



Baby Talk: Resources to Support the People Who Work with Infants and Toddlers

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State of Babies Yearbook: 2019

Are you interested in how babies in your state are doing? In other states? Check out the State of Babies Yearbook: 2019 which compares national and state-by-state data on the well-being of infants and toddlers. Access or download the yearbook at https://stateofbabies.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/State-of-Babies-Yearbook_full-digital-yearbook_5.14.19.pdf

Gender Specific Toys: Is There A Downside?

Dolls for girls and trucks for boys? It's no secret that many toy makers and parents encourage gendered play. But a new study suggests children may actually learn more when they play with STEM toys designed for the opposite sex. Read more or watch a video at <https://positiveparentingnews.org/news-reports/gender-specific-toys-is-there-a-downside/>

Advantages of Being Bilingual

Babies born into bilingual homes change the focus of their attention more quickly and more frequently than babies in homes where only one language is spoken, according to new research. When infants were looking at a picture and a new picture appeared on the screen, infants from bilingual homes were 33% faster at redirecting their attention toward the new picture. Read more about this and other findings at <https://aru.ac.uk/news/babies-from-bilingual-homes-switch-attention-faster> or <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/02/200225221348.htm>

Father Involvement: Passed Down Across Generations?

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than one in four children live without a father in the home. Research shows children with involved dads do better in school, are less likely to deal drugs, and have better emotional well-being. Now a new study sheds some light on how father involvement impacts kids from generation to generation. Read more or watch a video at <https://positiveparentingnews.org/news-reports/father-involvement-passed-down-across-generations/>

Babies Mimic the Music They Hear

Researchers and families have long known that babies learn to speak by mimicking the words they hear. But a new study shows that babies also might try to imitate the singing they hear in songs. As part of the study, scientists captured audio of a 15-month-old boy making sounds similar to the beginning of the song "Happy Birthday," hours after he heard the song played on a toy. An analysis of the sounds showed the boy hitting the first six notes of "Happy Birthday" almost spot-on. While the social aspect of music is important, these findings also point out the importance of music as a way to learn and remember. Read more at <https://news.osu.edu/babies-mimic-songs-study-finds/>

Adverse Events During First Years of Life May Have Greatest Effect on Future Mental Health

A Massachusetts General Hospital study has found evidence that children under 3 years old are the most vulnerable to the effects of adversity -- experiences including poverty, family and financial instability, and abuse -- on their epigenetic profiles, chemical tags that alter gene expression and may have consequences for future mental health. Their report finds that the timing of adverse experiences has more powerful effects than the number of such experiences or whether they took place recently. Read more <https://www.massgeneral.org/news/press-release/adverse-events-during-first-years-of-life-may-have-greatest-effect-on-future-mental-health>

Baby Talk is a free, one-way listserv that is distributed monthly. Each issue features high quality, readily available, and free resources. To join the listserv, send an email with no message or signature block to subscribe-babytalk@listserv.unc.edu

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