















IN COLLABORATION WITH  
**Feed Me Words**

# Conversation Starters

**TALKING AT HOME**

	 <b>Our Home</b>	 <b>Getting Dressed</b>	 <b>Changing Diapers</b>	 <b>Reading</b>
<b>Talking Tips</b>	Your baby just arrived in your home, and could use a tour! Take your baby from room to room and point out important items in the room. Explaining what these items do and what they are for will lead to more conversation and teaching.	Explain what you are doing while you are getting your baby dressed. Tell your baby what is going on at each step, and use this situation to introduce body parts as well as clothing names.	Similar to getting dressed, this every day situation is a perfect time to reassure your baby by explaining each of your steps.	Even though your baby can't read yet, introducing books and stories is an important part of their early literacy. You don't have to feel like you need to read every word on each page. Let your baby lead the discussion and watch what catches their interest. Talk about what they are looking at or pointing toward.
<b>You Could Say Things Like:</b>	"This is the kitchen. We cook our meals in the kitchen using the stove, the oven, and these pots and pans."  "We're standing in the living room. This is our couch, where we sit to relax. Here is a table that is holding a lamp. Lamps light up the room."	"Now it's time to get dressed for our day! Let's start with your pants. One leg goes in one side of the pants. There we go! And now the other leg. Thank you for your help!"  "It's cold today so we're going to put a hat on your head to keep you warm. Feel how soft the hat is? This hat will keep you nice and toasty today!"	"Let's get you all cleaned up. I have to wipe your bottom before we put a new diaper on. The wipe is a little cold, are you ready?"  "There we go, now you have a clean, dry diaper on. Do you feel better? Let's continue our day!"	"Which book would you like to read? Can you point to the book you'd like to read? Help me turn the page. Good job turning the pages!"  "Do you see the green frog on this page? He lives in that pond! Where do you live? ... You live here, in our home. The pond is the green frog's home."
	 <b>Cooking</b>	 <b>Meal Time</b>	 <b>Washing Up</b>	 <b>Play Time</b>
<b>Talking Tips</b>	Whether you are cooking for your baby, yourself, or the rest of the family, cooking in the kitchen is a daily activity that is full of talking points. Make the most of this time by discussing foods, preparation, and ways your baby can contribute to the situation.	No matter how you are feeding your baby, it's a great time to talk, because baby is especially focused on you.	Babies need to be cleaned up many times a day and having a cold washcloth wiped across their face with no prior warning could be startling. Use this time to tell baby what you are doing before you do it and encourage them to participate in washing up.	Your baby is constantly learning and play time is a wonderful time to talk about colors, shapes, actions and feelings. Pay attention to what your baby is engaging with and let them lead your talking.
<b>You Could Say Things Like:</b>	"We're making pasta for dinner! Pasta comes in many different shapes. This is spaghetti. It's long and straight. First, we have to boil the water."  "Your sister is setting the table for dinner. She is being so helpful getting us ready for dinner. You can help too! Would you like to carry your napkin over to the table and give it to your big sister?"	"Are you feeling hungry? Let's get you into your chair so you can eat. I'm going to pick you up and put you into your chair. Ready? 1, 2, 3...UP WE GO!"  "That was a big bite! Chew it all up before you swallow it. Would you like another bite? No? All done? Okay, we're all done with eating our meal."	"Oh, your hands are all sticky. I'm going to wipe your hands with this cloth. Can you help me by putting your hands out, please? Thank you for your help! All clean now, thank you."  "You're looking uncomfortable. I'm going to wipe your neck with this cool cloth and get you feeling cooler. Ok? Here we go. That's better, right?"	"Oh! I see you have your toy bunny there. What are you and bunny doing? Bunny has long ears. Where are bunny's ears? Can you show me YOUR ears? You and bunny both have ears but they look different, don't they?"  "These are blocks. We have red blocks, blue blocks and green blocks. 1, 2, 3, groups of blocks. Let's stack the block on top of each other to make a pyramid."
	 <b>Pets</b>	 <b>Holding</b>	 <b>Bath Time</b>	 <b>Bed Time</b>
<b>Talking Tips</b>	If there are pets in the house, they will be naturally curious about your baby and the baby about them. Use their interactions to talk about the pets and appropriate behavior when handling and interacting with pets and other animals.	Very young babies will be held a lot and won't be able to interact with you as much. But don't be fooled, because your baby is always listening to you. Even if you are just talking about your day and narrating what is going on, your voice and the words your baby is hearing are doing a lot for their brain development.	A lot of babies love the bath and since you need to be constantly engaged with your baby, there are lots of opportunities to talk. Your baby will likely be active and happy in the bath, so use this time to describe their motions and identify their body parts for them.	The end of the day can be tricky for you and baby, since everyone is tired, but it's important to keep talking. Singing softly to your baby is a way to switch up your talking routine and lull baby to sleep with your voice and words.
<b>You Could Say Things Like:</b>	"Do you see the doggy? That's Fred, he lives here too. Fred meets people by sniffing. I put my hand out to show Fred he can sniff me and I won't hurt him. Now I can pat his head. Good, Fred. We have to be sweet with our animal friends, nice and gentle."  "Hi, kitty! Can you wave hello to the black kitty? Do you want to give kitty a treat? Let's put a treat down for kitty to enjoy."	"Does it make you happy to hear my voice? Is that a smile? Can you smile? Oh, there it is, big smile! Are you a happy, loved baby? Yes you are!"  "Phew! What a morning! Are you ready for a nap? Me too! Let's sit down in this rocking chair and start to relax. Can you feel that motion? That's nice, isn't it? Let's take a rest together."	"The water is nice and warm. Do you like the water? Look at these bubbles the soap makes. Bubbles are round and go pop! when we touch them."  "Wow! You are making big splashes with your hands! Can you feel the water splashing all around you? Great job moving your arms around to make splashes!"	"It's the end of our day and time for bed now. Your belly is full and your body is clean and you are wearing your pajamas. All ready to go to sleep and rest up for tomorrow."  "Rockabye baby in your sleep suit, your mama loves you and thinks you are cute."



