

CREATING CONNECTIONS

Talking, reading and singing to your baby

Babies begin to hear from week 22 of pregnancy and will very quickly learn to recognise their parents' voices. Although it may seem quite early to begin talking to your baby it's never too soon to start. Talking, reading quietly and singing softly to your baby, in the neonatal unit, can help both you and your baby.

Hearing your voice will be comforting and will help your baby to feel calm, and know that you are with them.

Chat to your baby about anything! Tell them what you have done today or are going to do tomorrow. Tell them about your home, and people and pets in the family who are waiting to meet them.

Families often enjoy reading picture books to their baby on the neonatal unit, and these stories can become much loved favourites.



You can talk, sing and read in your preferred language.

Older brothers and sisters can talk, sing and read to baby too. This can help to involve them in your baby's care.

Reading to your baby may be easier for you than thinking of things to say. You can read anything, including children's books, magazine stories, or your favourite book.

Try singing favourite songs softly to your baby.



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Reading and singing can become something special and personal. This may help to distract you from worries, help you feel calmer and reduce stress.

You can chat to your baby about what you can see in photographs on your phone too.

Although listening to you talk, read and sing can be very calming for your baby, listening for a long time can be hard work. So watch out for signs that your baby needs some quiet time: crying, yawning, stretched fingers, and faster breathing.

Neonatal Units often have a supply of children's picture books, including some without words. Ask if there are any books available for you to read to your baby.

You can repeat the same stories. Babies love repetition and hearing the words again helps them learn.



Your baby learns words by listening to you. This helps them with learning both now and in the future.

Keep talking, singing and reading books to your baby once you go home - these moments are special.

