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You can share and care from a distance



**Baby Focus** | Birth–36 months

**Elizabeth Verwey**

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This book is dedicated to my Grandmom Sherman.  
Her love did not weaken over the miles that separated us.  
She inspired me to share and care for my grandbaby – regardless of distance.

## Welcome

This e-book has been written by a devoted Nana to inspire you to reach out to the babies and children you love in creative and interesting ways. Don't let distance prevent you from forming a wonderful relationship with a special child.

Do you work far away and want to bond with a baby or child?

Do you travel for business and have children at home?

Are you a long-distance aunt, grandparent, uncle, or friend?

Do you travel for pleasure and want to stay in touch?

Do you live across town and want ideas to try in between visits?

Every baby I met after my grandchild was born was compared to the light of my life – who was 3,000 miles away. Is this baby older/younger, bigger/smaller? Are the eyes bigger or bluer? Of course, babies change so quickly that it was a silly thing to do. But I couldn't help myself. I thought about our special baby all the time. I decided that I needed to make a plan to become a very special Nana. I've tried many approaches and the ideas in this e-book all made the cut.

Most of these suggestions will seem doable and your own ideas will spring forth when you try them. These methods will shrink the miles and bring families together at a time when people are separated by so many things: busy schedules, business travel, geography, divorce, and living at a distance from the babies and children they love. I offer solutions for those who dare to share and care with babies.

It can make a huge difference for both of you!

I had a long-distance relationship with my grandchild for the first 10 months of her life, and when she saw me coming down a crowded stairway, she knew who I was and became quite excited. I was excited too, as I knew so much about her from our video visits. I could hardly wait to get my arms around her!

As I worked on establishing and strengthening a bond with her, friends and family asked me for ideas to share with their long-distance babies.

This book is a direct result of those requests. The ideas presented here have helped me build a solid relationship with my grandchild who lives a 44-hour car ride away. I was in a bank line-up when I got the call that she had arrived. The teller motioned for me to come forward as I was listening to my daughter, with tears in my eyes. She asked me if everything was okay, and I said, "I hope so." The baby was premature and there were concerns, but Mom and baby were doing well. Years later, that teller still asks me about my grandchild!

From Grandmother to Granddaughter to Grandmother to...

As a child, I had a strong bond with my long-distance grandmother. She lived in Nova Scotia and although I was born there, we moved to Toronto when I was 7 years old. I stayed in Toronto, and we developed a very close relationship through letters, phone calls, and occasional visits. There was a physical distance, but we did not let it get in the way of our emotional relationship. I understood that she adored me.

Later, when my grandmother could no longer see well, she bought a tape recorder and learned to use it. She even had to ask the nice man at Radio Shack to come give her a refresher once, when she forgot how to record on that newfangled machine. I will be forever grateful to that young man. Grandmom and I mailed cassette tapes back and forth for years.

In fact, she died suddenly, and I travelled to Nova Scotia for her funeral with my baby. When we returned home, a cassette tape that she made a few days before her unexpected death was in the mailbox. That is one that I treasure. When I'm missing her, I still listen to her tapes, and appreciate that her grandmother clock ticks steadily away in the background, marking time.

I was her first grandchild, and I now understand the privilege of that position. It's somewhat like being a firstborn child, except it came with none of the nervousness or responsibilities that complicate that relationship.

And now, grandparenting from a distance in the 21st century.

My daughter moved to Vancouver when she was all grown up. She married her soulmate, and they birthed my first grandchild there. My baby had a baby!

Although I travel out annually, I'm eager to maintain as close a relationship as possible with my grandchild, despite the distance. Yes, I'm a long-distance Nana.



## How to Use This Book

The techniques in this book are a blend of old-fashioned fun and twenty-first century technology. My grandmother learned to use a tape recorder when she could barely see and was already in her eighties.

I believe that I too can learn a few new tricks. Some of these ideas will be a perfect fit and others may seem too high-tech for you right now. You may grow into a few of them or get the support you need to try them out. Each idea will work for some of you, some of the time!

Think of a baby or child who you wish you lived closer to and find out if their parents or caregivers will support you in strengthening your relationship with them. There are other ideas to try, even in non-supportive situations. The parent or caregiver may not be as committed to building the relationship as you would like them to be, but you will find easy ways to stay in touch, and the baby will know you care.

Skim through the age-appropriate section and pick one idea at a time. Try it out. Pick another one. Try that one. Repeat the methods that work. Babies and children thrive on repetition.

There are a few sections for “notes” throughout this book. These are offered to help capture ideas that you want to remember. You may see something that will be suitable to try in a few months time. Record it in the notes section for your future reference.

The rewards will come. If you have mailed baby a photo and they learn to point out facial features using your picture, your face will become familiar. Baby will recognize you and get excited when you make contact with them. When they hear your voice, they will look expectantly at the computer screen, and before you appear, they will know who is going to show up.

Use this book as a resource, and refer to it, especially as your special baby grows. Think of it as an adventure. Explore these ideas and be brave. Try something new and unusual and be curious about how you can discover your own ideas as you play with the ones I’ve shared.

The best tip is to follow the child’s lead. It’s important to try a few ideas, but also to let the improvisational baby show you what they find fun.

## Who Can Use These Ideas?

Adults who are too far away from a baby they love. This could be a trip, an adventure, or a permanent living arrangement. People who have benefited the most include:

- Parents who are travelling (for business or pleasure)
- Uncles or aunts who want to reach across the miles
- Parents who live away from their babies
- Grandparents who don't see the babies as often as they want
- Friends who want to share the highlights with an important baby

A few of my friends are using these ideas when they travel on business. Others are using them in between visits with the special babies and children who live in the same city. The commute time is almost an hour each way, so they visit in person every 2-3 weeks and use a few of these easy techniques to stay in touch between visits. The long commute is not necessary when you can have the same amount of quality time on video.

Some friends are using these ideas to stay in touch with their nieces and nephews. Other people use these tips to reach out to children of their adult friends and, as a result, are very popular with these children.

Snowbirds (seniors who travel to warmer climates each winter) are using these ideas to communicate with family "back home." When they travel for extended vacations, it really helps to stay in touch with those little ones. Four months is a large percentage of their young lives!

A nanny who was away from her child in the Philippines used Skype to do homework with her daughter most nights. I met a man in Toronto who reads a bedtime story to his grandchild in China every morning over Skype, as the time zones dictate that's the way it is.

I met a single mother who had to work away from her family for two years. The nanny set up the laptop computer at the dining table each evening, so the children could catch up with Mom over dinner.

We can't measure the emotion and commitment that develops when the two of you indulge in the pure pleasure of play. Warm feelings will be planted in both your hearts.

There are many ways to use the ideas here. Please explore and find new paths to the goal of strengthening your family bonds over miles.

## Ways to Share and Care

Postcards, cards and letters  
Photos (mail, text, or post them online)  
Phone calls  
Voice recorded messages  
Video visits by phone  
Video visits

There are several ways to communicate to see each other “live.” Some people really like to use videophones. These may be simpler for seniors to use. After you purchase the hardware, the costs are low to stay in touch with family members. When you place a call, you can see each other on a small screen. These phones can also be plugged into a large screen. This increases the size of the image, so your special baby becomes larger than life.

## Photos: Worth a Thousand Words

There are so many ways to share photos. I’ve witnessed people taking lots of pictures but missing the opportunity of using these images.

