

Bath Time

Babies and toddlers don't always need daily baths. But some little ones love them! A warm bath at the end of the day can be a welcome routine. It can also bring the calm. Here are tips for a relaxing and safe bath time:

- **Have everything ready before you put your child in the water.** Gather soap, shampoo, towel, clean clothing/pajamas, diaper, and toys.
- **Run the water and check the temperature.** If you don't have your water temperature set below 120°F, you will need to test the water with your wrist. It should feel warm, but not hot.
- **Plan for the transition.** Not all children enjoy the bath, and even those who do might resist. Children this age have a hard time moving from one thing to another (see *Transitions* article). This can happen even when they are about to do something they like! Ease the move toward the bath with a countdown to get undressed or another silly game.
- **Never leave when your child is in the bath.** It is NOT SAFE to leave your baby or toddler alone in the bath. They can drown quickly in a small amount of water, even in a bath chair.
- **Talk to your baby as you wash them.** Bath time is a great opportunity to focus closely on your child. Since you are likely sitting right next to the tub, you can offer your full attention. Talk to them about their day. You can also name their body parts as you help them wash.
- **Sing the same "bath" song each time.** It could be something splishy-splashy, or any other song (even one you've made up).
- **Have some fun!** You don't even need fancy toys. A few plastic items from your kitchen (cups, spoons, etc.) that float or sink are always fun.



Routines like an evening bath can also help signal to your child that bedtime is right around the corner. Once out of the bath, you can move on to other evening routines like teeth brushing, story time, and tucking in.

