

*Especially for practitioners working with infants!*

# Infant Cooing Activities

*Vocalizing and Listening*

## What is the practice?

This practice guide includes ways to get infants to vocalize more to their parents, caregivers, and others. Listen for cooing sounds like ah, ooh, eee, uh, and ah-ee. Infants who learn to use cooing to communicate are able to start and continue interactions and play with other people.



## What does the practice look like?

Increasing infant vocalizations is best done during face-to-face interactions between the baby and yourself. Any kind of play episode is likely to encourage infant vocalizations. The practice simply involves repeating or imitating the sounds the infant makes. It will not take long for the child to learn that any time he vocalizes to you, you respond by repeating what he said.



## How do you do the practice?

Following these simple steps will most likely get the infant to vocalize more and more.

- Start by placing the child in a comfortable position. Very young infants often like lying on their backs or being held in your lap, looking up at you.
- Talk to the infant while gently tickling his tummy or neck. Sometimes, touching the infant's mouth with light pats will get him to make sounds.
- Anytime the infant makes a sound, imitate what he says. At first, the sound you repeat should match or be about the same as the sound he makes. It is best to wait until the child is finished "talking" before imitating his sounds.
- Every once in a while, vary the sounds you use to imitate or repeat what the infant has said. If he says "ah," you might say "ah goo." Adding variation to the infant's sounds is likely to capture his interest.
- Be sure to show the infant that the sound play is fun. Smile, laugh, and show that you are excited. If you are enjoying the game, he will likely show the same enjoyment.

## How do you know the practice worked?

- Does the infant vocalize more often when he sees a game partner?
- Is the infant using different kinds of cooing sounds?
- Does the infant get more and more excited while playing sound games?

## Take a look at more infant cooing activities

### After-Nap Cooing Game

Seven-month-old Tyler lies in his crib after waking up from a nap. He makes his favorite babbling sounds and tries to make new sounds. His repertoire now includes ah, ah-ha, eee, ooh, and ohh-goo. Tyler is also trying to make sounds like blowing raspberries. His caregiver, Miriam, waits until he is “talking away” before going to pick him up. Before Tyler can see her, Miriam repeats whatever sounds he happens to be making. This is a game that Tyler and Miriam have been playing for some time. Tyler smiles and laughs whenever he hears her voice. She moves into Tyler’s line of vision and says, “You hear Miriam, don’t you?” This gets him to make even more sounds, which Miriam repeats. Then she says something just a little different to get him to repeat the new sound. He does not always get it just right, but he clearly loves this exchange.



### Time To Play

Four-month-old Alexis knows that it is “time to play” whenever her father places her on her back on a favorite blanket. Her home visitor gives Dad some ideas about how to talk to Alexis to get her to respond. Alexis’s father starts a game of vocal play by asking, “Is my little girl going to talk to her daddy?” This gets Alexis to start making different cooing sounds. As Alexis’s home visitor suggests, each time she makes a cooing sound, her dad waits for her to finish. Dad then repeats the sounds to Alexis’s delight. Dad has learned that imitating his daughter’s sounds gets her to “talk” more and more to him.

### Turning Up the Volume

It is sometimes hard for 9-month-old Cindy to make sounds loud enough for her mother to hear. Cindy’s early interventionist has helped her mom find a simple way for Cindy “to be heard.” They use a child’s microphone and amplifier to “turn up the volume.” The first time Cindy heard her own cooing sounds loud and clear she was startled. But now she starts “talking” whenever Mom brings out the microphone. Mom imitates Cindy and sometimes makes other sounds for Cindy to hear as they go back and forth “talking” to each other. Cindy is now able to make louder sounds since she has started her own version of karaoke!



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# Infant Babbling Activities

*Vocalizing and Listening*

Not long after infants have learned to produce lots of cooing sounds, they start to experiment with babbling sounds. Babbling includes the production of the same consonants over and over (ba-ba-ba, da-da-da, ga-ga-ga, ma-ma-ma-ma). As infants become good at babbling, they often experiment with putting combinations of sounds together (da-ga-ba, ba-mi-ma).