Print them out and mail them.  
Send them via e-mail.  
Send them via cell phone.  
Create a book (online or hard copy).  
Maintain an online photo book (the eLovingFamilies website).  
Set up a slideshow as a screensaver on your computer.

## Text Pictures

It’s still quite exciting to get text photos of my grandchild when the family is out having fun. I’ve started sending them a few of me, and they seem to like knowing what I’m doing, and that I’m thinking of them.

## Sharing Photos

When I get a good photo of myself, I have it developed and mail it to my grandchild in a magnetic photo sleeve. They’ve hung a few on the refrigerator and I hear that she takes them off and walks around with them, and then puts the photo back on the fridge when she’s finished.

When they send me photos via e-mail, I update my screensaver to have the latest photo of her on my computer screen.

Try sharing pictures online. Establish a family photo book folder. When you go on vacation, upload a few pictures so that everyone shares in the adventure. And when baby goes to the park, a picture says a thousand words about how much fun they're having, when posted online to a family photo book.

If you use Facebook, that's another good way to share pictures and comments about what's going on in your world. New pictures or videos of the child can be uploaded for your enjoyment, or you can share images of what you're doing. These photos can be shared with a short list of people. All your friends and associates do not need to have access to these, with the use of lists and the new privacy settings on Facebook.

## **Skype**

Skype was the choice I made to stay connected in 2010. Once you have a video connection, your imagination is your only limitation. It starts to feel like a "real" visit. My grandbaby and I share all sorts of things, and you'll hear about them in this book.

I even prefer to use video to visit with my son and cousins these days. We each make a cup of tea and enjoy a hands-free online visit.

I also "toured" my friend's apartment in Japan, when she walked around with her laptop in front of her. I heard of another family who "toured" the summer Olympics (London, UK, in 2012) with their family who lives there.

Once you choose your technology, it's easy to use while travelling. This is a real bonus when you are away for an extended time.

Once you have the program installed, and invite people you love to your contact list, you will have many options for communicating with one another.

## **Location Considerations**

Consider the environment. If you are in a room with background noise, or with a television turned on, it will interfere with communication. It's important to know that when one person speaks on video, the other person can't be heard. So, if you're in a noisy place, you will not be able to hear as well. The baby will also not be able to hear you.

## **Lighting**

I have a portable lamp that is set up behind my laptop. When the lighting is not right, I turn on the lamp and shine it towards me. I sit close to the camera and fill my screen with my face unless I'm sharing something or someone with the other person.

## Notes / Ideas

### During Your Visits

When I went to visit my grandchild last time, she was almost two years old. I got in late one evening and kept her home from daycare the next day. I wanted to grab every moment I could with this special child. Once Mom and Dad left for work, I noticed that she was playing shy, which had not happened when we interacted on Skype.

I set up my laptop in the next room, set her up with Skype on the desktop computer at her normal location, and we “chatted” via Skype. She could see me down the hall, and on the computer. We both giggled, and then we sang “The Wheels on the Bus.” I could see her craning her neck to see me in the other room, and then she’d look back at the camera. She made the connection and was then very comfortable with me for the rest of our visit.

When you spend time with your special child, ask other people to take lots of pictures of you together. Don’t be shy! Ask strangers when you’re out together. You can have these pictures made into a book at a photo shop for a very reasonable price. The child will be able to enjoy that book, and it will prolong your visit for them. There are a few books that have the option to record a message in your own voice. This is fun for everyone!

When I created my last photo book, I discovered that I could add words to the photos, so I added some funny captions. There’s a photo of the two of us at breakfast, with stickers on our noses. Hey – we were having sticker fun! I added the title “Sticker Noses” and it makes everyone laugh when they read it. I also added the caption “1, 2, 3...” to a photo of her splashing in a puddle, as that’s what we were saying before she made each splash.

I took a special niece for a “circle walk” when she was about two years old. I captured pictures of her when she pointed at all the circles (hubcaps, doorknobs, stones, mirrors, etc) we found. When she went for her afternoon nap, I visited the photo shop and had them create the “circle walk” book. I’m certain that she will remember that walk for a long time to come.

I made a similar book to remember on another visit with my niece. We found tons of heart shapes one weekend: on doors, on fences, in city sidewalks, and even heart stones at the beach. I called that book Our Heart Adventure and it was a big hit! This one has a recorded message, which was wonderful for a six-year-old niece who lives three hours away from me.

## Notes / Ideas



### Pre-Birth Sharing

There is a lot to share, even before baby arrives! As the baby grows inside mom, there are changes to her lifestyle and her body shape and size. She may wish to share some of those changes with you.

There are books she's reading or information she's gathering that may be interesting to you, too. Her doctor may have questions about family history that she'll want to share with you.

It's a great time to ask open-ended questions and ask further questions related to those answers. Mom will understand that you really are interested in hearing about the details, and she'll share more if she's comfortable.

Mom might have an ultrasound or other exam results to share. They often print out an image or send it via e-mail. Most weeks bring a new understanding of what lies ahead. Mom may also have questions for you, if you've already had a baby.

If there is a baby shower that you are unable to attend, you could ask to have a video set up so that you could share in the event.

If you are her parent or a friend, your main role here is to support mom in feeling ready to expand her family. This may mean listening to detailed medical information, looking at her new shape, and letting her know how amazing she looks. You may also need to reassure her that skin is amazingly elastic and can shrink back to her original shape once baby is born.

There is also a time in most pregnancies where mom does not feel it's possible to go the rest of the term – she's done with this pregnancy! Ask her to grab a tea, put her feet up and call you. Listen effectively. Stay quiet. Ask her open-ended questions and let her talk about what it's like. This is where loving humour comes in – you may be able to encourage her to take it easy. Growing a baby is hard work that only a few people get to do, so we sometimes underestimate how tough the job really is!

## The First Year (0-12 Months):

This first twelve months is a fast-paced year, with lots of milestones along the way. Make it a point to observe the “monthly” birthdays. Most mothers can tell you how old their child is in months, and they will be pleased that you also remember baby’s birthday. Add it to your calendar and shoot the parents an e-mail or pick up the phone to wish the baby a happy month.

If you had children over a decade ago, please understand that everything has changed. We used to sleep babies on their tummies, now the doctors ask the parents to sleep babies on their backs. It’s safer. And now they all have flat spots without hair on the back of their heads. No matter. I do hope I live to see how they look when they’re bald. But I digress.

Please accept that all the rules are different now. Let the new parents share the latest theories with you and make it a goal to only give your opinion when asked. Even when they ask, be careful.

If you have not had children before, you have a great advantage! Listen and learn from these new parents.

Know that if your turn comes, other people will listen to you describe the smallest details about life with baby, as it will be brand new and so important to your daily living at that point in time.

I think the comedian Phyllis Diller said it best: “I used to have five theories about raising children. Now I have five children, and no theories.” It’s wise to keep your theories to yourself, especially if you’ve never done the job!

There are many ways to stay in touch with children at this age. The most visually satisfying is through video.

You can even take photos during your conversations. If you took a picture during each of your visits, it would log one aspect of the progression of building your very special relationship.

## Video Visits

Over this first year, select a toy (cardboard) box or colourful bag that will store some of your materials or special activities. It does not have to be exceptionally sturdy. It could be a cardboard box covered in colourful wrapping paper. It could even be a decorative paper bag. I use a reusable bag with a tulip motif.

This distinct container will be a visual cue to your baby at a distance. As they grow, they will sense that something special is going to happen when they see you with that container.

