

BABY BASICS

Bonding With Your Baby Can Be As Simple As Bath Time

(NAPSA)—Bonding with your baby and building a trusting relationship is one of the most essential parts of your baby's life. Touching your baby, singing to your baby, rocking your baby to sleep, and even massaging your baby's arms and legs can gently calm him and promote closeness between parent and child.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, "There is nothing wrong with a newborn cuddling with his or her mother right after birth or having a close time together with his or her new family. If it's possible, we encourage you to do that... But don't think those first minutes are more important than all the hours and days that will follow. Building a healthy parent-child relationship doesn't take place in a moment of time; it's a long-term process."

Knowing the importance of bonding, parents should take every moment as an opportunity to connect and further their baby's development. And the experts agree—as explained in a recent issue of *American Baby*, "Your relationship with your newborn deepens over the course of weeks as you feed, soothe, and bathe your little one. It's the time you spend caring for your baby that helps create chemistry and cements the bond."

Bath time is the perfect time for your baby to benefit most from extra loving care and it can be a special bonding time for parent



Bath time turns into bonding time with education and fun for little ones.

and child. You can make it more fun and interactive by bathing baby in Munchkin's White Hot® Inflatable Safety Duck Tub that quacks and has a White Hot safety disc that tells you if the water is too hot. As they grow into toddlers, you can also add bath toys such as Munchkin's Sea and Learn Bath Shapes. They'll have fun repeating the shapes, numbers and letters as you stick them on the tub walls, all the while developing their math and vocabulary skills.

"After a splash in an infant tub, dry baby off and use some baby oil to rub on her back, head and feet," says American Baby author Colleen Moriarty. Massaging oil or lotion on baby after bath not only helps keep your baby's skin soft and prevents uncomfortable rashes, but it's also another easy way to bond with your baby. "Massage can help you understand your baby's feelings, what

she likes, and what makes her comfortable."

Beyond bath time, here are some great ideas to help create tighter baby bonds:

- Hold your baby as often as you can. Carry your baby close to you in a sling or carrier inside and outside the house to provide the reassuring sense of touch.

- Sing and talk to your baby. Even nursery rhymes and simple songs can soothe a fussy child. He has been listening to your voice since he was in the womb.

- Play games together. Simple games like peekaboo can help baby cope with your absences. Games also teach baby to pay attention to what you're saying and doing, as well as teach cause and effect.

- You don't have to feel that you are spoiling your baby by picking him up every time he cries. Comforting your baby when he's upset helps to create a stronger emotional bond. Babies feel more secure knowing that their needs will be met, and your sense of touch is calming during stressful times.

- Establish a daily routine to help the entire family feel more relaxed. A fixed but flexible schedule should include approximate times for feeding, naps and play.

For more information on products that help make bath time a more fun, stress-free bonding experience for both baby and parent, please visit www.munchkin.com.