## What is the practice?

This practice simply involves imitating and repeating an infant's babbling sounds as part of interacting and playing with a child. Soon the child will realize that she can get you to be responsive to what she is saying. Once this happens, you can respond to her babbling by varying the sounds she makes. This will capture her interest and get her to try different sounds.

## What does the practice look like?

A caregiver has a little girl seated on her lap facing her. The caregiver is holding onto the child's hand and asks "How is my little girl doing today? Can you say hello?" Anytime the little girl makes a babbling sound or any other kind of sound, the caregiver repeats it. She then waits to see what the girl will do and say. They go back and forth talking to each other. Every once in a while the caregiver changes how she responds to see what the child will do. When the caregiver's response is different, the little girl looks intently at her and tries to make the new sounds.



## How do you do the practice?

Here are some simple things you can try to get children in your care to babble more and more. You can also try to get them to make different babbling sounds.

- Encouraging the child to babble and "talk to you" is more likely to happen during face-to-face interactions between you and the child.
- Vocal play activities should be ones that the child enjoys and finds interesting. The idea is to create a situation where vocalizing occurs naturally.
- Any time the child makes a babbling sound or any other kind of sound, imitate what she says.
- As part of vocal play, use a babbling sound that the child already makes to see if she will repeat the sound.
- Lap games and vocal play activities generally work best.
- Every once in a while, introduce new babbling sounds into the play activity and watch to see what the child does. Imitate what she says and then repeat the new sound she has made.
- Make the activity as fun and enjoyable as possible. The more the child sees that you are excited, the more she will likely be the same.

## How do you know the practice worked?

- Does the child repeat the sounds that you imitate?
- Does the child try to make different babbling sounds?
- Does the child use babbling sounds to get your attention?

## Take a look at more fun babbling activities

### *Puppets and Papa*

Eight-month-old Taylor and her father are playing together on the floor with her favorite toys and stuffed animals. Shira, Taylor's home visitor, encourages Dad to describe what Taylor is doing. He engages Taylor in "conversations" about all that is going on even though Taylor is too young to understand all the words. Dad uses animal sounds like baa-baa and moo-moo as part of playing with toy animals. He then asks Taylor to say the sounds. She tries her best to repeat what her dad said. No matter what she says (e.g., me-me for moo-moo), her father repeats the sounds, which gets Taylor to "say it again." These little exchanges have become a favorite activity for Taylor who watches, listens, and tries to repeat the sounds her dad says.



### *Babbling Back and Forth*

It has been a couple of months since Riley has learned to say da-da, ga-ga, ba-ba, and other babbling sounds. Riley loves to just lie in her crib after waking up from a nap at child care. During this time she goes through everything she can say over and over! Her teacher, Pilar, plays a sound game with her when she picks Riley up. Pilar looks at Riley and asks, "Has Riley been talking again? What have you been saying?" This gets Riley excited and she starts babbling again. Pilar repeats the sounds while talking to and describing what Riley is doing. ("You are so good at saying ba-ba. Say ba-ba again!") After about three or four back-and-forth bouts of talking, Pilar asks, "Can you say ga-ga, ga-ga?" Riley tries to repeat what she has heard. She does not always get it right, but she certainly is pleased with her effort.

### *Mouth-Patting Game*

Anton's early interventionist, Hailey, has found some fun ways to help him make babbling sounds as part of games that Anton plays. Anton has difficulties with muscle strength, especially in his facial muscles, which makes it hard for him to make sounds. With Hailey's help, Anton's mom has created some games to provide him with assistance and incentives to babble on! One game they play is Mouth Patting, which involves Mom gently patting Anton's mouth while saying ma-ma-ma or some other babbling sound. This gets her son to make the same or similar sounds each time his mouth is patted. When Mom stops, Anton gets excited and starts moving his lips to tell Mom to "do it again." Anton's mother tries different babbling sounds each time the game is played, and Anton does his best to repeat the sounds.



