

Reflecting on babies and mirror play

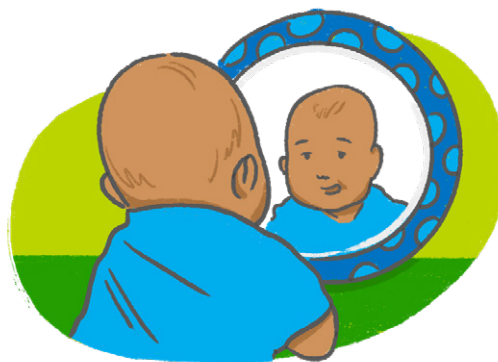
Babies love looking at themselves in the mirror. They're not tiny egomaniacs checking their hair or teeth (if they even have any). For your baby, a mirror is pure play—fun and fascinating. It's a simple way for parents and caregivers to connect. Mirror play invites you to talk, laugh and learn together.



Scan for more information, services and resources.

Learning and Growing Through Mirror Play

Mirror play is fun and supports healthy development. It helps build visual skills, supports tummy time and encourages early language. Before babies can talk, you can point to facial features and enjoy simple back-and-forth “Smart Talk” together.



Developing Self-Awareness

Mirror play helps babies connect their movements and expressions to what they see. This builds self-awareness and supports social and emotional growth like trust, confidence and relationships. It also helps children manage feelings, connect with others and feel safe in their world. Simple ways to connect with your baby and support learning include:

Young infant

Birth – 8 months

- **Start with face time.**
Hold your baby in front of a mirror during tummy time or while sitting in your lap.
- **Name what they see.**
Point out features like eyes and noses to build early language.
- **Copy and respond.**
Mimic their sounds and movements to encourage connection.
- **Keep it short and gentle.**
A few minutes is enough. Watch for signs they are ready for a break.

Older infant

6 – 18 months

- **Make it interactive.**
Tap the mirror, wave or guide their hand to explore.
- **Play “Who’s that?”**
Point to their reflection and say their name. Then point to yourself.
- **Add movement.**
Clap, bounce or sway together to keep them engaged.
- **Use simple words and sounds.**
Label actions like “clap,” “wave” or “smile” to support language growth.

Toddler

15 – 36 months

- **Turn it into a game.**
Ask, “Where’s your nose?” or “Can you make a silly face?”
- **Build independence.**
Let them explore while you stay nearby and talk about what they do.
- **Talk about feelings.**
Make and name expressions like happy, sad or surprised.
- **Use everyday moments.**
Add a mirror to routines like getting dressed or brushing teeth for playful learning.