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## How To Fall Even More In Love With Your Baby

Five easy steps to deepening the bond between baby and parent

By Renee Bock



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Admit it. You love to just watch your baby. While they sleep, in the car seat, in the stroller, playing quietly. There's nothing more alluring. Babies are miraculous, and your own baby is simply a show stopper.

As a mother of three boys and a long time childcare center director, I'm about to share a few secrets with you. There are ways to deepen that affection, and to grow your attachment to your baby. They are easy, they don't cost any money, and I guarantee you will enjoy them.



**1. Notice all the baby can do now:** Very often parents spend time focusing on the next developmental milestone. Instead, focus on how amazing your baby is right this minute. You'll start to see his greatness in more detail.

**2. Slow Down:** Especially in New York City, parents are rushing a lot of the time. Babies sense when you are hurrying and feeling stress. They like to move at a slower, predictable pace. Remind yourself to slow down. If you do, the baby will be calmer, more responsive, and the two of you will communicate more easily.

**3. Observe During Play:** Give yourself permission to spend time observing your baby during play. As the child sets their own agenda and engages in open ended, unstructured play, you will see what is really important to them. Start with five minutes every day. Turn off the phone and all media and just BE together. Don't talk, don't read, just watch her. How does he use the pots and pans? Is there a problem she's working on solving? Little by little extend the observation time and get to know your baby even better.

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**4. Learn the Baby's Signs:** As you observe you'll start to notice things that were invisible before. She often cries when she gets into a certain position, he lifts his arms just so when he wants to be picked up, when she babbles to the teddy bear it seems like a conversation. There is a loop between observation, understanding, and responsive care. The baby is more predictable, you are more calm and confident, and you enjoy more.

**5. Respect the Baby:** In all you do, respect the baby. If you see the baby as a full person rather than a cute doll, your relationship will deepen. You'll care more and the baby will feel more cared for. One of the easiest ways to show the baby respect is to tell the baby what you are going to do next. "Now, I'm going to pick you up. Now I'll change your diaper. The bath is going to be warm." Babies thrive when routines are predictable. They learn language when it is immediate and meaningful. Narrating care routines is a great way to partner with your baby and support their learning.

We know that feelings of attachment between a caregiver and child are the single most important factor in the healthy development and well-being of the child and there are so many easy and fun ways to establish attachment. When a child feels cared for, understood, and respected, they connect with their adult and begin to create and discover their own sense of self. Be sure to take pleasure in this process.

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Renee Bock is a dedicated early childhood educator, who is currently the Chief Academic Officer at [Explore+Discover](#), a social learning center in Manhattan that is committed to setting the standard for infant and toddler care and education. Renee has more than a decade of experience in the field and holds a Master's in Early Childhood Education from Bank Street College in New York. She has three sons, Ariel (16), Raffi (14), and Shaya (13). She can be reached at [Renee@K3Learn.com](mailto:Renee@K3Learn.com)

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