

CAN MY BABY SEE?

Yes, at birth your baby can see. When you first lift your newborn to come face to face, his eyes will open and search your face, almost saying, *"Is it really you?"* He knows you already, but now you will have new opportunities for communication.

At first he will probably only be able to look at you for short periods. You may notice that he will look at you intently, and then look away for a time. If you pay attention you will notice that his attention span will increase in the weeks to come.



WHAT CAN MY BABY SEE?

Your baby can focus on objects **8-14 inches** away from her – just about the distance between her eyes and the face of whoever is feeding or holding her.

More than any other object, **your face** holds a very special attraction for your newborn baby.

Your baby also enjoys gazing at objects with sharply **defined outlines** and bold **contrasting colors**, such as books and toys in black and white.

Movement or change in her surroundings will also capture her attention, such as curtains fluttering in a window.

Your baby is best able to focus when she is **quiet and alert**.

A reflex that presents itself from birth is called **tonic neck reflex** or "fencer's pose." When a baby is on his back, his head will usually turn to one side. The arm on the face side extends and the other arm flexes near the face in a fencing position.

You can take advantage of this reflex by providing stimulating objects for your baby to look at on the **sides** of the crib or diaper changing location. Prop open a colorful picture book or other contrasting color toy, such as a checkerboard. Your baby will love to "study" it!



BABY'S ART BOOK

Babies can discriminate patterns from the time they are very young. To get the attention of your newborn, patterns should be of sharply contrasting colors. **Black on white** is the most extreme contrast. Your baby will enjoy "studying" these pictures from the earliest weeks, but especially between the ages of six and eight weeks.



MATERIALS

five pieces of poster board cut 5 ½" by 7"
black sticky dots
black and white patterned contact paper
black marker
yarn
hole punch
scissors
glue

1. Using the hole punch, punch two holes in the short side of each poster board piece, making sure the holes line up in all five pieces. Tie the yarn loosely through the holes to make a book.
2. Create pages using designs with the black marker (face, spiral, stripes, checks), black sticky dots and black and white contact paper. Use the black marker to write a title on the front.
3. Hold the book about 10 inches from baby's face for him to gaze at, or prop it against the side of the crib.

PATTERNS FOR BABY'S ART BOOK

