

# WELCOME BABY! Newsletter for 10 months

**Dear Parents,**

Have you been practicing saying, “Yes,” to your sweet 10 month old baby? Do you find yourself having to say, “No, no, no,” more often? With every step of crawling, cruising, balancing and reaching, you’ll need to do more child-proofing in your home and especially in the rooms where your baby plays. Safety is so important at this age and it is easy to think that the word, “No!” will work. You may have already discovered that “no” doesn’t work.



Sometimes you might feel really frustrated when you keep saying the same thing again and again and it seems like your baby just doesn’t understand that simple little two-letter word. She seems so smart in all sorts of other ways, why doesn’t she get it when you say, “No!?”

In our 9 month letter we talked about “cause and effect” and what it means to your baby. If he drops his spoon on the floor, he knows you’ll pick it up – so that he can drop it again. It is important to remember that your baby likes things that are predictable, that he can count on and expect. He might not like it when you wash his face after he has eaten and has cereal all over his nose, but he knows you are going to wash his face and hands anyway. He anticipates this by wrinkling up his face, turning his head and pushing away the washcloth. “No, no, no,” he is saying by his actions. And you are saying, “Yes, yes, yes, it is time to wash your face.” Do we have here the beginning of a tiny little power struggle?

What’s a power struggle? We’ve all been in a power struggle some time in our lives. One person says, “Yes, you will.” The other person says, “No, I won’t.” It’s as simple as that, and sometimes a lot more complicated. When we get ready to change baby’s diaper and she kicks and scoots away and we just keep on going as if this were the most serious thing on planet earth we can feel annoyed and almost angry sometimes. Or, we can realize that the busy legs of our “crawler” just can’t stand being held down. We can get ready for the diaper change with a few songs, silly faces, a special toy or a whisper in the ear. How many times a day and night do you change diapers? A lot, and it takes quite a bit of creative work to entertain a busy baby that’s just beginning to seem like a toddler. So how do you say, “Yes,” when you want to scream, “Stay still!”



## YES IS A MAGIC WORD

Perhaps the easiest way to say “yes” is by agreeing with your baby. You are not agreeing that he doesn’t need to have his face washed, you are agreeing that he doesn’t like it. “Yes, yes, yes, I know you don’t like me to wash your face, but I need to do it anyway. There: we are all done. Yeah.” Clap your hands: clap, clap, clap. You smile a big smile, and he knows he can deal with face washing one more time.

**When we say “yes” to our babies we are saying we agree with their feelings, even though we might not agree at all with their actions.** Babies this age are so in love with you; they really want to please you. But getting the face washed after having so much fun playing in the food, isn’t really what they have in mind. Most of the time the meal is over when your baby is just playing with his food. Do you know the hand sign for “all done?” You hold your fingers together in front of you and sort of sweep them out to the side and say, “All done?” It is the opposite of “more” where you put all of your fingers together and tap your two hands (fingers) against each other. **Here is a website where you can learn baby signs:**  
<http://www.lifefprint.com/asl101>

“Yes” is all about letting your baby know that you care about her feelings and desires, it is not about giving her what she wants. She might want to play in the fish tank and you’ll need to distract her quickly. Safety is always a high priority and you’ll want to save your big “No!” for times of real danger. Otherwise, if we just say “no, no, no, no, no” all the time it loses some of its importance. So how does “yes” work when we need to keep our baby safe?

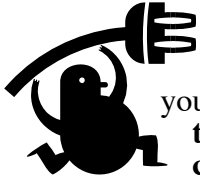
SAFETY



(See a pin and pick it up. All the day you’ll have good luck.)



