



Welcome to Your Baby Calming Toolkit



Congratulations on your new bundle of joy!

The first few months of your baby's life are a time of immense love and discovery. But let's face it—it can also feel overwhelming to interpret your baby's cries and know exactly what they need and when. **That's where this toolkit comes in.** It's packed with information and simple techniques to help you understand your baby and what they need, soothe them with confidence, and strengthen your bond along the way. Did you know that your baby already has his or her own unique way of communicating with you?

Ready to learn how to understand their language?



Every Class You Need In One

Understanding Your Baby

Your baby's unique ways of communicating with you are known as their cues. They might not have words yet, but they can still let you know what they need through their body language, facial expressions, sounds, and movements. Learning to recognise these cues can help you respond and meet those needs quickly, building trust and security and leading to calmer days all round!



Why watch for baby cues?

- Responding to their cues helps your baby feel understood and supported.
- It strengthens the bond between the two of you.
- It reduces frustration for both you and your baby reducing the guesswork and meeting their needs more effectively.

How to watch for cues:

- Observe your baby during quiet, calm times to learn their typical patterns.
- Look at their face, listen to their sounds, and notice their movements.
- Pay attention to how these things change as they move between alert, calm, and upset states.





Baby Cues Decoder

While your baby will have their own, unique cues and ways of expressing themselves, there are common cues that most babies will show to some degree. Here are some to watch out for. Tick the boxes below and on the next page when you spot any of these.

Hunger Cues

- **What to look for:** Rooting or turning their head toward your chest or hand, sucking motions, putting hands to their mouth, and crying with short, low-pitched wails.
- **How to respond:** Offer feeding promptly. Hold your baby close and ensure a comfortable feeding position for both of you. Speak softly or hum to reassure them.

Tiredness Cues

- **What to look for:** Rubbing eyes or face, yawning, jerky arm and leg movements, and turning away from stimulation.
- **How to respond:** Reduce noise and stimulation. Hold your baby in a dim, quiet space and try rocking or gentle swaying. Use a soothing voice or lullaby to help them drift off.

Cues I've Noticed

☐

Rooting/turning head

☐

Rubbing eyes/face

☐

Sucking motions

☐

Yawning

☐

Putting hands to mouth

☐

Jerky limb movements

☐

Short, low pitched wails

☐

Turning away





Getting Your Attention

Cues will be quite subtle to begin with, but will get stronger as your baby's need or discomfort grows. You won't prevent your baby from ever crying - that's just what babies do, but noticing their cues early allows you to respond before baby becomes more upset and harder to settle (they need your support to regulate themselves at this age) more often - which has to be a win!

Overstimulation Signs

- **What to look for:** Frowning, grimacing, hiccups, squirming, and crying with a high-pitched wail.
- **How to respond:** Move with your baby to a calm, quiet area without bright lights or loud noises. Hold them securely and use gentle rocking or a consistent shushing sound.

Pain or Discomfort

- **What to look for:** Sharp, shrill cries, arching their back, pulling knees to their chest, or a tense and rigid body.
- **How to respond:** Check for possible causes like a wet nappy, tight clothing, or signs of illness (e.g., fever). Baby massage and yoga can help if they have trapped wind or similar. If you're worried about a continued problem, speak to your doctor or health visitor.

Cues I've Noticed

☐

Frowning/Grimacing

☐

Sharp, shrill cries

☐

Hiccups

☐

Arching back

☐

Squirming

☐

Knees to chest

☐

High pitched wails

☐

Rigid body





Ready to play?

Observing your baby's cues is a great way to see if they are in the mood for some play time with you too.

Check in with baby before you start an activity with them. If you see "engagement cues", then it's time to play, if they start to show disengagement cues it means they've had enough for now and need a break. Here are some common ones to look for:

Engagement Cues

- **What to look for:** Bright, wide-open eyes, smiling, cooing, and reaching out toward you.
- **How to respond:** Take advantage of these moments to play, sing, or chat with your baby. These are great opportunities for bonding and stimulation.

Disengagement Cues

- **What to look for:** Turning away, arching their back, or closing their eyes. Your baby might also fuss or cry to signal they need a break.
- **How to respond:** Pause any activity and give your baby time to reset. Reduce stimulation and offer a calming presence by holding them or speaking softly.

My Baby's Cues

What other cues does your baby show? Note them below.





Calming Your Baby

When your baby is fussy or upset, sensations and sounds they are familiar with help them to feel safe and become calmer. Often these mimic what they experienced while in the womb.

