

# 10 Ways Babies Learn When We Sing to Them

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By Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

1. **Bonding** – When you sing to your baby, they bond with you and your voice. Singing makes yours the first and most important voice in her life. Your baby learns that you LOVE him!
2. **Transitions** – Babies feel safe when life is predictable. A song for waking up, sleeping, and other routine transitions and activities helps them know what comes next.
3. **Language** – Language is in itself musical, and when you sing and speak, your baby learns about words, language, and communication. Through your singing, baby's language comprehension begins.
4. **New words** – While you sing and hold your baby, you introduce new vocabulary. When you hold up a stuffed dog as you sing about a dog, baby learns to associate the name of that toy with the words you sing. When you sing about parts of the body and kiss your baby's feet or tickle his tummy, he learns new words.
5. **Rhythm and rhyme** – Music includes rhythm and rhyme, again, part of our language. In time, babies will recognize rhymes and rhythms.
6. **Play** – Singing is one of many methods of play and “sing-play” is a fun way to interact with babies.
7. **Family fun** – Singing is a great way to involve older siblings in welcoming a new baby to the home. Singing to and playing with the baby builds a bond between siblings. Make singing a family activity.
8. **Singing names** – A baby can learn his name by hearing it in songs. Try substituting your baby's name for other words in songs so he hears his name sung over and over again.

9. **Listening skills** – Like reading, singing is an activity that requires listening. It's another opportunity for your baby to begin to understand language and feelings expressed through language and sing-play.
  10. **LOVE** – All of the above boils down to using your singing voice as a way to express love. Babies don't care if you are a great singer. They only care that you are singing to THEM! In their eyes (and their ears), you'll be a star!
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Cathy and Marcy are trailblazers in children's and family music. They play dozens of instruments from banjo and mandolin, to electric guitar, steel drum, and ukulele. Learn more about them online at <http://www.cathymarcy.com/>.

**Audience:** *Family*

**Age:** *Infant/Toddler*

**Topics:** *Subject Areas, Creative Arts, Music and Songs*

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