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# Animal Sound Games

*Vocalizing and Listening*

Infants become familiar with sounds and words by hearing and associating different sounds with people, animals, and objects. This helps get them ready for listening to and understanding spoken language. This practice guide includes some techniques you can use with babies and their families to familiarize them with different sounds.

## What is the practice?

This practice uses the sounds of animals, toys, and other objects to provide children opportunities to hear sounds during adult-child play. The sounds are used to provide feedback in response to the child making any kind of vocalization. For example, when playing with a stuffed bee, make a buzzing sound when the child produces any excited response. The more a child hears the sounds “that go with” different toys and objects, the more she will begin to notice how sounds are similar and different.

## What does the practice look like?

An infant is sitting on his mother's lap. The mother shows her child a stuffed animal and makes the animal sound. The stuffed animal is slowly moved toward the child. The sound of the animal is repeated until it “tickles” the child's tummy or neck. The mother waits until the child vocalizes, smiles, laughs, or shows some indication that he wants to play the game again. The mom repeats the game any time her son vocalizes, smiles, or laughs at her.

## How do you do the practice?

- Start by asking the parent to identify three or four objects or toys that are familiar to the child. Soft toys like favorite stuffed animals often work best.
- Show the child a toy and make the sound associated with the toy. (For example, say “oink, oink” while showing the child a toy pig.)
- Make the toy seem to dance or move. Repeat the animal sound over and over. Move the toy toward the child and touch her with it (pretending to have the pig kiss her, for example). Make it fun!
- Repeat the game, but wait until the child gives some sign that she wants to play again. (For example, if she looks at you and makes a sound—any sound).
- Try different sounds and different toys. Vary where you “tickle” or “kiss” the child to make the game more interesting.



## How do you know the practice worked?

- Does the child get excited and enjoy the game?
- Does the child vocalize more often to get others to continue the game?
- Does the child anticipate having the toy tickle or kiss her?

# Take a look at more fun with animal sounds

## Puppet Power

Four-month-old Joshua especially enjoys seeing animals while out and about with his mother. Mara, his home visitor, has noticed that he listens intently to whatever sounds the animals make. She uses this interest to play sound and word games with Joshua and his mom. They use animal hand puppets to get Joshua to “talk.” He especially likes dog, cat, and cow puppets. Mara has the puppets talk to Joshua, saying things like “You are a big boy. Do you want to play with me?” She watches for a sign or signal that he wants to play with a puppet. Mara starts saying the animal sound as she makes the puppet dance on Joshua’s tummy. She then gives the puppet to Mom who starts having it walk toward Josh’s face. As the puppet gets closer, Mom makes the animal sound a little louder and in a more pronounced and exaggerated way. The game ends by having the puppet pretend to nibble on Josh’s nose. As soon as Mom puts on another puppet, Josh starts making sounds as if he is talking to the puppet.



## Sound Words

Sarah is a caregiver in a class of 6- to 12-month-old infants. She plays a game where she “makes up” sounds for different things the babies like to do. Banging wooden spoons on pots, banging blocks together, and hitting on a drum are a few of the children’s favorite activities. Sarah puts the “noisemakers” on a low shelf within easy reach of the children. Whenever a child begins playing with one, Sarah makes appropriate sounds. She says “Bang-bang” when someone hits the pots, “clank-clank” when they play with blocks, and “boom-boom” when they pound a drum. The children watch Sarah intently as she talks for the toys and they attempt to repeat her sounds. Some of the older children have begun saying the sounds themselves, and for others, while they are playing with the noisemaking toys.

