



PUPPETalk

You are your child's first and most important teacher. We know that talking to babies is the most important way to grow their brains. A finger puppet will help you and other family members talk with your child. Talk when you feed, bathe, and play with your baby. Talk when you change the diaper and put your baby in the car seat. Be creative and have fun! Every child is different, so add your own variations and create new activities.

Even when you don't have your puppet with you, remember to always keep talking with your child!

- 01** Name your finger puppet and use an encouraging and soothing voice with it.
- 02** Coo, blow raspberries, and make silly sounds. Imitate or repeat sounds that your baby makes as you take turns talking back and forth.
- 03** Say your baby's name while moving your puppet up and down and side to side. Try to get your child to follow the movement. Play peek-a-boo by covering and uncovering your puppet. You can say: "Where is your puppet? Here he is! Good job, you found your puppet!"
- 04** Babies like gentle touch and massage. Place your baby on a safe surface over a blanket or floor mat. Roll her arms between your fingers using light pressure. Work your way down to her feet where you can trace circles on her soles. Talk to your child, telling her she is beautiful and naming the different body parts. Play with her toes and add the *This Little Piggy Went to Market* rhyme.
- 05** Look at pictures in books and magazines. Name and describe what you see. Your baby may especially like looking at black and white, bright colors, and patterns.
- 06** Walk around the house and explore. Name and talk about the different objects you find. Describe colors, numbers, sizes, shapes, and textures.
- 07** Explore the outdoors using different senses. Let your child see, touch, and smell the grass, leaves, tree bark, and other objects. Feel the breeze, listen to the birds, and smell the flowers. Your puppet should describe these things as your child discovers and explores.
- 08** Read simple books. Name the objects and describe the colors, shapes, and other details of the pictures.
- 09** Sing songs and say rhymes such as *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*, *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*, the *Hokey-Pokey*, and so many more! Do you have a favorite song from your childhood? Have your puppet gently tap out the beat on your child's tummy and sway to the music so your baby feels the soothing rhythm.
- 10** Tummy time is an important way for your child to gain head control. On a safe and flat surface, place your child on his tummy. Use your puppet to help your baby explore a new toy and look in a mirror. Move the puppet around your baby to encourage him to move his head and find the puppet.