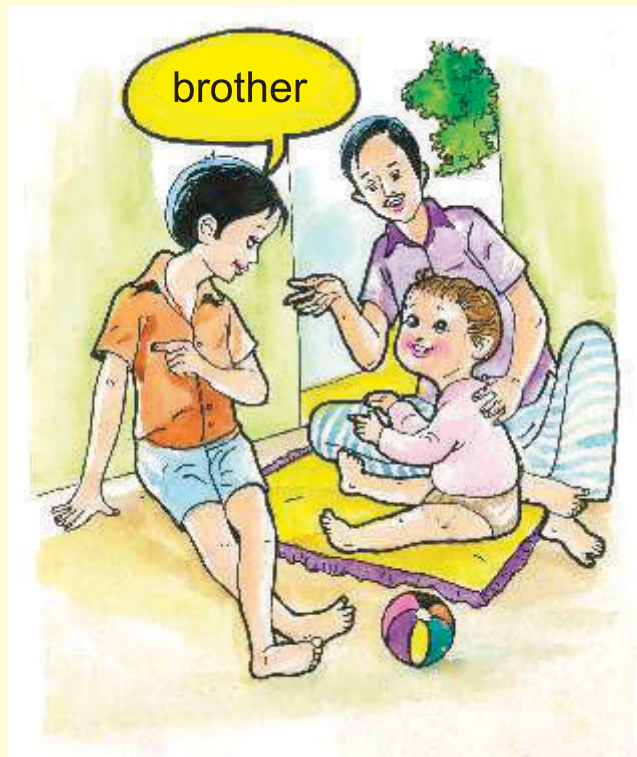
1. Introduce familiar persons and objects to the infant. When the infant tries to initiate the words, slowly and clearly pronounce words. Be in front of the baby so that she could see your lips move.

Eg : da-da – to call daddy

Ba-ba – to ask for the ball

Gi-gi – to request by saying give

2. Read story books to the infant. Show pictures and name people and objects.



### 3.5. Imitates sounds and tries to imitate simple words ( from 10 months )

“I can imitate the sounds I hear”

#### • Activities

1. Use simple words with the baby always. Make the infant aware of the meanings of the word. The infant will be motivated to imitate the words if you repeat the words frequently.
2. Repeat the words that the infant utters. Always expand on what he says to make it meaningful.



3.6. Looks at familiar persons and objects when the names are called (from 6 months)

“Because I understand the words my mom says, I turn towards the person or the object she names”

#### • Activities

1. Introduce objects and people by pointing at them. Use simple, clear words for the infant to understand the meaning. When the infant gives attention to the adult and what is shown, reintroduce the word with the functional meaning.

Eg : body parts and objects you use on a daily basis can be introduced in this way

Eg : **Spoon**, this is the spoon you eat with.  
**Mouth**, open your mouth to eat.



2. It is more appropriate to use several sensory inputs to introduce objects.

If you want to introduce the word “banana” (listen), show the banana first (visual). Let him touch (touch) it and feed (smell & taste) the banana. Let your child listen, see, touch, smell and taste to get the best experience about the word you plan to introduce.

3.7. Tries to express the own needs by combining gestures and verbal expressions ( from 9 months )

“ When I need to get something I show it with gestures and try to make sounds ”

• Activities

1. When the infant tries to express his needs through gestures or verbal expressions, complete the phrases and provide what he requests for.

Eg : Baby : Gi..... Ba.....

Mother : Give Ball, you want the ball, here is the ball

2. When the infant requests for an object, give an opportunity to choose. Show two toys at the eye level and ask child what he wants. If the child uses word approximations, clearly pronounce the complete word and offer what she asks for.

Eg : “Do you want the teddy or the flower” The child points to the flower.

“It is the flower, you get the flower”





3.8. Tries to participate in conversations by using many verbal expressions  
( from 10 months )

“I try to converse with others”

• Activities

1. Use simple sentences to begin a simple conversation with the child. Give adequate time for the infant to respond. Continue the conversation based on the responses of the infant. These may be gestures, expressions, words or phrases.

Eg : Baby : Gi..... Ba.....