## The Cat’s Meow

Eight-month-old Mandy has a favorite stuffed cat that meows and makes other cat sounds when it is squeezed. She is not able to squeeze the cat herself because she does not have the strength to do so. Her early interventionist helps her mother use the cat to engage Mandy in a game. Mandy makes all kinds of sounds so Mom will squeeze her “kitty-cat” for her. Mom starts the game by asking Mandy, “Where’s the kitty-cat? Is she sleeping?” This gets Mandy excited and she starts making cooing sounds. Mom and the early interventionist know this means Mandy wants to see her cat. Mom brings the stuffed animal into view and asks her daughter to “say ‘hello’ to kitty.” Mandy waves her arms and makes a loud squealing sound. Mom squeezes the cat to make a meow sound. The game continues by Mom asking Mandy different questions. Each time she “answers,” Mom squeezes the cat to make yet another sound.



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# Talking Pointers

 *Vocalizing and Listening*

Early childhood professionals know that it is never too early to have conversations with infants. Talking to very young children introduces them to the world of voices, sounds, and words. This will help them learn how to communicate with others.

## What is the practice?

Babies love to hear the voices of familiar people. Infants become especially attuned to things they hear when talked to in interesting ways. Talking to infants using a combination of adult speech and child-directed speech (“baby talk”) can be especially interesting to infants. “Baby talk” is a form of child-directed speech in which an adult talks to a child in a simplified, exaggerated, and repetitive manner. “Baby talk” can also be called “parentese” or “motherese.” This practice will surely get a child looking and “talking” to you by making all kinds of sounds. Check out the Child-Directed Speech Dictionary practice guide for some other baby talk ideas.



## What does the practice look like?

Opportunities to have conversations with infants happen anytime you and one or more infants in your classroom are together. Imagine holding an infant in your arms, while the infant is looking up at you. You start “talking” to the infant, asking, “You see me, don’t you?” The infant begins to move and gets excited. “You hear me talking to you.” The child gets even more excited. You introduce baby talk into the conversation. You speak in a slow and exaggerated manner when you say, “Does little (child’s name) hear me talking? (Child’s name) is so, soooo cuuute!”

## How do you do the practice?

- The child should be in a comfortable position where you can easily look at each other. Holding him in your arms or laying him face-up stretched out on your legs generally works well.
- Start the conversation by saying anything that gets the infant’s attention (e.g., “How is [child’s name] today?”) If you are about to feed the infant, you can say something like, “It’s time for [child’s name] to eat. Are you hungry?” It is best to use words that make sense in terms of what you and the child are doing together.
- Follow the child’s lead. Watch for signs or signals that tell you he hears or is paying attention to your voice. Some infants get “bright-eyed,” while others move their bodies to show their excitement.
- Begin adding baby talk into the conversation. “(Child’s name) is soooo cuuute. (Child’s name) is such a preeetty baaby!” Speak softly, slowly, and in a manner that exaggerates the sounds in the words.
- Switch back and forth between adult speech and baby talk during the conversation with the child. It will heighten his attention to what is being said and will likely get him more involved.
- Do not worry about the infant understanding what you are saying. The main idea is to get the child involved in the conversation.

## How do you know the practice worked?

- Does the child pay close attention to your face and mouth?
- Does he respond differently to adult speech and baby talk?
- Does he vocalize and get excited as part of the conversation?

## Take a look at more talking pointers

### *Mealtime Chit-Chat*

Six-month-old Zachary is about to be fed his bottle. He knows to expect that his caregiver, Mia, will be talking to him in her funny voice! Mia is holding Zachary in her arms so that they can look at each other. "Is Zach hungry?" she asks. Zachary looks up at Mia while opening his mouth, anticipating the nipple being put in his mouth. Mia continues by saying, "Yum, yum, yum. Zach is eating like a good little boy. He loves his ba-ba doesn't he?" in a high-pitched, sing-song voice. Anytime Mia uses baby talk, Zachary gets bright-eyed and blows bubbles with his milk! The whole feeding episode is filled with a back-and-forth conversation between Zachary and Mia.



