



## Food for thought:

*"The truth is there are lots of reasons for children not to watch television. The newborn brain develops very rapidly in the first two to three years of life. It is being wired. We know from studies of newborn rats that if you expose them to different levels of visual stimuli, the architecture of the brain looks very different. Over stimulation of the brain during this critical period can create habits of the mind that are ultimately deleterious"* writes Dr Dimitryhristakis. He estimates that for every hour of television watched per day by children aged one to three, there is a 10% increase in the risk of the child having attention deficit problems by the age of seven. Other studies have shown that television watching of children is associated with obesity and aggressiveness. A recent British survey has found that one in four children aged 6 to 24 months have a television in their bedroom!

This research was brought to my attention by Cherry Bond in Touch Matters, September 2004. The research references are available on request.

## Baby massage with bumps

Pregnant women are now welcomed on the baby massage courses. Joining into a baby massage course while pregnant will prepare for the time after the birth. It will teach useful skills such as massage for colic. Women can then massage their baby soon after the birth - before they feel up to joining a class after the birth.

## Nappy Song

Most babies and children have a time when they are extremely uncooperative when it comes to changing their nappies. Sometimes it helps if putting the nappy back on is made into a game. Here is a suggestion.

*Eazy peazy, Nice and eazy,  
Stretch your arms  
And bend your kneezy.*

*Hold baby's hands together, then gently stretch her arms out sideways, and let them go. Hold her legs below the knees, gently bend them up to her chest, put nappy under and let them go.*

## Babies don't keep

I hope my children look back some day,  
and see a parent who had time to play.  
There will be years for cleaning and cooking,  
but children grow up when you are not looking.  
So ... quiet down cobwebs ...dust go to sleep,  
I'm rocking my baby and babies don't keep.

Author unknown



### What is infant massage?

Infant massage is an ancient tradition in many cultures. It is being rediscovered in the West. Clinical evidence shows that loving, touching and nurturing contact between caregiver and infant has an important impact on their development.

Infant massage is something that every parent or caregiver can learn and practice - providing benefits to both baby and parent. It consists of simple strokes using light natural oil to allow your hands to glide over baby's delicate skin. The movements are safe and relaxing for both you and the baby.

Young babies are accustomed to the constant tactile stimulation and movement in the womb, and they benefit from the re-establishment of those rhythms after birth.

Babies enjoy being handled and massaged in a manner that communicates your strength, love and confidence. All strokes are slow and rhythmic with just enough pressure to be comfortable but stimulating.

### Learn how to massage your baby

You can start massaging your baby from birth. The best time to begin is between one and nine months before the baby starts crawling. Massage can be adapted to suit older children.

Courses are organised for you and your baby. These are regularly run in the Nottingham area. Each course consists of one session per week for five weeks. Each session lasts approximately one and a half hours. The classes are held in small groups of parents (or grandparents or other carers) and babies. Participants massage their babies whilst being guided through a massage routine that uses a carefully balanced combination of Swedish, Indian and Reflexology techniques. In addition participants will learn a massage sequence specially designed to relieve colic.

Individual tuition is also available. Presentations about infant massage can be arranged for interested parents, parent groups and professionals.

**Gift vouchers** are available. This is an ideal birth present.

### What are the benefits of infant massage?

- Improves communication between parent and baby
- Helps to calm babies' emotions and relieve stress
- Soothes babies and help them to sleep better
- Helps babies to develop awareness of their body
- Enhances parents' ability to understand their babies' needs
- Aids digestion and help to relieve colic, wind and constipation
- Helps to develop muscle tone, coordination and suppleness
- Strengthens the immune system
- Regulates breathing and relieves nasal congestion
- Improves skin texture
- It provides a wealth of sensory experience to babies, the strokes, eye contact, odour; your voice, warmth and rhythm.
- The bonds of love and trust inherent in the massage routine will be carried by your child into adulthood.