

Especially for parents of infants!

More Infant Fingerplays

Rhymes and Sound Awareness

Baby games combine simple, rhyming phrases with interesting movements. They help infants become familiar with the meanings of sounds and words.

What is the practice?

Simple, repetitive fingerplays introduce infants to the world of rhymes. These delightful games will provide your child opportunities to listen, hear, and learn the sounds in words.

What does the practice look like?

Fingerplays include short rhyming phrases together with movements of the hands or arms to tell the fingerplay "story." The best infant fingerplays are ones that are short and repetitive. They are about things that likely will spark your child's interest.



How do you do the practice?

Here are some fingerplays that will surely delight your child. Search the Web using the term "**infant fingerplays**" for more ideas. Select ones that you think your child will especially like. Try out two or three fingerplays until you find one that really excites your little one.

Baby's Eyes

Blue-eyed babies. (Point to your eye.)
Brown-eyed, too. (Point to your other eye.)
Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake. (Clap your hands.)
I see you. (Cover your eyes and uncover.)

Fe Fi Fo Fum

Fe fi fo fum. (Touch each finger with thumb-one finger per syllable.)
See my fingers. (Hold up four fingers.)
See my thumb. (Hold up thumb.)
Fe fi fo fum. (Touch each finger with thumb again.)
Good-bye fingers. (Close fingers toward palm.)
Good-bye thumb. (Close thumb under fingers.)

Baby's Fingers

These are Baby's fingers. (Touch the baby's fingers.)
These are Baby's toes. (Touch the baby's toes.)
This is Baby's tummy button. (Touch the baby's stomach.)
Round and round it goes! (Gently circle belly button.)

Beehive

Here is the beehive, where are the bees?
(Clench your fist.)
Hidden away where nobody sees.
(Pretend to look inside your fist.)
Open it up and out they fly. (Open fist and bring out fingers quickly one by one.)
One, two, three, four, five, buzzz. (Tickle your child's neck while saying "buzz.")

How do you know the practice worked?

- Does your child look and listen closely?
- Does she get excited during the finger-play?
- Does your child try to do any of the fingerplay movements?

Take a look at babies enjoying fingerplays

Adding to the Fun of “Baby’s Eyes”

It looks like seven-month-old Sophia is going to be a very good listener. Every time her mother does her favorite fingerplay, she becomes bright-eyed, giggles, and laughs. She hangs onto every word her mom says. *Baby’s Eyes* is the fingerplay that Sophia’s mom has changed to make it her special rhyme. While reciting the nursery rhyme, she first points to Sophia’s right eye, then her left eye. She helps her clap her hands together and then covers her face with a cloth. She says, “I see you!” when Sophia removes the cloth from her face. Sophia has started putting the cloth on her own face to get her mom to repeat the game.



“Inch Worm” in the Tub

Christopher, big brother Todd, and their mother are having fun playing at bath time. Mom knows that 11-month-old Chris likes hearing *Inch Worm* (below). She asks Todd to show him a plastic squeeze toy of a worm. This is her way of saying it’s time for the fingerplay. Chris lets her know he wants to play by getting excited and trying to make a squeaking sound. His mother responds by reciting the words to the fingerplay and making all the hand movements.

Inch worm, inch worm, inching along. (Bend index finger and move it up and down.)

Inch worm, inch worm, singing a song. (Cup hand by ear like listening.)

Inch worm, inch worm, before the day ends. (Put hands in circle over head, then drop arms flat to sides.)

Inch worm, inch worm, will you be my friend? (Put hands out, palm up.)

She finishes by letting Todd make the toy worm “nibble” on Chris’ neck. She also says, “Kiss, kiss, the inch worm kisses Chris!”

These Are Baby’s Fingers

Eli’s mother has found a fun way of playing fingerplays with her 9-month-old son who is deaf. She uses sign language together with the words while doing fingerplays. This helps Eli make the connection between the signs, words, and movements. Eli especially likes “*These Are Baby’s Fingers.*” He gets to see the signs and have his body parts tickled while playing the game. He especially likes seeing the sign for round and round. This tells him he is about to have his tummy tickled. Eli tries to use sign language to have his mother repeat the fingerplay.