**OUT AND ABOUT**



	<b>In the Car</b>	<b>On the Bus</b>	<b>On the Train</b>	<b>On a Walk</b>
<b>Talking Tips</b>	Car travel can be frustrating for babies because they have to be strapped in and can't look at your face. Talking to baby in the car, even when you can't look right at them, can offer some security and comfort. Telling them where they are going and why can be a good way to introduce each car trip.	Taking public transportation offers a whole new set of situations and experiences to talk about with your baby. Often times, you'll be holding your baby the entire time, and this will allow you to have close, face-to-face conversations with your baby as you travel together.	It may seem silly or difficult to talk with your baby in public, but once you get the hang of it, it will feel more natural. Your behavior will model how you'd like other people (even strangers) to talk with your baby, increasing the contact your child has with new words and experiences.	Whether you're in your neighborhood or out in about in the city, walks can be both stimulating and scary for babies. Describing your surroundings helps your baby process what's going on around you and gives them words to describe their feelings.
<b>You Could Say Things Like:</b>	"We're going to see Grandma and Grandpa this afternoon! They are so excited to see how much you've grown this month. Let's get all buckled up in our seats so we can travel safely together."  "I hear you fussing, sweetie. I know it's frustrating to be in your seat for so long. We're almost there. Let's talk about what we'll see when we arrive at our destination."	"We're waiting for the bus to come pick us up. Who else is waiting with us? Let's count how many people are waiting for the bus..."  "Hello, bus driver! Can you wave hello? Here's where we pay our fare. Now let's find a seat. Would you like to sit near the window? We can look out the window and look at the city where we live."	"Let's swipe our card. Woohoo! You ride for free! We're going to go underground now to catch the train. We walk down the stairs to get to the train platform. That's a lot of stairs!"  "Can you hear the train coming? I hear it too! Now can you see the lights? Here it comes! Let's get on the train! Wait for the doors to open...okay, now we can get on."	"The city is noisy, isn't it? Do you feel safe? I'm here, you're safe, we're just hearing the sounds of our city. Let's keep walking together, okay?"  "Look at all the mailboxes! This is our mailbox. Let's see if we have any mail today. Ooh, we do! Would you like to hold a piece of mail? Thank you for helping me carry in the mail!"
	<b>Meeting Others</b>	<b>At the Park</b>	<b>At a BBQ/Picnic</b>	<b>Food Shopping</b>
<b>Talking Tips</b>	Meeting other people and seeing new faces for the first time can be exciting and is a good time for you to help your baby process new feelings through language and talking through the situation.	The park is full of new creatures and places to talk about with your baby. Watch what your baby is attracted to and help them describe their new surroundings.	A community BBQ or family picnic is a great time for your baby to experience new sights, smells and words. Encourage other family members to take over the talking as well, introducing your baby to everyone and everything that's happening around them.	The grocery store is a great place to talk with your baby about food, shapes and colors. It's also a good place for you and your baby to interact with other people and each other while you shop.