Now, what to put in that toy box or bag? Here are a few ideas:

- a puppet who can say hi once in a while
- a cloth that can be used to play peek-a-boo
- a rattle or musical instrument
- a teddy bear or special stuffed toy
- a fun hat (I have a penguin one)
- a feather

## First Few Months:

Baby can track face-like objects. Imagine that baby is looking through frosted glass. Things appear a little blurry. The baby can see about 22 centimetres or 9 inches away and sees the colours red and white best.

### Awe and Wonder

Ask the adult to hold the baby up to the camera to get a closer view. It's awe inspiring to witness the movements of the mouth, the pursing of their small lips. Their lovely eyes search your features on their computer screen. I cooed and clucked like an adoring nana. I made sure to wear red lipstick to give her something red to focus on.

### Shake, Rattle and...?

Shake a rattle and talk to baby early on in this first year. They can't reach for you in the beginning, and it's the perfect time to just make eye contact and speak directly to baby. The caregiver or parent needs to hold the baby up so they can see your face in the computer monitor. Or they can settle them in a seat that's facing the monitor and camera.

Remember to begin each session with a warm hello to baby. For example, "Hi Susie, it's Nana."



This is a great time to speak in your mother tongue with baby. If you wish to teach baby your language, start using it now. You can build in one phrase at a time, or if the caregiver or parent speaks your mother tongue, use it full time during your video visits. It takes some time but is very worthwhile to begin teaching a baby a second language from birth. The brain builds extra pathways, and they will be there for a long while.

At this point the bulk of the conversation is actually between you and the caregivers or parents, but parts of it can be about the new baby. Ask questions about how the baby is sleeping, and how the parents are coping.

It's a good time to share stories about the parents as babes in arms (if you knew them then) or about other babies you both know.

This is a good opportunity to compliment the parents or childcare providers on how well they handle the baby. If you've had a baby, you'll remember how unprepared you felt (or at least I did) when you began to take care of this brand new human being.

My first grandchild was a preemie and over three pounds lighter than my smallest baby, so I was utterly amazed at how comfortably my daughter handled our precious bundle of joy.

## **Sing a Lullaby**

Choose a lullaby that you enjoy singing and aim to sing it at some point during each phone call or video session. There are so many lullabies to choose from. Is there a family favourite, or one you sang to the parent? Is there one that your mother sang to you that you want to share with this special baby?

I chose this one:

Big moon, bright moon,  
Shining so very high,  
Up in the starry sky,

Big moon, bright moon,  
Can you see people as tiny as I...?

I sang it to both my babies. When my daughter was babysitting a newborn as a teenager, she came home one evening, mystified. She told me that the baby had been very fussy and that a song came to her that she did not know. She sang it and was able to calm the baby in her care. Then, she sang it for me and tears welled up in my eyes. When I first sang it to my own grandbaby, who was being rocked by my daughter 3,000 miles away, it was profound for both of us.

Each time I sing it to her online now, she is sitting on her mom's lap. They sway back and forth and it feels cozy for all three of us.

At the end of each session, be sure to say a special goodbye to baby.

"Bye-bye, George. Oma loves you."

## **Rock-a-bye Baby**

This traditional lullaby is lovely to sing to a baby when the caregiver is rocking them in their arms. You will find the lyrics for Rock-a-bye Baby in the Resource section of this book.

If singing a lullaby is not comfortable for you, pick one out to play (on your phone or a CD player) to baby each time you connect on the phone or video. This can become your very own goodbye or soundtrack! You could also sing along with this soundtrack.

“Hush, Little Baby” is another classic, and you’ll find those lyrics in the Resource section of this book as well.

There’s also a Zulu lullaby called Thula Baba Lullaby. The English translation (Hush-a-bye Little Man) is there too.

A Japanese song called Itsuki Lullaby was sent to me by a dear friend to include in the book. We met when Kiyomi came to Canada to learn English and we’re still in touch, more than 20 years later. You’ll find it in the Resource section of this book.

## **Two Months:**

Baby is ready to respond to visual cues that are thirty centimetres away. Mirror your baby’s movements by moving your mouth in the same way (i.e. sticking out tongue, big yawns) and try moving your mouth to see if they will mirror you.

Real smiles start to come. They are different from the early smiles.

### **A Signature Look**

You’ll want to offer baby a consistent look to make it easier for them to recognize you. If you wear glasses, wear them for every visit. If you have facial hair, it’s best to keep it the same for a while.

Is there a chain or necklace that you wear all the time? I change up my jewelry, but always wear the same colour lipstick. My grandchild started reaching for my red lips at a very young age. I make sure I put it on before all our video visits!

### **Language**

If using a second language, it is important to consistently speak this language over the first 8 months if you want baby to easily use the sounds later on. Baby may not demonstrate that they understand what you’re saying until later, but they do pick up the sounds of the language. It will be easier for them to respond if you’ve used the second language from birth.

## Three Months:

Babbling will begin. Try to copy these baby sounds – it's your first conversation!

Baby may start to bring their hands together and play with fingers. They may begin to mimic your expressions. Show a happy face and get a smile, show a frustrated face and watch them dissolve.

### Nicknames

If a nickname or term of endearment comes along as you speak with this baby, use it again and again. A name that only you use can form a special bond between you. What's the word for baby in your native language? This could be the start of teaching them your mother tongue.

### Share Special Moments

When my daughter was on her maternity leave, she would phone and ask if I had time to visit and I'd suggest we both make tea. It was such a special teatime.

She'd be rocking, feeding and changing within sight, and I'd be busy sorting laundry or eating lunch in front of my webcam. It was quality time.

She could also leave the room to change the laundry, with baby in a seat in front of the camera, so baby and I could chat and carry on without interruption. Baby and I both enjoyed our time! I could easily call for my daughter if I saw baby getting restless.

This time also gave space for questions or comments about babies in general or our family in particular. I learned how many things have changed by observing her tending to my first grandbaby.

## Four Months:

Baby often lets out their first laugh during this month. It may be a game of peek-a-boo, or something else unexpected that happens with a familiar person.

Peek-a-boo!

Play peek-a-boo with baby! Use anything from a dishcloth to a file folder. When you cover the camera lens, you “disappear” and you know how to do the rest, right? Peek! Baby will soon take a cloth to cover their head and they will expect you to ask where they have disappeared to. Peek-a-boo!

This little rhyme is fun to share.

Where’s the baby?  
Peek-a-boo!  
There’s the baby!  
I see you!

This face game is really sweet. It’s fun to have a snack to pop into your mouth at the end of the rhyme.

Face Game (point to your features as you go)

Two little eyes, to look around,  
Two little ears, to hear each sound,  
One little nose, to smell what’s sweet,  
One little mouth, that likes to eat.

## Bouncy Baby

Baby can begin to enjoy a supportive doorway bouncer. That’s fun to watch. Ask the caregiver if they can move the camera or laptop to accommodate you watching the baby bounce.

## Display a Photo

Is there a photo in the child’s home of you holding them? If not, take one when you are together. Baby can see it and remember that you held them once. If this is not possible, send a picture of yourself for their home, so that you are there, year-round. Ask the parents or caregivers to show it to your special baby once in a while and say your name.

If you send one that shows all the features on your face, the caregiver can use it when they are teaching the baby where your eyes, nose, and mouth are, and they will become very familiar with your image.

## Notes / Ideas

### Favourite Songs

There are so many songs to sing and this is an activity we can do before they're ready to sing along. Remember to include a couple of the songs from your childhood, too.