### *Appealing 'Baby Talk'*

Brianna's father is putting on her coat for them to go to the store with their home visitor, Asa. "Are we getting ready to go bye-bye?" Asa asks Brianna. Excitement spreads all over her from head to foot! Five-month-old Brianna starts smiling and vocalizing. Asa responds by saying, "We have to go to the store to get Brianna some food for din-din. What should we get?" Brianna looks at her dad and joins in by starting to vocalize. Dad says to her, "You are such a preeetty little girl. Daddy loves you soooo, soooo much" in a high-pitched voice. Brianna loves it when her father talks to her this way. The more animated and exaggerated her dad's voice and expression, the more Brianna talks back.

### *Slow and Silly*

An early interventionist has helped Evan's father figure out a great way to talk to his 7-month old son. Getting Evan to hang on every sound and sign his father makes is especially important because of Evan's hearing impairment. Evan's father talks to him in a high-pitched voice with exaggerated sounds together with big, exaggerated sign language. He does this no matter the activity—during mealtimes, while bathing Evan, while they are playing, or any other time. One of Evan's favorite activities is outdoor play because he has so much fun with his father. Evan's father acts very silly and makes slow, exaggerated mouth movements when he is playing in the yard with Evan. "Up in the tree house!" Evan's father says as he signs up and opens his mouth wide. Evan opens his mouth as much as he can as well. Both father and son are "hooked" on each other's every movement!



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# Mealtime Conversations

 *Vocalizing and Listening*

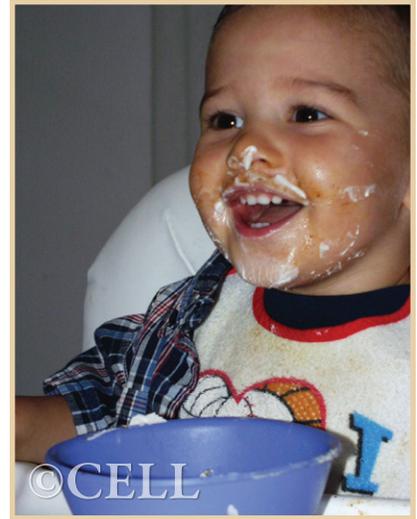
Mealtimes can be especially good for encouraging “conversations” between yourself and young children. This practice guide includes ideas for turning mealtimes into opportunities for children to listen, “talk,” and engage in your turn/my turn interactions and conversations with you.

## What is the practice?

This practice uses mealtimes for talking to infants and encouraging infants to vocalize and gesture to adults. It makes mealtime an enjoyable occasion for listening and communicating. The practice works best when you are feeding the child foods he especially likes. The more relaxing and enjoyable the activity, the more it will be a time for talking and communicating.

## What does the practice look like?

Imagine a hungry infant seated in a highchair or an infant seat. The parent tells the child, “It’s time to eat!” The child gets excited and begins to open his mouth. The parent says, “Do you want some (child’s favorite food)?” The child gets even more excited. The parent feeds the child while saying, “Yum, yum, good.” The back-and-forth flow of the mealtime is filled with lots of talking, vocalizing, gestures, and excitement.



## How do you do the practice?

The whole idea of this practice is to help the child become a conversational partner. Provide the child with opportunities to communicate things like, “I want more,” “I like the food,” and “talk to me some more” in whatever way he can. The ways in which the child communicates and becomes a conversational partner will depend on his age and interests.

