



I am the Manual!

Speaking for the Baby Campaign

Babies don't come with a manual – they are the manual!

Observing your baby and trying to understand what is going on for them is a 'way in' to understand and get to know them. Understanding what babies may be experiencing help us to respond more easily, genuinely and responsively. The experience of being understood helps your baby feel secure, confident and builds trust. A way to understand their experiences is to *observe closely* and *read their behavioural cues*.

The idea is to observe your baby closely and intently for a few minutes at a time. While observing, try not to judge yourself or your baby. Observing is not about whether your baby is behaving well, looking good, or doing what you want. This is about getting to know him/her as a unique individual and noticing his responses to his environment. When you get stuck, simply return to a position of curious wondering.

*Look at Me, I am
the Manual...*

I wish she came with a manual - how are we supposed to know what to do?

Actually, I *am* the manual. If you study me closely, I'll give you lots of clues about what I need. I love it when you watch me and wonder about what I'm feeling. When you try to understand my world, I feel seen.



Tips for Observing

- Slow down. Just observe. Observing involves careful and conscious attending. Be curious about what she is doing.
- Try to imagine what she is experiencing and feeling.
- Why do you think she is feeling that way? What are her cues or signals to you? What are you noticing?
- What do you notice about her spontaneous activity? What is she trying to communicate?
- When you get stuck, try to be curious. Describe in words what you see her doing.
- When your mind wanders – which it will, a lot – simply bring your mind back to the present moment. Allow your baby to be your focus.
- Observe your baby with an unhurried curiosity

“I am the manual! Observe me and see!”