Visit YouTube to search for the songs you want to learn, and you can hear the tunes that go along with the lyrics. I've included the lyrics for some traditional children's songs that we've enjoyed. If you know how to read music, there are also sites that offer sheet music.

If you can play an instrument, please play for the child. It's such a memorable occasion when someone plays live music for us!

### Five Months:

Baby begins to turn toward new sounds. Researchers believe that baby understands all the basic sounds that make up their native language by this age. They also recognize their own name around this time.

### Knee Rides

Ask the parent or childcare provider to face the baby towards the camera and give them a knee ride. You can bounce up and down in time with the rhyme.

### Head and Shoulders...

My grandchild and I started pointing at our facial features (nose, mouth, teeth, and ears) and progressed to pointing at our chins, cheeks, eyes, and other facial parts.

At a certain point, it led us to this song:

Head and shoulders, knees and toes,  
Knees and toes, knees and toes.  
Head and shoulders, knees and toes,  
Eyes, ears, mouth and nose.

We added an “Achoo!” (sneeze) at the end of this song and it has stuck to the end of that song. Every time. It’s our own variation! There are many variations of this song online.

You can find the lyrics online if you forget some of the words. Just type into a search engine “lyrics, (name of song)” and something will come up. You can send the lyrics to the parent/caregiver to support them in learning the song.

Is there a childhood song in your mother tongue that you want to teach to this baby? This is a great time to do so. Even if the parent is not familiar with the song, they can learn it together!

## **Six Months:**

Baby enjoys rolling over now and may be able to sit up. Ask the child’s caregiver to sit baby up, with support, and to put some toys in front of them. This is a whole new experience for them and it’s fun to watch them explore their toys.

Baby may begin to jabber or combine syllables at this age. If you can be responsive, you can have short “conversations.” Expand on their noises. Complete the words that they begin with a sound. If they say “ma,” you can say “mama – yes – mama is holding you.” Consider it your first improv game with your special baby.

## **Row, Row, Row Your Boat**

When the parent or caregiver holds baby on their lap, facing the camera, they can move them in their arms while you move back and forth in front of your camera, in unison. The miles disappear. It feels like you are moving with your special baby. In a seated position, mime rowing a boat throughout this song.

Row, row, row your boat,  
Gently down the stream.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
Life is but a dream.

This next knee rhyme is a little more adventurous!

## **Roly Poly**

Sing this one to the tune of “Frère Jacques.”

Roly poly, roly poly,  
Up and down, up and down (one knee up, one knee down)  
Roly roly poly,  
Roly roly poly,  
Up and down, up and down.

## **Eensy Weensy Spider**

On one video visit, I asked what songs they sang at daycare and discovered that I remembered how to sing “Eensy Weensy Spider.” I started singing it to my grandbaby before she could sing along, and now she asks for it during each of our video visits. She’s mastered most of the hand actions now, but before she was able to do so, she joined me in the hand clapping at the end and saying “yea.”

The lyrics for “Eensy Weensy Spider” appear in the Resource section of this book.

## **Baa, Baa, Black Sheep**

This is another favorite that we started singing at this point. My grandbaby had a little toy lamb and that led us to this traditional song. The lyrics appear in the Resource section of this book.

## **Seven Months:**

Their verbal skills expand to use double syllables. Aee. Eee. You may also hear ‘mummmummmmm.’ If Mom responds to this sound, baby will begin to associate that sound with her.

Baby Sign Language is well received at this age. There are classes available, but many common baby signs can be found online. Teaching some of these signs can minimize frustrations for caregivers.

Shaking your head with an exaggerated “yes” or “no” will teach baby these common signs. This is a good time to make it a habit to wave goodbye at the end of each video visit.

## **The Wheels on the Bus**

This is a fun song as there is a lot of repetition and it’s one that they often sing at circle time gatherings. I think my grandbaby especially likes this song because she takes the bus. I check with her about which verse should come next. She says yes or no and has a sense of empowerment. What a gift.

The lyrics for this song appear in the Resource section of this book.

## **Notes / Ideas**

## Character Cameos

Take a puppet, teddy, or soft stuffed animal from your toy box (or bag) and talk baby talk with it. Or, have the puppet sing a song. Relax and let go. Get over any sense of self-consciousness that you may have. Have fun!

## New Experiences

Your special child will start to eat solid foods in the second half of this first year. Ask the child's parent or caregiver to save introducing new foods so you can share the experience with baby over video. You may want to get some food too – yogurt or apple sauce, for instance – and eat along with baby. It will be a shared activity that is possible with a highchair moved to the desktop space, or their laptop moved to the kitchen table.

Talk about the new food that baby is tasting for the first time. Tell them which ones are your favourites. Talk about how they are grown.

## Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley Grow

Oats, peas, beans and barley grow,  
Oats, peas, beans and barley grow,  
Can you or I or anyone know  
How oats, peas, beans and barley grow?

## Mary Had a Little Lamb

This is another favourite in our family. My mother's name is Mary and this name was passed along to my daughter. The lyrics appear in the Resource section of this book.

## Counting (1, 2, 3)

Over the first year, stick to 1, 2, 3... and add more numbers as baby grows. You can use 1, 2, 3 to start a song, a marching band, or to count objects (puppets, balls, etc.).

## Eight Months:

Babies tend to start losing the ability to easily understand new languages around now. Use a second language often, if you want them to find the sounds easy to use later on.

This is a good time to focus on waving goodbye when you sign off from your video visits. It's a fun ritual that my grandchild enjoyed, and I was rewarded with her first wave!

Blow kisses too! Kiss the fingers on your hand and blow them to your special baby. They understand what you're doing. You will be rewarded with some kisses blown back, sometime soon.



## **Playtime**

Ask the adult to set up the child in their highchair to colour or on the floor to play with a building toy, while you share playtime on video. It's fun to witness their steady progress while you "visit" with them.

## **Water Play**

Water play is important play! It's fun to learn about how water works. It's wonderful to share all these discoveries! Ask to share a water play with baby. You can bring the video to them or set up a water play area near the desktop computer area.

## **Share Your Scent**

Our strongest memories are stored in smells we remember. We recall people through scents. My grandmother kept a lavender potpourri in her cupboards and drawers. That's why she comes to mind when I smell it, even before I identify that I've smelled that scent.

Get a card, and spray it with your aftershave/perfume. Once it's dry, put it in a plastic bag and mail it to the family with a note. Ask them to take the card out and have it nearby for a couple of video sessions. Baby may begin to associate that smell with you, even at a distance.

## **Nine Months:**

Baby has separation anxiety around this time. They want their primary caregiver available as much as possible. It's a good idea to speak to the adult first, and then include baby in your conversation.

Baby is also learning new physical feats. They may be crawling, or even be an early walker. Each baby learns at their own speed. Accept where they are now and have confidence that they will keep learning.

## **Getting Around**

Ask to see your special baby when they learn to crawl, scoot around, or walk. It's so much fun to cheer for them and watch how good they feel as they get to show off their newest accomplishments to you.

It doesn't matter to me what they've learned. I applaud and I'm excited that they learned something new! Children blossom with raving fans. Their parents do, too.

## **Belly Button Fun**

Babies love pointing to their belly buttons! My grandchild loves seeing mine! So, maybe your special baby will want to show off her belly button next time? Maybe you can show yours?

## Ten Months:

Baby is beginning to understand many words and simple phrases. Baby will speak in gibberish to you, and you can respond with "How interesting, sounds good." Baby will smile at being heard and carry on chatting to you. Baby is sensitive to tone of voice and knows when you're interested.