<b>You Could Say Things Like:</b>	"This is your Aunt Jessica. She came all the way from New York to meet you! Would it be okay if Aunt Jessica held you? I'll be right here when you're ready to come back to me. Okay, here we go, Aunt Jess."  "The people behind us in line are waving to you. Can you wave back? That's nice of them to say hello. Hello! It's okay if you don't feel comfortable saying hello to them right now."	"Do you hear that? Sounds like birds chirping and singing in the trees. If we look up, we can see the tree branches, where the birds live and build their nests."  "Look at all the green grass in front of us. Would you like to walk on the grass? Let's take off your shoes so you can feel the grass under your feet. Ooh, feel that? That feels different, doesn't it?"	"Mmm, smell that? That's a smoky barbecue smell. It makes me feel hungry. How does it make you feel? Let's go find out what everyone is cooking."  "Your brother has a football. Do you see the football? Here, hold the ball. Can you throw the football to your brother? Good throw!!"	"It's apple season! My favorite apples are green apples. Do you see the green apple? Green apples are fresh and tart to eat! Let's get three green apples. 1, 2, 3 green apples go in our cart."  "Ooh, look at all these orange carrots. You love mashed carrots! Carrots are a delicious treat. Would you like to get some carrots today? Here, why don't you hold the carrots while we shop?"
	<b>At the Library</b>	<b>At the Doctor</b>	<b>Parts of the Body</b>	<b>Dancing</b>
<b>Talking Tips</b>	The library offers amazing resources for babies and families, especially over the summer months. Take advantage of the children's room at your library to introduce your baby to plenty of books and literacy tools.	There are lots of check-ups in the first year of your baby's life, so visiting the pediatrician and getting looked in on by doctors and nurses will be a fairly common situation to talk through with your baby.	Naming parts of the body is an easy game to play with your baby in a variety of situations. Try naming a body part, pointing to your own, naming it again, and pointing to the part on your baby.	Using singing, music, and dancing is a fun way to continue talking with your baby, while introducing new sounds and movements at the same time. Put some music on and dance around with your baby while talking about what you are doing.
<b>You Could Say Things Like:</b>	"We're going to get some books at the library. I'm excited about picking out some new books to read to you! Let's say hello to the librarian before we look at books. Good morning!"  "Which books would you like to look at today? I see you reaching for this blue book about trucks. Would you like to check this out and take it home? I'll put it in our bag to check out."	"We're waiting for the doctor to visit our room and check out your body. You've grown a lot since she last saw you and she's excited to chart your growth and talk to us about how we can stay healthy."  "I'm going to hold you while the doctor listens to your heart with her special instrument. We're going to pull up your shirt and show her your chest and your tummy. Hold my hand, you'll be okay."	"Where is daddy's nose? This is daddy's nose! Where is baby's nose? This is baby's nose!"  "Can you find your ears? We listen with our ears. These are my ears. Here are your ears. Can you find my ears? I can find your ears!"	"Ooh, I love this song. It makes me want to dance! Would you like to dance with me? Let's dance together! We can sway our hips back and forth to the beat. Do you like that?"  "I see you are bouncing to the music! Do you like this song? Wow! Look at you moving your arms while you bounce! Great movements! You seem to really like listening to this music!"