

Welcome to Our Program!



Our Commitment to Your Family

Early Head Start and other programs that serve infants and toddlers offer your child a safe place to learn. We know you are your child's first teacher and want to work with you to care for him. As your partner in your child's education and care, we are dedicated to:

- Valuing your culture, beliefs, and traditions in raising your children.
- Listening to your concerns and share ideas on healthy child development.
- Supporting and encouraging you throughout your child's time in our program.
- Sharing your child's progress in our program through daily reports.
- Helping you find community resources, such as those for food, housing, and medical care.
- Contacting you in case of an emergency. You can help us by keeping your baby's emergency contact phone numbers updated.

Our Commitment to Your Child

We care for your 6-month-old baby by not only ensuring their physical needs are met, but also following to health and safety guidelines, supporting her in meeting milestones, and creating strong bonds between your child and her caregivers. We encourage you to do these things at home, too, and we are always available to answer any questions you may have.

Feeding

At about 6 months, babies are ready for solid foods. Your health care professional can help you identify when your child is ready to try solid foods. Healthy eating habits start early, and we work with your child during the day to get them on the right path. We will work with you to make sure that the way we feed your child in the program is similar to what you do at home.

- You will start new foods at home, one at a time, and for a few days before offering something new. We follow your lead and feed your child the same foods you try at home. We will keep and share records of what your baby is eating and if we notice any reactions.
- We will start using a cup when you let us know you have tried it at home.
- We follow your baby's cues and feed her if she is hungry and stop when she shows us she is full.
- If you have any concerns that your baby might develop food allergies, let us know.

Immunizations (Shots)

Immunizations help your baby stay healthy. Your baby's health care professional should provide routine immunizations based on the recommended schedule. There are many ways that we work with you to support your baby's health.

- We support you in working with your health care professional to ensure your baby gets up to date on all her shots and gets them when she needs them.
- Our program's Health Managers or Health Consultants are readily available to answer your health and medical questions. We can also assist your family in finding a health care professional in your area.
- We can offer you more information. [The Health Tips for Families Series](#) from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness offers valuable information on a variety of health topics.



Healthy Gums and Teeth

Your baby's teeth may begin to come in at this time. You should begin brushing your child's teeth with a soft brush or wipe them with a wet cloth as soon as his first tooth begins to show.

- Tooth decay can develop when liquids or foods other than water are on his gums (or teeth) for long periods. To prevent decay, we gently wipe your baby's gums at least once during the day.

[Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles](#) from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness offers tips for establishing healthy dental routines for your child.



AT HOME TIP!

Use an infant toothbrush or cloth to wipe your baby's gums and any teeth after meals to reduce your baby's risk of tooth decay.

Development

Your baby is increasingly able to use his senses and muscles. At 6 months, your baby may begin to: turn when he hears his name called; reach for toys; hold a toy in one hand and transfer it to the other; enjoy banging a small object on a table; start "talking" by babbling; roll over from his back to his tummy; and help hold his bottle during feeding. Our program is designed to support your baby's learning.

- We provide a safe, clean environment so that your baby can explore, learn, and grow.

- Colorful toys and floor gyms are available to engage him in playing.
- We provide consistent times for play, feedings, and sleep so that he can develop healthy routines.

Remember, each child is unique and develops at his own rate. Talk to us or your health care professional if you have any concerns.



AT HOME TIP!

Start a quiet, soothing bedtime routine to help your baby get to sleep at a regular time each night.

Relationships

As your baby becomes more aware of people around her, she will want to play with you and other familiar adults. Yet, at 6 months, she also may be afraid of adults she does not know. She may get anxious when you leave her at our center.

- We will work with you and your baby to reduce this “separation anxiety” and help her develop healthy relationships.
- We help you ease her into relationships with new people by playing with her, talking with her, and holding her when she seems ready.
- Together we can establish a routine to make drop-off predictable for her. We will discuss ways to support you and your baby regularly and let you know how she’s adjusting.

It is important to give yourself extra time in the morning to say good-bye during drop-off. Remember not to sneak out. Leaving without saying goodbye will confuse her when she discovers you are gone. It can also break her trust in you. Reassure your baby that you will be back to pick her up.



AT HOME TIP!

Talk to your baby. It helps her learn words and understand the world around her.

Staying Healthy

We have high standards for keeping our spaces clean and sanitary to help protect your baby from illness.

- We practice good handwashing throughout the day. You can help us by making sure to wash your and your baby’s hands upon arrival each morning.
- We wash and sanitize all toys, bottles, and pacifiers daily.



AT HOME TIP!

Your child may start moving soon! Get ready by installing door and cabinet locks, safety gates, and other safety equipment. Learn more about creating a safe space for your baby by reading [Injury Prevention Starts at Home](#).

Questions to ask your health care professional at your 6 and 9-month well-child visit:

- What are good activities to do with my baby?
- When should I start brushing my baby’s teeth?
- How do I know when my baby is ready for solid food?
- What can I do to make my home safe for my baby?
- How do I keep my baby safe in the car?
- Use the [Well-Visit Planner](#) to help get organized and learn more about what to expect at your baby’s well-visit! For strategies to keep your baby safe on the road and in the car, read [Keeping Children Safe in Vehicles](#) and explore the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) website .