### Dance, Dance, Dance

Once your baby is standing and bouncing, they will enjoy moving to music. If they are actually walking, they will love dancing with you on video. At either home, put on some good dancing music, and as the saying goes, dance like nobody's watching. Embrace the foolishness that entertains a child. Let loose!

### Facial Features

In this first year, babies learn to distinguish various facial features (eyes, nose, mouth, ears, etc.). This is something you can do together on video and it can be reinforced by the parent or caregiver, using a photo of your face in their home. Send them an enlarged close-up photo of your face and ask if they might use it for this purpose. It could hang in a plastic protector sheet, so baby can handle it without damaging the photo.

## Eleven Months:

Baby has separation anxiety around this time. They want their primary caregiver available as much as possible. It's a good idea to speak to the adult first, and then include baby in your conversation.

Baby is also learning new physical feats. They may be crawling, or even be an early walker. Each baby learns at their own speed. Accept where they are now and have confidence that they will keep learning.

Baby will start to imitate the words you use. When they try, encourage them by repeating it. It helps them learn how to say the word.

Baby can now put objects in a container. They may enjoy putting blocks into a box, or balls into a pot. This is a good time to count with them, as they place each object into a container.

My grandchild likes to build towers and then knock them over to watch my reaction. Very dramatic! Best of all, it produces laughter from her!

Books will become more important at this age. Share the books you love with your special baby. Read to them and show enthusiasm for things you want them to enjoy.

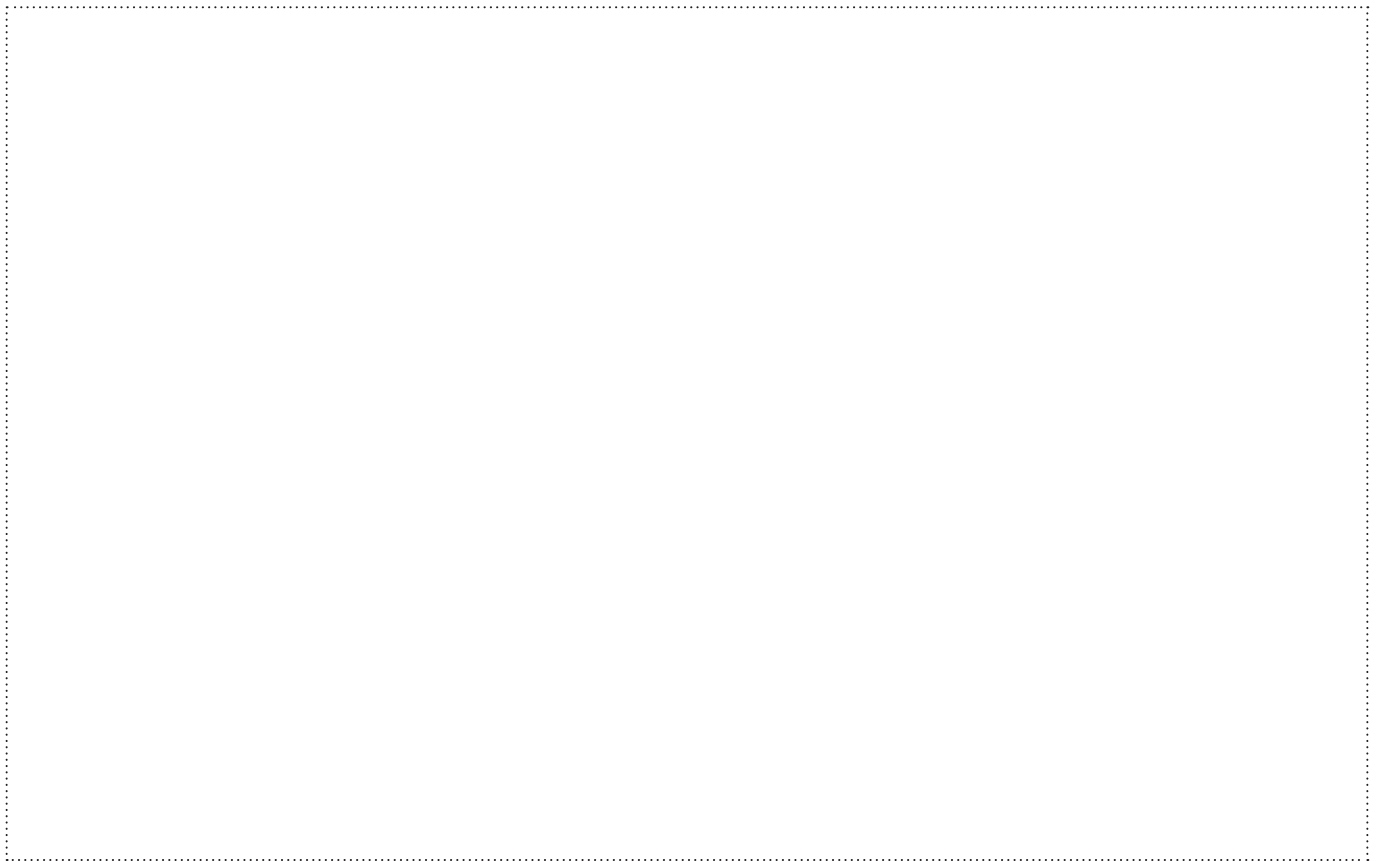
*\* At this stage, you may have built a repertoire of songs and activities that you rely on during your video visits. Please go back and review the ideas that were covered previously in this e-book. There may be a few songs or ideas that baby did not respond to or you did not get the chance to try out. Take some time now to try a few of them.*

## Planning Our Visits

When I'm home, my special bag of goodies is near my computer. It has a cloth for peek-a-boo, musical shakers, puppets, some bubbles, a feather, a balloon, and my penguin hat. A real mixed bag!

I also keep a sticky note on my computer and write notes of things that I want to try next time, to keep our visits vibrant and interesting. As I've said before, I'm responsive to baby's input and think of our time as an improv class for me. Following baby's lead makes a huge impact on them feeling seen and heard.

## Notes / Ideas



## One-Year-Olds (12 – 24 Months):

For the first year, we are totally dependent upon the child's caregiver to help us build our relationship. At one year of age, the child can begin to ask for you. We still need the adult to co-operate, but the child may ask to see us, and can communicate directly with us.

They might ask for a video session with you, much like they would ask for an adult to read a book or sing a song. The adult may not catch on right away, but if they fuss and point at the computer, they may want to see something that they understand is just for them, instead of looking at e-mail. They may even be able to say your name and look at the phone or computer.

If you are starting this book at this point because your child at a distance is over one year old, please go back to skim the first section to gather ideas. There are many tips in the first section to help strengthen the bond with your young child. Many of these ideas will also be useful in this second year.

Or, if there is an older sibling, be sure to read this whole book, to consider how you might use the information for the different ages and stages.

Many of the suggestions are suitable for older children. Just follow the child's lead. If they are not interested in doing what you had planned, try something else. That's why there are so many ideas to choose from. There is room for individual preferences for you and the baby or child you are reaching out to.

### Video Sessions

This is a wonderful time to figure out if you can plug your computer into your TV screen. This is especially exciting if you have a large screen TV. You can see your child in larger than the actual size! It's wonderful to behold.

Be sure to ask questions of the child, even though they can't answer them. It makes them feel involved in the conversation.

