Sign Language

Using American Sign Language with babies and toddlers can help them to express their needs and wishes before they can communicate verbally. Teaching some basic ASL signs to your baby can help reduce pre-verbal frustration and has been shown to help babies talk sooner. Best of all, using baby signs increases parent-child bonding.

Ideas & Tips

• Start with two to three signs linked to specific objects, such as “eat” and “milk.” The sign for “help” is also useful. Use eye contact and say the word out loud, while signing. Repeat the signs consistently.
• Try these sites for signing resources and tips: signingsavvy.com/learning and startasl.com/baby-sign-language.html
• “Play to Learn” programs, hosted by the Children’s Museum of Tacoma, are held at many Pierce County Library locations. Some sessions are instructed in ASL and English. It is a valuable program for children 6 and under. Program schedules can be found at playtacoma.org/play-to-learn.
• Visit a local park and introduce your baby to a few new signs for things you see together, such as “tree” and “bird.”

More Books

• ABC Baby Signs by Christine Engel
• My First Baby Signs by Phil Conigliaro
• My First Signs by Annie Kubler
• Out for a Walk: Baby’s First Sign Book by Kim Votry
• Where is Baby? A Lift-the-Flap Sign Language Book by Michelle Cryan

Rhyming Fun

We Love You
Mommy, Mommy
(Have an open palm and tap your thumb on your chin)
Daddy, Daddy
(Have an open palm and tap your thumb on your forehead)
Grandma, Grandma
(Have an open palm. Tap your thumb on your chin, and make a double motion away from your face)
Grandpa, Grandpa
(Have an open palm. Tap your thumb on your forehead, and make a double motion)
We Love You!
(Hug the child)