Mother : Give Ball, you want the ball, here is the ball

Ba – ba

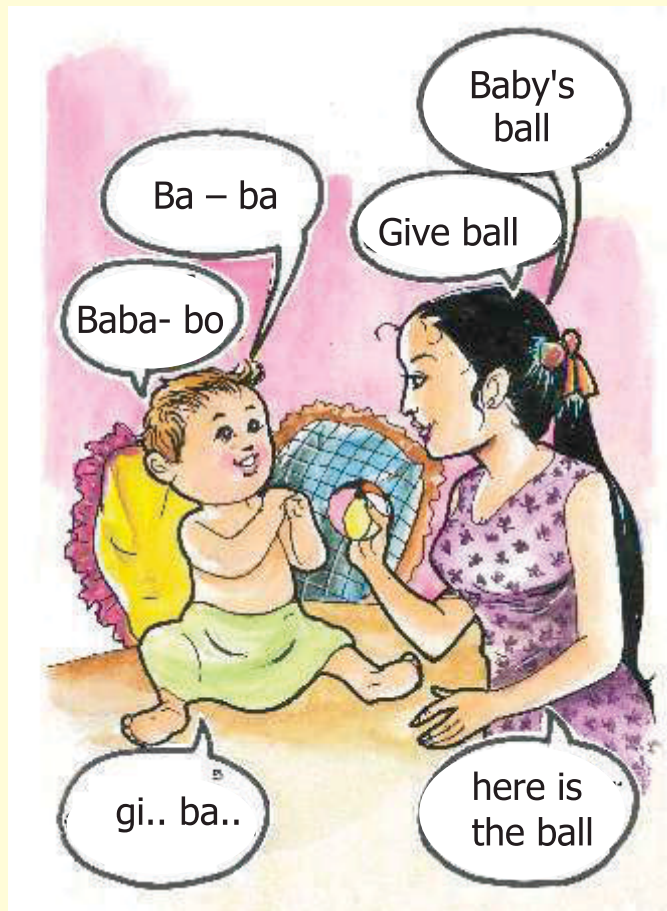
Ball

Baby's ball

Give ball

Ba- ba

Baba- bo



### 3.9. Follows simple verbal commands ( from 10 months )

“I can understand simple words and sentences.  
Now I can respond to those”

#### • Activities

1. Give simple instructions during daily activities to the infant. Encourage the baby to follow these instructions.

Eg : while making tea, instruct the infant to show his cup.

During doll play, instruct infant to feed or bath the doll.

While bathing the infant ask him to give his foot, “ lets apply soap on your feet ”



2. Sing simplerhymes and songs and encourage the infant to join verbally.

Eg : Mom : hickory dickory

Baby : Dock

Mom : the mouse ran up the

Baby : clock

3. The infant is able to identify body parts according to functional value.

Eg : where is the mouth you eat with ?

3.10. Uses simple words meaningfully. At times may use word approximations ( from 10 months )

“Now I know how to use words”

• Activities

1. Now the infant can put all the above skills together and express his needs by using words or word approximations.

Eg : while playing doll she may express  
“baby sleeping”



## 4. Cognitive Development

4.1. Tries to play with toys meaningfully ( from 8-10 months )

“Now I can select toys and play meaningfully with those”

### • Activities

1. Show how to use a toy appropriately when you offer the toy.  
Eg : pressing a button will pop up a character
2. Demonstrate the functional value of toys clearly.  
Eg : “ this is a comb lets' comb your hair ”



4.2. Develops a sense of object permanence (from 7-8 months)

“I know my mother hid a toy”

• Activities

1. Play hide and seek with your infant, hide toys and encourage the infant to search for those.
2. When a toy drops on the floor encourage the infant to look for that.
3. The infant is now aware that his mother or any other favourite adult will return to him when they go out.



4.3. Prefers to select toys or persons they like ( from 10-12 months )

“I like to choose my favorite toys and play with the adults I like most”

#### • Activities

1. During this stage the infant will get upset in unknown situations and when exposed to new people. Therefore take the child to various places and introduce more people. Then the infant will start liking more people and places.
2. Encourage the infant to differentiate new environments from familiar ones.
3. Encourage the infant to discriminate between known and unknown persons.



4.4. Tries to express likes and dislikes by using gestures and verbal utterances ( from 10 -12 months )

“I can express what I like by gestures and words now ”

• Activities

1. Give opportunities for the infant to express his choices on what he wants.

Eg :what shirt do you like to wear today ? this or that ?

2. When offering a toy, ask for a choice rather than giving a single toy to the child.



4.5. Uses some familiar objects meaningfully ( from 10 months )

“Now I know how and when to use familiar toys and objects”

- Activities

1. Participation at play activities depicting functional situations will reinforce the infant's awareness on the functional value of a toy.

Eg : Doll play, play house, marketing are some examples.

2. During daily activities demonstrate how objects are used and introduce functional words and activities.

Eg : comb : combing the hair, spoon : feeding , cup : drinking



4.6. Shows what she likes by pointing the index finger ( from 10 months )

“Now I can point with my index finger and show what I know or what I want”

• Activities

1. Read story books together with the infant and point your index finger to show pictures and explain. Ask questions from the baby to encourage him to show by pointing.



2. When the infant is requesting for toys or anything else, encourage him to choose what he wants by pointing at it.

## 5. Motor Skills Development

5.1. Comes to sitting position from lying and maintains sitting without support ( from 8 months )

“Now I can sit without support”

### • Activities

1. Sit the child on a mat and play with the child often.
2. Keep the toys on the mat around him. He will then try to reach for those by maintaining his balance and posture and will also turn to the sides while sitting to reach those toys.



## 5.2. Stands with support ( from 9 months )

"I can hold on to furniture and standup

### • Activities

1. When the infant is in the cot, offer toys from the top edge of the railing, so that the infant will attempt to hold on to this and stand up.



2. While the child is playing on the floor, offer a few toys on a chair or a table at a height where she could reach. Encourage the infant to reach for those toys by holding on to the furniture and pulling up to stand.
3. Encourage the infant to crawl.  
Eg : crawling up the stairs.
4. Place a toy on the furniture. Encourage the infant to reach for it by crawling and then pulling to stand. Then let him hold on to the furniture and stand with support and play with those.



### 5.3. Stands without support ( from 12 months )

“Now I can stand by myself without support”

#### • Activities

1. Encourage the infant to use cars and tricycles which can be propelled by self.



- 2.



#### 5.4. Walks sideways with support ( from 12 months )

“I try to cruise round by holding on to furniture ”

##### • Activities

1. Carry out activities for motor skills development as previously explained.
2. Place toys on furniture and encourage the child to hold on to those and walk around.



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Towards the first steps of your infant



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