For example, ask about the weather. You may tell them about the weather where you are: "It's really sunny here today – the sky is blue. Is it sunny there, Abdul? Do you see any fluffy white clouds? Nana sees some nice clouds here." If you have a laptop, you may be able to show them the clouds. The parent will probably answer for the baby/child. Keep the conversation going, asking the child direct questions.

Or sing them a little rhyme related to the weather. There are many versions of the song "You Are My Sunshine" that thrill babies. Or you can sing a song to help the rain go away. I'd substitute the baby's name for Little Johnny in this song.

## *Rain, Rain, Go Away*

Rain, rain, go away,  
Come again another day.  
Little Johnny wants to play.  
Rain, rain, go to Spain,  
Never show your face again!

Just like having a “live” visit, in between questions/comments to the baby or child, you may have an overlapping conversation with the parent. I maintain eye contact with the baby while I carry on the conversation with the parent.

Then, when we were on a Skype session and the computer went into sleep mode at her end, my image would freeze in an awkward position, and then the monitor would go dark. She could still hear my voice, but my grandchild would walk over to wiggle the mouse to take the computer out of sleep mode, so that my image began to move again.

Use your own name several times throughout the session and be sure to begin and end each video session with your name. For example:

Start each session with a warm hello: “Hi, Sabine, it’s Nana. Did you sleep well? I’m so happy to see you.”

I did lots of waving at the beginning and the end of each of our video sessions, and my daughter told me that I got the first wave back from my grandchild. When it happened, it was a very happy day. I told everyone who would listen!

At the end of each session: “Bye-bye, Michael. Have fun at daycare today. Can you wave to Nana? Say bye-bye, Nana.”

I also started blowing kisses sooner than I would have expected to get them back and was delighted when I was rewarded with an “early” kiss!

## Voice Recorded Messages

Most cell phones have an option to send a recorded message via text or SMS. I send these to my grandchild when I'm travelling and can't find an Internet connection. Mine are short and cheerful, and she seems to enjoy hearing them. I'm looking forward to getting one back. I have received voicemail messages on my home phone line that charm me.

"Hi, Nana, Skype," was a favorite early phone message.

I was visiting and babysitting my special grandchild while the parents went out of town. They prepared a recorded message and sent it to me from their car via text message. It was a cheerful message from both of them saying "hi" and that they knew she'd have fun, and that they would see her soon. It was very reassuring to her. When she was missing them, I was able to offer to phone them, and she was comforted when she heard their voices. We played it twice over 4 days and it worked like a charm to cheer her up.

## Postcards

Mail postcards from your own city, or when you travel. Postcards have strong images and arrive bold and beautiful. These are fun to carry around and show to friends. It's another reminder that you're thinking of them. Just write a few words, printed clearly.

These cards can become a type of book. The parent or caregiver can punch a hole in the corner of each postcard and tie them with a ribbon or put them on a metal ring for easy viewing.

When you're on holiday, you can mail postcards from various cities and as they grow up, they will have a collection to enjoy with you. When you look at them together, you will have stories to share.

## Sharing Images

On video sessions, I like to share old family pictures. Just hold a photo up close, in front of the camera. If you have amusing pictures, it can lead to much fun and laughter. I shared one of my daughter and me sticking out our tongues at the camera in one of those photo booths, and before long, my grandchild and I were sticking out our tongues at one another. My daughter was rolling her eyes, yet smiling.

Now, when we videocall, if my daughter and I are having a serious conversation, and my grandchild gets restless, I'll stick out my tongue and she will smile and stick out her tongue at me, and feel she has some of my attention. It feels like an inside joke. My daughter ignores our behaviour, and we continue our conversation.

## Marching Band

Shaking rattles or playing simple musical instruments (nothing too high in pitch at this age, as their ears are more sensitive) is fun and can lead to a marching band. We played around with instruments on video as she learned how they worked. The harmonica was a favorite!

When I visited her, we did a daily marching band throughout the house. Then, on our follow-up video visits, we played our instruments and marched around the room. We both enjoyed the memories.

## Alphabet Song

The A, B, C, D song is always a hit in English. In what other languages can you teach the alphabet song? Do you have any large letters? I have some initials to highlight the letters we love. I'll tell her some of my favorite letters and what words begin with them.

## Stickers

Mail stickers in an envelope addressed to the young child and decorate the envelope with stickers too! They can stick them everywhere and drive adults crazy! What fun!

One morning when I was visiting, we started playing with some of the stickers after breakfast. I have a picture of my grandchild and me in our pajamas, with stickers on our noses. That is a photo I treasure, and I hope she'll share that one with her own grandchild.

Mail a balloon and keep one with you that's the same colour and shape. Blow yours up while you are on video and ask someone to blow the other one up at the child's end. Then, you can both play with the balloons, and the child has that one to play with after you're finished your playtime.

## Balloons

Another idea to develop this theme would be to include a copy of *The Red Balloon*, a children's book, or another classic book about balloons.

*NOTE: Please make sure the parent knows that balloons that have burst are a choking hazard for children. Broken balloons must be disposed of immediately.*

## **Bubbles, Bubbles, Everywhere**

Blowing bubbles! This is a great activity for a child who has blown bubbles before. I cover my computer keyboard with paper and blow the bubbles at the camera at this end, and she blows at the computer screen to try to make them move. She claps to burst them too. We both laugh at this silly fun. It's helping to develop her imagination.

## **Birthday Fun**

We had a video session on the morning of her second birthday. I lit a candle and sang Happy Birthday, and we blew out the candle together. It was the start of a fun filled day for her!

You could celebrate the day of your birth with baby, too. It's all very exciting. The Birthday Song is always a winner!

## **Gifts**

My daughter started putting the gifts aside that I mailed to my grandchild. These gifts were opened when we were on a video call. It felt great to share these moments together.

## **Counting Fun**

Now it's time to count up to ten with the child. If you want to teach the child to count in another language, this is the perfect timing! It can mean more when you are counting objects, rather than counting for no reason. You can always use your fingers and thumbs though, if you don't have anything else to count.

When my grandbaby learned to count to ten, instead of the number "seven," she'd say the word "lucky." I haven't been able to confirm the origin of lucky number seven, but I like to imagine that's how it evolved.

## **Feathers Tickle My Fancy**

Mail a few feathers and keep some the same colour at your end. Ask the parent or caregiver to call you when they receive them. Then, at your online visit, ask the child to pick up the red feather, as you pick up your red feather, and ask them to tickle their chin, or their nose, even their toes! Then, they can use the blue feather to tickle their belly button. I'll admit that I tickled my belly button with the blue feather. That was a big hit!

On the next video visit, she found one of the feathers by the computer, and I still had mine handy, so she initiated the game again, and wanted to tickle me. So, my daughter held her close to the screen, and I squirmed with laughter when I was "tickled." Teach them to play along and soon they will giggle and wiggle away from your tickling fingers.



## Paint with Water

Mail a Paint with Water book. There are two versions of these early painting books. My favourite for this age is the type that has some dried paint on each line of the pictures. When a child uses a paintbrush with water, the colours come out with each stroke.

The other type is best for two-year-olds. These types have blocks of dried paint on the edge of each page. The child needs to be shown how to get some paint on the brush, and then they can paint. For young children, it's easier to use than real paints.

I mailed the first version to a child and the parent had the child paint one and they mailed it back to me! It's fun to have their "art" on my fridge.