Being close to you is the number one thing that will calm them. Soothing physical contact like cuddling and gentle rocking, soft talking, humming or singing and dim lighting, while maintaining a calm presence yourself will all help to settle them.

What does your baby enjoy?

Favourite familiar activities can also help calm, soothe and sometimes, simply distract your baby from what's upsetting them. Notice what they seem to enjoy and respond to when they are happy and relaxed and bring out their favourites to bring back those smiles! Here are some ideas to try.

Their favourite way to be held - do they like to be up on your shoulder, facing outwards with their back against your chest, laying across your forearm facing down (known as tiger in the tree) or something else?





Their favourite movement - is this gentle bouncing, swinging, twirling, stretching or something else? Baby yoga is a great way to enjoy different types of movement, and supports development too.

Their favourite sounds - this could be your voice, a particular piece of music, or white noise (try a white noise app, hairdryer or fan) - which perhaps reminds them off the muffled sounds they heard while in the womb.

Their favourite things to look at - your face is always a favourite, but some babies also find looking at high contrast (black and white) pictures or patterns soothing. Bubbles are always a winner for engaging your baby too.

Baby Massage - Your loving touch is another thing your baby is likely to find calming, and baby massage is a wonderful way to offer this, and also strengthen the bond forming between you.

What are your baby's favourites?





Finding Your Own Calm

It's completely natural to feel anxious or upset when your baby is unsettled, but remember that the calmer you are able to stay, the quicker your baby is likely to settle too. You're not alone in this, and there are simple steps you can take to help both you and your baby feel more at ease.

Try these tips to help you find your calm:

Practice Calming Breaths

Take a deep breath in, then release it slowly, making your out-breath longer than your in-breath. Repeat this a few times until you feel yourself beginning to relax.

Stay Grounded in the Moment

Bring your focus to the present by using your senses. For example, count five things you can see around you or notice the feeling of your feet on the floor.



Find Your Smile

Replenish yourself by doing something that brings you a little joy. Whether it's listening to a favourite song, watching a funny video, or looking at a cherished photo, taking this moment for yourself can make all the difference.

Take a Break When You Need To

If you're feeling overwhelmed, it's okay to place your baby in a safe spot, such as their cot or play mat, and step away for a few minutes. A short pause can help you reset and return feeling more composed.





Ready for the Next Step?

Even small moments of calm can make a big difference for you and your baby, so I hope this guide has been a useful start in getting to know and understand your baby better, finding more calm in your day, and enjoying this special time together - you're doing an amazing job!

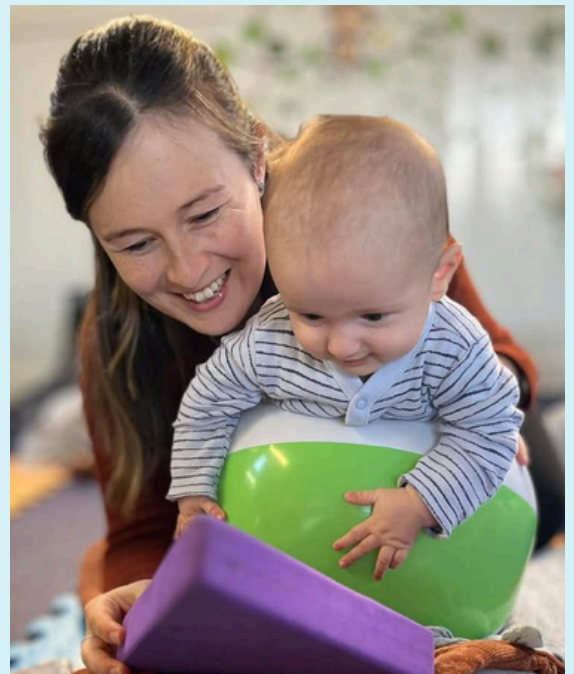
If you're ready to dive deeper into learning about your baby, nurturing their development, and finding support for you too, at our gorgeous, 6-Week, **Baby Development Course** you'll find all this and more. It's every baby class you need in one!

We'll guide you through a range of ways to support your baby's development and strengthen your bond, including **baby massage, baby yoga, tummy time, sensory play and sign language**, and you'll also gain the support of a community of parents, just like you, in a welcoming small group environment.

It's especially for babies from birth to 6 months, and the first step of our programme of award winning classes, supporting development through play right up until age 4.

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