- This activity works best when the child is hungry and in a comfortable position. Be attentive to the infant’s signals and signs that he wants to be fed.
- The activity also works best when you and the child are facing each another. Whether the child is in a high chair, an infant seat, or other seating device, it is important that he is comfortable. You may need to prop pillows or towels on either side of him to help him sit upright.
- Talk to the child in short sentences like, “It’s time to eat,” “I have your favorite food,” or “Okay! It’s chow time!” Ask simple questions: “Are you ready to eat?” and “Do you want more (child’s favorite food)?” The idea is to get the child excited about mealtimes and back-and-forth “talking” with you.
- Pay attention to anything the child does to “tell you” he wants more or wants your attention. Respond to any and all things he does to get you to continue the mealtime play and “conversation.” These can be gestures, sounds, or movements.
- Make the conversational exchanges fun and enjoyable. Spark your baby’s interest with feeding games—like using a spoon as an airplane!

## How do you know the practice worked?

- Does the child anticipate being fed by opening his mouth?
- Does he communicate to you by getting excited or reaching out toward the food?
- Does he vocalize to try to get your attention?

# Take a look at more mealtime conversations

## Mealtime Back-and-Forth

If 8-month-old Ashley had her way, she would only eat applesauce! She gets so excited whenever she sees her favorite food that she coos, squeals, and yells with delight. Corrine, her caregiver, knows that this mealtime will have Ashley “talking up a storm.” Corrine tells Ashley, “I have your favorite food! Applesauce!” in an excited manner. Ashley immediately responds by getting excited and by vocalizing as loud as she can. Corrine puts Ashley in her highchair and says, “Open up. Here it comes!” Without hesitation, Ashley is “chomping at the bit” to get her first mouthful. “You like that, don’t you?” Corrine asks. The entire mealtime turns into a back-and-forth exchange between Corrine and Ashley, each playing her part in this delightful conversation.



## Your-Turn/My-Turn

Seven-month-old Nathan will pretty much eat whatever is put in front of him. He will let you know in no uncertain terms that he is hungry! His home visitor suggests that because he likes to eat so much, mealtimes are a good chance to engage Nathan in back-and-forth communication. His father feeds Nathan while his son is in an infant seat sitting on the kitchen table. Dad puts some food on a spoon and begins feeding Nathan. He asks, “Do you like that? Do you want more?” Nathan says “Yes” by waving his arms and making movements with his lips. Dad says, “Let’s try some peaches. What do you think?” Next he asks, “What about some bananas? Is that a yes?” Throughout the meal, Dad always

describes what he is doing. He continues engaging Nathan in conversation by asking questions, as his home visitor suggested. This involves his son in a your-turn/my-turn exchange throughout the meal. It is clear that Nathan not only likes his food but truly enjoys this father-and-son time together.

## Do You Want More?

Nicole has had difficulties taking liquids from a bottle ever since she was born. Mom has gotten advice from an early interventionist, who has helped her increase Nicole’s fluid intake. Mom noticed a while back that Nicole has started looking at her bottle or at her mom while being fed. Mom began experimenting with feeding time to see if she could make it more fun and enjoyable for her daughter. With Nicole nestled in her arms in a feeding position, Mom announces, “It is time for your bottle! Are you ready to eat?” Any time Nicole looks at the bottle or at mom, she puts the nipple in her daughter’s mouth. After about four or five sucks, mom removes the nipple and says, “That was good! Do you want more?” Nicole begins to make sucking movements and mom again puts the nipple in her daughter’s mouth. This has turned into a back-and-forth, your turn/my turn conversation. Nicole has figured out that looking, sucking, and making sounds gets mom to give her more to drink.



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# Child-Directed Speech Dictionary

 *Vocalizing and Listening*

Adults in most parts of the world speak to infants differently than they do others. When talking to babies they use high-pitched and elongated words in an exaggerated manner with lots of facial expressiveness. This kind of speech is called child-directed speech, parentese, motherese, or baby talk. This practice guide dictionary gives examples of some of the more common words used in child-directed speech. Child-directed speech can help the children in your care have an easier time understanding and attending to spoken language.

## What is the practice?

Speaking parentese is a special way of being engaged in conversations with an infant. It will have the child attentively looking at, smiling, and talking back to you. Try talking to an infant in short, repetitive sentences. Change the pitch of your voice and make funny faces. This is about all it will take to get your little ones to learn the joys of conversation. Help the children in your care discover the pleasures of talking, interacting with, and having fun with people. Parentese works best when it is used along with normal adult speech.