## Books

You could each take the same book out of the library, or buy two books, mail one book and keep the other. Then, you can read that book to the child while the parent holds the other book and the child. You could buy one book, write out the text to support you at your place, and mail the book to them. Then, you won't have to see the words.

When a parent or caregiver cuddles the child with their back to the computer camera and you read the book aloud, I'm sure it will feel (to the child) like you're right there, holding them.

I can now read picture (large text) books through the camera lens. My daughter holds her child and knows just where to hold the book so I can see the text and read it aloud. She coaches me when I miss a word, just like I did for her when she was learning to read. It makes us both giggle.

Books are a part of most of our video sessions. My grandchild picks them out, and if it's one I know, I'll join in. The other day, she chose one that had the Jack and Jill rhyme as the storybook. I was able to "read" along, even though I could not see the book, because I remembered the rhyme. My grandchild gave me some puzzled looks, trying to understand how I could read this book, without even seeing the pictures or words.

There is another favourite picture book called Baby Beluga. It is based on a song by Raffi, on his Baby Beluga recording. I printed out the lyrics to the song and sing it to my grandchild while an adult turns the pages. This makes us both happy. I used to sing this song to my children.

## Notes / Ideas

## Two-Year-Olds (24–36 Months)

### Sticker Books

It's fun for your baby to have their very own sticker book. There are many varieties. Choose one, mail it to them, and then you can mail sheets of stickers for them to add to their book.

### Ten Fingers

Follow the actions as the rhyme indicates.

I have ten little fingers	(hold them up, palms forward)
And they all belong to me.	
I can make them do things.	
Would you like to see?	
I can shut them up tight	(make fists)
Or open them up wide,	(spread fingers)
I can put them together	(palms and fingers together)
Or make them all hide.	(knuckles together, hiding fingers)
I can make them jump high,	(reach up high)
I can make them jump low,	(way down low)
I can fold them quietly	(resting in lap)
And hold them just so.	(still resting)

### Finger Puppets

Does the child have finger puppets? Sing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," and let the child choose the next animal. When they hold up a cow, you sing "With a moo, moo here and a moo, moo there, here a moo, there a moo, everywhere a moo, moo. Old MacDonald had a farm, E, I, E, I, O." Bounce your finger around like you have a puppet on it, or get your own finger puppets. My grandchild has a set of finger puppets, and a random pickle finger puppet has been added, so our version of Old MacDonald has a pickle that tickles! Let loose and have fun with it. The more fun you have, the more fun everyone will have!

You may wish to make or purchase finger puppets and play with them a few times online before you mail them to the child. It's quite easy to make finger puppets, using felt, sharp scissors, and glue. Begin by making the "blanks" first, and then add the features of the animals you want to portray. It's a creative challenge that's fun and satisfying.

### Old MacDonald

There is a full version of the lyrics in the Resource section, in case you want the details, but please don't become too tied to them. Develop your own version of this traditional song. Children like to play with the lyrics and sounds, and you don't have to finish this delightfully long song.

At this age, I just sang the verse about the animal puppet we were playing with and did not sing about the past animals. When the baby gets older, it's fun to make it a bit of a memory game too, by singing about the past animals, in sequence, reviewing the past verses.

Have fun with it! If your special child gets bored, move along to another song.

## **Hokey Pokey**

Have you danced the Hokey Pokey? It's a nursery rhyme that helps children learn about their body parts. There are videos on YouTube if you are not familiar with this classic song. The lyrics are in the Resource section of this book.

My friend is a big fan! She has a fridge magnet that asks: "What if the Hokey Pokey IS what it's all about?"

## **Recording Books**

It's fun to start a collection of books that you read aloud and record. Baby can listen again and again. You can use any number of recording devices. What do you have available? A cassette player or digital recorder will both do the job. The baby needs to have the same technology to be able to listen to the recording.

There are a few retail outlets that have books pre-made with the ability for you to record yourself reading them. You could prepare one at home and send it along in the mail.

And, when you get together, record yourself reading other books, with baby on your lap. Place those books and the recording together in a plastic bag. The child can listen to these pre-recorded books with other people and remember how good it felt to be on your lap, listening to these stories.

The parent or caregiver will appreciate the break and enjoy the cuddle!

## **Draw a Book Together**

When you are together, create your own book. Staple some pages together to look like a book, and on the cover, put your names and the title (i.e. Opa and Brent's Great Adventure) and when you do something together, draw a page. I drew a crude picture and wrote some words in our book each day we were together. I let my grandchild colour and scribble on the pages with me. It was a book we created together, and she kept it after I had gone home. It may help her remember our special moments.

## **Family Tree Book**

If you make a picture book of the child's family tree, it could become a keepsake for them to refer to for years to come. You can use photos of each relative and add their names and dates of birth. Other people can go through this book with baby.

This book can be made using a photo book or scrapbook or make one using construction paper pages that can be laminated. Extra pages can be added as the family grows. It's your personal preference. Enjoy creating this keepsake for your special baby.

## Notes / Ideas



## Acknowledgments

It would not have occurred to me to write this book if it were not for my friends asking me what I was doing with my grand-daughters this week. They went home and did the same things with the babies they loved.

When I was sharing this interesting news with my chiropractor, while getting an adjustment, she suggested writing the book to share with others. Thank you, Katarina Bulat. A great idea! Nadia Bassett supported the project from the beginning and it was strengthened by her ideas and enthusiasm.

Like most projects, it took on a life of its own once I spoke about it and other people shared their stories with me. I received remarkable support and I'm so grateful for every suggestion. So many people are already building strong relationships with babies and children across the miles.

My readers gave me wonderful ideas and feedback and made it a better book. The editor, Tracey Nesbitt, made it a pleasure for you to read.

Thanks to Raymond Helkio for the gift of his gifted graphic design. Ray is also the author of "TGMR."

My life is supported by my father, Bob Millard, and my children, Michael and Corinne. I am blessed with many kind friends. I'm a fortunate woman surrounded by a circle of mentors and friends too numerous to mention here. You each know how much I dare to care, and I thank you for being there for me.

## Resources Section

### *Traditional Songs* *Lullabies*

#### **Rock-a-Bye, Baby**

Rock-a-bye, baby  
In the treetop  
When the wind blows  
The cradle will rock  
When the bough breaks  
The cradle will fall  
And down will come baby  
Cradle and all

Baby is drowsing  
Cozy and fair  
Mother sits near  
In her rocking chair  
Forward and back  
The cradle she swings  
And though baby sleeps  
He hears what she sings

From the high rooftops  
Down to the sea  
No one's as dear  
As baby to me  
Wee little fingers  
Eyes wide and bright  
Now sound asleep  
Until morning light

#### **Hush, Little Baby**

Hush, little baby, don't say a word.  
Papa's gonna buy you a mockingbird

And if that mockingbird won't sing,  
Papa's gonna buy you a diamond ring.

And if that diamond ring turns brass,  
Papa's gonna buy you a looking glass.

And if that looking glass gets broke,  
Papa's gonna buy you a billy goat.

And if that billy goat won't pull,  
Papa's gonna buy you a cart and bull

And if that cart and bull turn over,  
Papa's gonna buy you a dog named Rover.

And if that dog named Rover won't bark,  
Papa's gonna buy you a horse and cart.

And if that horse and cart fall down,  
You'll still be the sweetest little baby in town.

#### **Thula Baba Lullaby (Zulu)**

#### **Hush-a-Bye Little Man Lullaby (English)**

Thula thul, thula baba, thula sana,  
Thul'ubab uzobuya, ekuseni.  
Thula thul, thula baba, thula sana,  
Thul'ubab uzobuya, ekuseni.

