



Hello everyone!

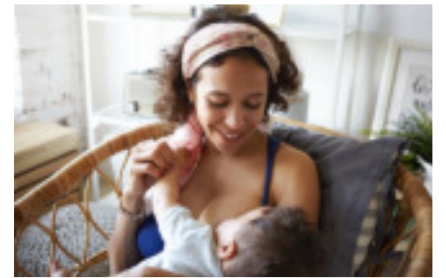
Hope you are all well and keeping safe during these challenging times. My name is Anne I'm an Early Years Practitioner and I facilitate our Stay & Play sessions.



I thought it would be a nice to keep in touch with you all by sharing some ways you can connect with your baby at home. We will be using the principles of **five to thrive**. Your baby's brain grows better when you do five simple things that feed it:

RESPOND. **CUDDLE**. **RELAX**. **PLAY**. **TALK**

Today let's look at **CUDDLE**



My brain grows better when you cuddle me

"Before my birth I was more aware of touch than of any other sense, and I was safely held in a small space. Now I can move freely, but I still feel most safe when I am in contact with a grown-up who loves me. Feeling safe with you fills my body with special chemicals that help my brain to grow. The patterns that grow in my brain when you cuddle me will mean that all my life, I will be able to feel safe with safe people. When I am close to you my body begins to work in tune with yours. When you feel excited or stressed your heart beats faster and so does mine. When you feel calm or happy your heart beats slower, and so does mine. Connections are building in my brain that will make it possible for me to control my body one day. Remember that my brain works more slowly than yours, so I need time to notice what is happening and respond to it"

Some suggestions

Cuddle your baby as often as you like-babies can't have too much contact. Respect the space of infants as they grow older. There may be times when they don't want a cuddle, but you should try to find other ways to provide reassurance. Use gentle circular rubbing of the stomach to help a baby with wind or constipation

Remember

Babies need touch that soothes (cuddles) and touch that stimulates (tickles). Some very young babies (especially if they are small at birth), may sleep too much, but with gentle stroking or finger-play encourage them to wake and feed. As well as cuddling, it is good to put your baby down to experience time on their own-this is the start of learning how to be independent.