DENVER DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

3 TO 6 MONTHS

3-6 months

These activities are designed to help your child with the following basic skills:

Love, self-care, and socialization.

Activities to continue:

- Soothe and calm your baby when (s)he is fussy, and respond promptly to cries.
- Smile and talk to your baby often.
- Rock and love your baby, and sometimes sing or rock him or her to sleep.
- Prop your baby up so (s)he can see what goes on around him or her.

Massage – To relax your baby, sometimes gently rub his or her back, arms, or legs.

Bathing – Run a shallow bath of warm (not hot) water. Hold your baby firmly so (s)he will feel secure, and let him or her splash, kick, and enjoy a bath. Never leave your baby alone near water, even shallow water.

Playing Peek-A-Boo – Play "peek-a-boo" with your baby. Hold a magazine or piece of paper between your face and the baby, or peek around the baby's crib or a door. Another way to play this game is to cover your baby's face with a diaper and to say "peek-a-boo" as you remove the diaper. The main thing is to keep the baby from seeing your face for a moment, then have your happy face re-appear suddenly.

Looking in Mirrors – At this age, babies like to look at themselves in mirrors. Let your baby see her- or himself either in a small, mirror that will not break, or in the bathroom mirror.

Working to Get a Toy – Put a favorite toy just out of reach of your baby. Bounce the toy in front of your baby and talk to him or her so (s)he will work to get the toy. Don't keep it out of reach so long that your baby gets upset.

Speech and language.

Activities to continue:

- Talk to your baby often as you dress, feed, or bathe him or her, and imitate cooing, jabbering sounds (s)he makes.
- Continue to let your baby hear many different sounds.
- Provide some quiet time when the radio and TV are not on.

Locating Sounds – Try to get your baby to turn his or her head toward sounds. At first, you may need to gently turn your baby's face toward a sound. Or you may take the baby toward the radio, TV, or telephone from which a sound is coming.

Imitating Speech Sounds – As you talk to your baby, repeat some sounds often and try to get him or her to say them back. "Da-da" and "ma-ma" sounds are usually easy sounds for a baby to imitate, although they do not have any meaning at this age.

REMEMBER:
Talk with your baby — Play with your baby — Enjoy your baby!

Large muscle strength and coordination.

Activities to continue:

- Encourage your baby to raise his or her head and push up on the arms to watch what is happening around him or her.
- Try to get your baby to roll over from stomach to back and from back to stomach.

Bearing Weight – Hold your baby upright under the arms. Slowly lower your baby until his or her feet touch the table, bed, or your lap. Try to get your baby to bounce up and down and take some weight on her or his legs.

Developing Head Control – To make your baby's neck muscles stronger, take his or her hands and wrists when (s)he is lying on his or her back. Slowly pull your baby up into a sitting position. If (s)he has little head control, do not try this again until (s)he has more neck strength.

Sitting – Help your baby sit up alone. Start by having your baby sit in a corner of a couch or chair which prevents falling over. While (s)he is in that position, help your baby hold small toys with the hands. When your baby can sit well propped up, encourage him or her to sit up on a blanket on the floor without back support.

Small muscle and problem-solving skills.

Activities to continue:

- Try to get your baby to follow faces or bright objects with his or her eyes.
- Let your baby feel many different textures.
- Let your baby explore bits of cereal or small crumbs placed on the table in front of him or her.

Looking at Small Objects – Hold your baby on your lap at the table and drop a small object on the table in front of him or her. This can be a small bit of food, such as a pea. You can also roll the object on the table to see if your baby watches it. (Be careful that your baby doesn't put the small object into his or her mouth if (s)he might choke on it.)

Holding On – Put a rattle or other small toy into your baby's hand, and pull on it gently to teach him or her to hold onto things.

Using Both Hands – Put a toy or other object in your baby's hand and see if (s)he changes it to the other hand. Also try to get your baby to hold two objects - one in each hand - at the same time. At first, you may need to place something in one hand and then try to get him or her to pick up a second toy with the hand (s)he uses most often.

Picking Up Small Objects – Help teach your baby to pick up small objects, such as crumbs or small bits of food. (When your baby can do this, be sure to keep pills and other small, harmful things out of your baby's reach.)