Kukh'inkanyezi, zi-holel' ubaba,  
Zimkhanyisela indlel'e ziyak-haya,  
Sobe sikhona ka bonke bashoyo,

Bayathi buyela. Ubuye le khaya.

Thula thula thula baba,  
Thula thula thula sana.

Hush, hush, hush-a-bye little man, be quiet baby,  
Be quiet, Daddy will be back in the morning.  
Hush, hush, hush-a-bye little man, be quiet baby,  
Be quiet, Daddy will be back in the morning.

There's a star that will draw him home.  
It will illuminate his path home  
Where we are. All will urge,

They'll say, go back. He returned to this home.

Hush, hush-a-bye baby  
Hush, hush-a-bye baby.

## Itsuki Lullaby

五木の子守り唄

I'm bound here until obon.  
After that you'll miss me.  
I wish obon would come earlier.  
'Cause I want to go / home early.

My family's very poor,  
But others are rich.  
They wear good kimono belts,  
And good foot gears.

Even if I were to die,  
Who would shed tears?  
You only hear cicadas cry  
In the back mountains.

## Other Songs

### Eensy Weensy Spider

The eensy weensy spider ..... (use your hands to mime a spider climbing)

Crawled up the water spout.

Down came the rain..... (reach both hands up, and wiggle your fingers as you lower your hands)

And washed the spider out..... (make the motion an umpire does to indicate "out")

Out came the sun..... (join your hands over your head to make a sun shape)

And dried up all the rain..... (rock back and forth with your sun)

And the eensy weensy spider..... (spider fingers crawling up)

Crawled up the spout again.

As I mentioned earlier, we started clapping and saying "Yea" at the end of this song,  
and it has stuck.

### Baa, Baa, Black Sheep

Baa, baa, black sheep,  
Have you any wool?  
Yes sir, yes sir,  
Three bags full.

One for the master,  
One for the dame,  
And one for the little boy  
Who lives down the lane.

Baa, baa, black sheep,  
Have you any wool?  
Yes sir, yes sir,  
Three bags full.

## The Wheels on the Bus

*(hand actions: hands/fists going round and round)*

The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round, round and round.  
The wheels on the bus go round and round, all through the town.

*(hand actions: hands and arms in front of you like doors, clapping your hands together on the word "shut")*

The doors on the bus go open and shut, open and shut, open and shut.  
The doors on the bus go open and shut, all through the town.

*(hand actions: mime putting a ticket in the box)*

The driver on the bus says ticket please, ticket please, ticket please.  
The driver on the bus says ticket please, all through the town.

*(move up and down with the words, and ask someone to lift the baby up and down)*

The people on the bus go up and down, up and down, up and down.  
The people on the bus go up and down, all through the town.

*(hand actions: ball up your fist and pretend rub your eyes)*

The babies on the bus go wah wah wah, wah wah wah, wah wah wah.  
The babies on the bus go wah, wah, wah, all through the town.

The mommies on the bus say I love you, I love you, I love you.  
The mommies on the bus say I love you, all through the town.

*(hand actions: pretend to honk a horn with the heel of your hand)*

The horn on the bus goes beep beep beep, beep beep beep, beep beep beep.  
The horn on the bus goes beep beep beep, all through the town.

I like to wrap up the song with the chorus  
*(hand actions: hands/fists going round and round)*

The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round, round and round.  
The wheels on the bus go round and round, all through the town.



## Mary Had a Little Lamb

Mary had a little lamb,  
Little lamb, little lamb,  
Mary had a little lamb,  
Its fleece was white as snow.

And everywhere that Mary went,  
Mary went, Mary went,  
Everywhere that Mary went,  
That lamb was sure to go.

It followed her to school one day,  
School one day, school one day,  
It followed her to school one day,  
That was against the rule.

It made the children laugh and play,  
Laugh and play, laugh and play,  
It made the children laugh and play,  
To see a lamb at school.

*And so the teacher turned it out,  
Turned it out, turned it out,  
And so the teacher turned it out,  
But still it lingered near...*

*"Why does the lamb love Mary so?  
Mary so? Mary so?  
Why does the lamb love Mary so?"  
The eager children asked.*

*"Why, Mary loves the lamb, you know,  
The lamb, you know, the lamb, you know!  
Why, Mary loves the lamb, you know."  
The teacher did reply.*

## Old MacDonald Had a Farm

*Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.  
And on his farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O.  
With a moo, moo here and a moo, moo there,  
Here a moo, there a moo,  
Everywhere a moo, moo,  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

*Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.  
And on his farm he had a pig, E-I-E-I-O.  
With an oink, oink here and an oink, oink there,  
Here an oink, there an oink,  
Everywhere an oink, oink,  
With a moo-moo here and a moo-moo there, (I left these verses out)  
Here a moo, there a moo,  
Everywhere a moo, moo,  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

*Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.  
And on his farm he had a horse, E-I-E-I-O.  
With a neigh, neigh here and a neigh, neigh there,  
Here a neigh, there a neigh,  
Everywhere a neigh, neigh,  
With an oink, oink here and an oink, oink there  
Here an oink, there an oink,  
Everywhere an oink, oink,  
With a moo-moo here and a moo-moo there,  
Here a moo, there a moo,  
Everywhere a moo, moo,  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

## Old MacDonald Had a Farm *Continued*

*Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.  
And on his farm he had some sheep, E-I-E-I-O.  
With a baa, baa here and a baa, baa there,  
Here a baa, there a baa,  
Everywhere a baa, baa,  
With a neigh, neigh here and a neigh, neigh there,  
Here a neigh, there a neigh,  
Everywhere a neigh, neigh,  
With an oink, oink here and an oink, oink there,  
Here an oink, there an oink,  
Everywhere an oink, oink,  
With a moo, moo here and a moo, moo there,  
Here a moo, there a moo,  
Everywhere a moo, moo,  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

*Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.  
And on his farm he had a chicken, E-I-E-I-O.  
With a bawk, bawk here and a bawk, bawk there,  
Here a bawk, there a bawk,  
Everywhere a bawk, bawk,  
With a baa, baa here and a baa, baa there,  
Here a baa, there a baa,  
Everywhere a baa, baa,  
With a neigh, neigh here and a neigh, neigh there,  
Here a neigh, there a neigh,  
Everywhere a neigh, neigh,  
With an oink, oink here and an oink, oink there,  
Here an oink, there an oink,  
Everywhere an oink, oink,  
With a moo, moo here and a moo, moo there,  
Here a moo, there a moo,  
Everywhere a moo, moo,  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

*A few other ideas for verses*

- *Ducks quack*
- *Dogs bow wow (here a bow, there a wow)*
- *Cats meow*
- *Mouse eek, eek*

## Hokey Pokey

*You put your right hand in,  
You put your right hand out,  
You put your right hand in,  
And you shake it all about,  
You do the hokey pokey,  
And you turn yourself around.  
That's what it's all about.*

- 2) left hand*
- 3) right foot*
- 4) left foot*
- 5) head*
- 6) butt*
- 7) whole self*

## Sleeping Bunnies Song

*See the little bunnies sleeping till it's nearly noon, ..... (child pretends to sleep)*  
*Come and let us gently wake them with a merry tune*  
*Oh so still, are they ill,*  
*NO ..... (shout NO, and child gets up)*  
*Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop ..... (clap your hands as child hops)*  
*Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop*  
*Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop*  
*Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop*