



Six Big Changes for BABIES

Between 6 and 18 months of age, babies:

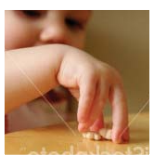
1



Grow more slowly

- Babies get bigger and stronger but their growth slows down.
- Since they are growing more slowly, they will not always want to eat as much as parents expect.
- Parents may think baby has become picky or suddenly have a “bad appetite”.

2



Need to practice using their fingers

- Babies have a strong need to practice exploring with their fingers, so they love feeding themselves.
- Practicing is so important that it can become more important than sleeping or eating.
- Practicing during mealtimes can be messy and frustrating for parents.

3



Get better at remembering things

- Babies begin to remember more about what they like and don't, including specific foods.
- They also remember how, when and where they are fed (see scripts below).
- Babies start to give cues to ask parents for things they can't have.

4



Start to use scripts to predict things

- Babies need to learn everything about the world around them, so they create “scripts” to help them remember what should happen next, who does what, and what they can do.
- By 11 or 12 months, babies have “scripts” for bath time, mealtime, bed time, etc. If something doesn't happen according to the “script” the baby may get upset.
- Parents can change the script by repeating a new routine over and over and the baby will adapt.

5



“Ask” their caregivers to help them learn

- Babies learn by interacting with caregivers. Toddlers will look back at caregivers when trying new things. They point at everything they want to learn about, even foods, but this doesn't mean they are hungry.
- By 18 months, babies are more comfortable learning on their own.
- By paying attention and talking to their babies about their toys and actions, parents will help babies learn; this is not spoiling, it's learning!

6



Need to practice their new motor skills

- Between 6 and 18 months, babies learn to move in many new ways!
- They need to practice A LOT and may start waking at night or refusing food to get the practice they need
- Waking at night again and refusing food is often confusing for parents. Giving babies more time to practice during the day can make a big difference. Once the skills are mastered, babies don't need to practice as much!