First, we say to ourselves, “**Yes, I am the best child-proofer in the world!**” And then we get right to work. Crawl around on the floor and look for furniture that your baby could bump his head on. This is a good time to put that coffee table away – especially if it has sharp edges, or fasten a thick blanket over it so your baby won’t hurt himself on the edge. This is the time of “furniture cruising” and a coffee table is a perfect height, but check it out carefully to see if it is really safe. Babies this age can sometimes plop down on their bottoms, but not always. It is easy for them to slip on a toy and all too easily whack their head on the edge of a table as they go down. In a few months you can bring back the coffee table when your baby is more steady. **Check to make sure bookcases are secure against the wall.**



Why do babies love electrical cords so much? Who knows, but they do. You’ll need to get those little **plastic safety plugs for the electrical outlets**. Remember to put them in while your baby is napping or asleep, otherwise she’ll watch you and want to do the job herself. **Babies this age can remember a whole lot especially if they watch you do something. Wrap up cords and tuck them behind furniture so your baby can’t reach them. Do this today.**

Your baby wants to learn from you. If you always wear your seatbelt, you’ll model safety for him as he gets in his car seat. He may still squawk and kick when you try to get him there, but just say, “Yes” with a smile on your face and a miracle will occur, I’m sure of it.

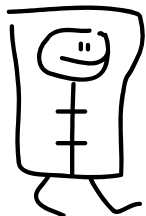
In Skagit County we have great support for **car seat installation**. All you have to do is call and make an appointment, 360-336-3236 or log on to [www.skagitems.com](http://www.skagitems.com) for a schedule of car seat clinics around the county. A trained car-seat technician will check out your car seat and make sure it is installed correctly. Keep your child in a rear facing seat as long as possible. **The rule is for a baby to be one year old, twenty pounds and walking before being in a forward facing seat.**



If you wear your bicycle helmet, guess who’ll also want to wear one eventually? I know one Daddy who has a bright pink helmet with a Hello Kitty sticker on it. He’s such a good sport.

Stay safe for baby!

## WATER SAFETY



There’s nothing quite so much fun as playing in the water, but children need to know that not all water is the same. Some is deep, some is hot, some isn’t safe for drinking. It’s really fun to pour and splash in the tub, but it may not be the same in the highchair. **You will never leave your baby alone in the bathtub, even for a second.** If the phone rings, forget it. You may not want your baby to wear a life jacket in the tub, but you certainly will if you go boating or fishing.

At pools and lakes you’ll want to make sure there are safe places for you and baby. Babies are slippery! And once they start walking, they’ll want to run and they have no sense about what is safe around water. You must stay with them and **watch them constantly**. It might seem like a relaxing thing to go to a pool or the beach, but babies this age need constant care. Plan your event carefully so that you can scoop up baby and go home – if it starts to rain, or there’s too much sun, there’s sand in the tippy cup, or someone has a melt-down because he didn’t get a nap. Yes, you can always try again next week. Keep your expectations small, plan ahead, have a back-up plan and remember, your baby is still less than one year old. Safety first.

Some parents want to take their baby swimming and this can be a lot of fun, but only if your baby likes it. Please talk to your doctor first. You will want to talk to the doctor about the effects of chlorine from the pool on baby’s lungs, especially if your baby was born prematurely or has frequent colds, asthma or wheezing.

[www.medem.com](http://www.medem.com) is a website where you can get good information about your child’s health. You can sign up to receive the “Smart Parents’ Health Source Newsletter” by email. This newsletter also has good information about product recalls.

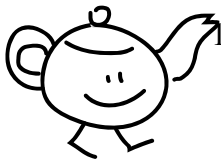


## KITCHEN SAFETY

Once your baby begins to stand and “cruise” around the furniture, you’ll need to make sure the kitchen is safe, especially when you are cooking. Make sure the handles of pots and pans face the back of the stove and there are no electric cords that can be pulled down. When babies are unsteady on their feet, they’ll grab at anything for support. **Babies have no sense about safety at this age; it is up to you to make your house safe.** A baby cannot tell the difference between why it is fun to play peek-a-boo with a tea towel, but not OK to play peek-a-boo with the tablecloth that has plates on it. Remember, the word “No” is not enough. You are the kitchen supervisor.