## What does the practice look like?

Picture a child lying on her back on a blanket on the floor and her mother leaning over her. The mother starts a conversation by saying, "Helloooo, my sweeeetie. How is my baaaabeeeee today?" She says this while smiling at her daughter and making exaggerated faces. She moves closer and closer to her baby's face while talking. "You are soooo cuuute," Mom coos. "Are you Mama's biiiiiig giirrl?" Encouraging parents to use parentese with their infants is one way to increase and improve talking between baby and parent.



## How do you do the practice?

Here is a list of some of the words and sayings that are often used as part of speaking parentese. However, this is surely not a complete list. Search the Web using **parentese** or **motherese** for other examples of "baby talk."

Baba (bottle)	Jammies (pajamas)
Beddy-bye (go to sleep)	Kissy (kiss)
Blankie (blanket)	Nappy (take a nap)
Boo-boo (bruise or hurt)	Pee-pee (urinate)
Cutie (cute)	Poopy (soiled diaper)
Din-din (dinner)	Sippie (baby cup)
Doo-doo (feces)	Stinky (smelly)
Go bye-bye (leave or go somewhere)	Tee-tee (urinate)
Hiney (buttocks)	Tummy (stomach)
Icky (disgusting)	Uppie (pick up)
Itty-bitty (little or small)	Yucky (disgusting)
	Yum-yum (eat or meal time)

## How do you know the practice worked?

- Does the child look intently at you when you speak parentese?
- Does she smile, laugh, and make noises when you are talking to her?
- Are you using more parentese in addition to standard adult speech?

## Take a look at more speech dictionaries

### Mommy-Daughter Chat

Sam is five months old and loves it when her mom talks to her. Her interventionist, Esme, suggests Sam sit facing her mom on Mom's lap or knees when they are talking. In this position Mom and daughter can see and hear each other clearly. Mom starts a conversation. She asks Sam in a sing-song voice, "How was your day? Did you do fun things?" Sam starts smiling and laughing right away while looking intently at her mother. Mom responds by saying, "You like it soooo much when Mama talks to you! You are my favorite little girl. You are sooo cuuute. You're Mama's sweetie baaabee!" Sam coos and babbles happily. Mom continues the conversation by talking to her daughter and mixing baby talk into the story.



### Game of "Touch"

Andy, eight months old, and his caregiver, Ava, play a game of "Touch." The parentese Ava uses in this game excites Andy every time she changes his diaper. "Where are Andy's piggies? Where are Andy's piggies?" Ava asks. Andy starts kicking his legs in anticipation of his feet being tickled. Ava continues the game by asking, "Does Andy want a kissy? Does he want a kissy on his tumtum?" The more she talks to him, the more Andy seems to know what is coming next. He wiggles his body around, knowing that Ava is about to kiss and blow raspberries on his tummy. Every so often, she uses more exaggerated and expressive baby talk when speaking to Andy. This encourages Andy to initiate more play and signal Ava to continue playing the game.

### Parentese

Lauren is 9 months old and has some visual difficulties. This makes it very important for her to listen closely to all that is going on around her. Lauren's home visitor, Vince, encourages Lauren's parents to make her auditory environment as stimulating as possible. He suggests talking to her about everything that goes on. Each parent has developed a different way of using baby talk with Lauren based on her responses. Her dad uses do-do, icky, pee-you, poo-poo and other parentese each time he changes Lauren's diaper. The fun, exaggerated style of talking encourages Lauren to smile, laugh, and talk back to her dad. Mom uses her set of parentese words during Lauren's mealtimes. Lauren especially likes it when her mother asks, "Do you want din-din or your sippy?" She has learned that reaching for either will have Mom feed her or give her a drink.

