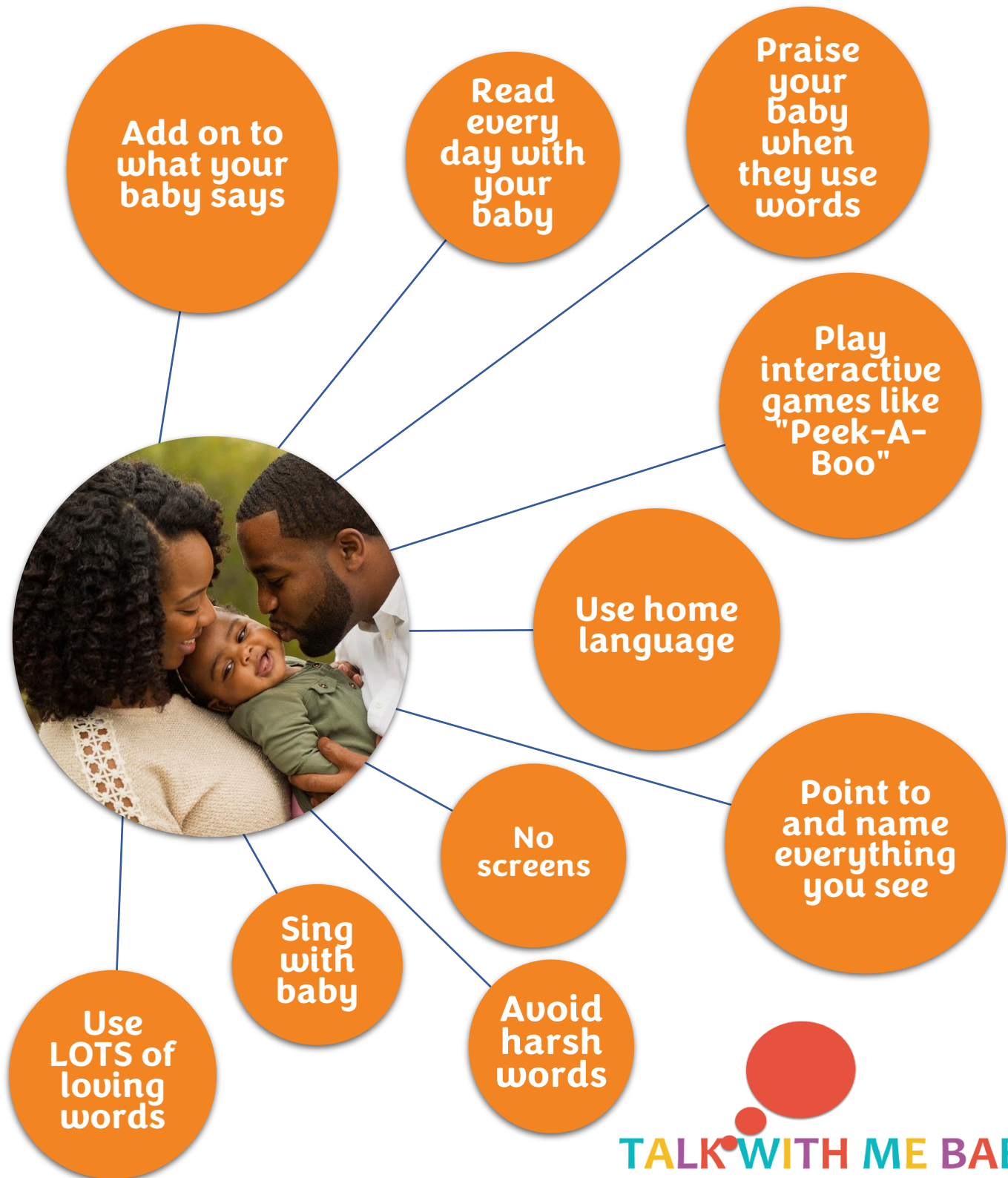


**The SMARTEST babies have parents, caregivers, and family members who:**



# How I Communicate

My brain is like a sponge. I am soaking up our interactions and trying to imitate what I notice from you. I can communicate with intention and make sounds when you interact with me. Talk, Read, Sing and Play with me often! I am starting to pair gestures with sounds and am starting to direct attention to my needs. You can encourage my language development by saying aloud with a short sentence or phrase what you notice me do or say.

# What I Need to Thrive

Learning how to talk is not a passive process. Babies learn language by playing with it. Their mouths have to practice forming sounds and put those sounds together to form words and sentences. They need to imitate you lots of times and they need lots of feedback. To learn language, they need you. When it comes to your baby learning language, no electronic device or app can replace you.

Knowing lots of words will help your child express themselves and prepare them to learn to read. Playtime is a great time let them practice using the sounds of their language and build their vocabulary. Don't be afraid to use big words with your baby. You can 'Lift Language' by using real words and complete sentence and by pairing more advanced words with words they already know. When they drop the ball, you can say something like 'Oh! You dropped the ball. The ball fell to the ground when you released it.'

As with learning anything new, your baby needs lots of repetition. Remember to use new words many times and in different contexts. 'Can you let go of your sock, please? Can you release it?'

At 12 months, your baby is may have said their first word or two, but continues to use lots of nonverbal communication, like gestures and head movements. They may even pair gestures with sounds and words to direct others and reinforce what they are wanting to communicate.

Serve and return conversations (back and forth) will sound and feel a little different as your baby starts to communicate with sounds and words.

Continue to use the **TALK** strategy to have brain-building conversations with your baby.

**T - Tune In.** Follow their lead and engage in conversations around their interests.

**A - Ask Questions.** Use questions and pause to prompt them to respond.

**L - Lift Language.** Help them learn new words and how to say them by repeating the full word they are attempting. When they point to a dog and say 'Dah. Dah', lift their language by saying, 'Yes. That is a dog. What is the dog doing?'

**K - Keep It Going.** Learning to take turns is important in many parts of life, like conversations and playing. Slowly increase the number of back-and-forths in your conversations with your baby to help them learn this important skill. You can also encourage turn-taking with turn-taking play, such as taking turns sorting blocks or making animal sounds.



## SELECTED RESOURCES FOR 9-12 Months

To check out all the resources in the Sesame Workshop about learning language, click [here](#).

### Article

## Tips for Shared Reading with Children Birth to Three

Language and Literacy Reading

Tips for using reading time to bond with your child and build their language and literacy skills.

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For tips for using reading time to bond with your child and build their language and literacy skills, click [here](#).

### Video

## Sharing Books Together

Language and Literacy Reading Baby (0-1) Toddler (1-3) Preschooler (3-5)

Kindergarten (5-6) Under 5 min

Explore books with your child to encourage language development.

Watch Video

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This instructional video and follow up activities for parents & caregivers gives insightful tips on how to best share books with young children. To view the video, click [here](#).

### Article

## Language On the Go

Learning Through Routines Language and Literacy Baby (0-1) Toddler (1-3)

Preschooler (3-5) Kindergarten (5-6)

Use these tips to build language skills while you're on the go.

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To learn 5 strategies for language building on the go, check out this brief article by clicking [here](#).