It won’t be long until you baby learns to climb, and curious babies love to get into whatever you are doing in the kitchen. Hot teapots, toasters, mixers and coffee pots all need to be out of reach and far back on the counter. **Always unplug them when they are not in use.** No one plans to have accidents and most accidents are preventable with good care and supervision. Here’s a nursery rhyme to sing in the kitchen, it can be your safety reminder song:

### Polly Put the Kettle On



1. Polly put the kettle on,  
Kettle on, kettle on.  
Polly put the kettle on,  
We’ll all have tea.

2. Sukey take it off again.  
Sukey take it off again.  
Sukey take it off again,  
They’ve all gone away.



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*There was an Old Man of Dumbree, who taught little owls to drink tea. For he said,  
“To eat mice is not proper or nice,” That amiable Man of Dumbree.*

*There was an Old Man who, when little, fell casually into a kettle; But growing too stout, he could never  
get out – So he passed all his life in that kettle!*

Edward Lear

## PLASTIC SAFETY

Many plastics are made with polyvinyl chloride, also called PVC or vinyl, which can be a hazard to health and the environment. Polycarbonate plastic can also be potentially risky. Here are some suggestions:

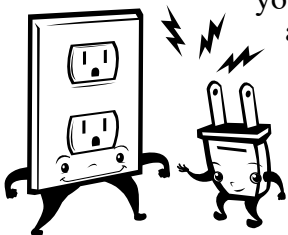
- Microwave food in glass or ceramic containers with no metallic paint. **Do not heat plastic containers or plastic wrap in the microwave.**
- Look at the recycling number on the bottom of the plastic container. The safest plastics for food are numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5.
- Look to see what type of plastic it is when buying baby toys, bibs, teething rings, cling wraps, food containers, and children’s lunch boxes. Baby bottles and water bottles are often made from polycarbonate; try to avoid these. Look for products with labels that say, “No PVC,” “No chlorine” or “No plasticizer.”

Here are some resources for more information: Institute for Children’s Environmental Health:

[www.iceh.org](http://www.iceh.org);

Green Guide: [www.thegreenguide.com](http://www.thegreenguide.com). If you do not have a computer, you may always write to me or call and I can print out articles for you and send them to you in the mail. My email address at Welcome Baby, Skagit County Public Health is: [meredithb@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:meredithb@co.skagit.wa.us).

**Child-proofing your home and keeping your baby safe is something you will do every day.** Keeping young children safe from pets is important, too. Here’s a little rhyme to remind you to keep an eye on your dog, cat and pig; you never know what will happen next.



Higglety, pigglety, pop!  
The dog has eaten the mop.  
The pig’s in a hurry,  
The cat’s in a flurry,  
Higglety, pigglety, pop!



And when baby’s breakfast gets tossed on the floor, say “Yes! I can clean this up again!” and

remember to sing:

**Humpty, Dumpty sat on a wall. Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the King's horses, and all the King's men, cannot put Humpty Dumpty together again.**



Enjoy your beautiful baby and please let me know if you have any questions, I'll be glad to help.

*Meredith Baker, © 2007*

## **REFERENCES**

**The EcoConsumer**, Seattle Times. Tom Watson, project manager for King County's Recycling and Environmental Services. [www.Kcecoconsumer.com](http://www.Kcecoconsumer.com).

**Parent Help 123** - Connecting you and your family to food and health resources: [www.ParentHelp123.org](http://www.ParentHelp123.org).

**HIGGLETY PIGGLETY POP! Or There Must Be More to Life**, by Maurice Sendak, Harper & Row, 1967.

**The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes**, edited by Iona and Peter Opie, Oxford University Press, 1007.

For first-time parents, we have a **Mother-Baby Play Time** (Dads are welcome, too!) every Tuesday afternoon from 2:00 – 4:00. This drop-in group meets in the Family Birth Center Waiting Room, Skagit Valley Hospital in Mount Vernon. Please call for more information, **360-419-3324**.

WELCOME BABY! is a parent support and education program available to families of **all** children, birth to age, three in Skagit County. WELCOME BABY! is sponsored by Skagit County Public Health, Skagit Valley Hospital, Island Hospital, Kiwanis, Rotary, Friends of Welcome Baby & Baby Talk and United Way of Skagit County.

*Best wishes from Friends of Welcome Baby, watch for another newsletter when your baby is 11 months old.*