



# IS YOUR BABY READY?<sup>TM</sup>...



## *to Communicate*



### Communication Begins Long Before Words

Babies communicate from day one. Every movement, sound, look, and gesture is a message. Understanding these early cues helps you support connection, bonding, and development.

### Look For These Early Communication Readiness Signs:

#### 1. ENGAGEMENT + CONNECTION

- Looks toward your face or voice
- Smiles back when you smile
- Enjoys social games (peekaboo, songs, gentle movement)

#### 2. IMITATION SKILLS

- Copies facial expressions (smiles, sticks out tongue)
- Mimics simple actions (tapping, banging, shaking)
- Tries to imitate your sounds

#### 3. SOUND PLAY

- Coos, squeals, or grunts to get your attention
- Experiments with pitch, volume, and rhythm
- Makes back-and-forth sounds with you ("conversation")

#### 4. SENSORY AWARENESS

- Tracks faces and objects visually
- Calms with gentle touch
- Reacts to playful movement, bouncing, or tummy-time interactions

#### 5. BODY + MOTOR READINESS

- Turns toward sounds
- Reaches for you or objects
- Uses hands in play—grabbing, banging, exploring
- Shows interest in people and not just toys



#### WHY THIS MATTERS

- Early communication is built on:
- Joint attention (looking at the same thing together)
- Imitation (the foundation for gestures + words)
- Back-and-forth interaction (the first real conversation!)
- Sensory-motor skills (babies learn to communicate through movement)
- Your baby's brain is forming the pathways needed for understanding words, making sounds, and expressing ideas.

### HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR BABY'S COMMUNICATION JOURNEY

- **Get face-to-face** during play and feeding, as long as your child accepts the interaction
- **Narrate what baby is seeing, touching, or doing** ("You're reaching for your ball... you got it!")
- **Follow baby's lead**—respond to their interest, not just your plan
- **Play social games** with predictable patterns
- **Use gentle, exaggerated expressions** to encourage imitation
- **Imitate them back**—their movements, sounds, faces
- **Pause** after you speak so baby can respond