



### Dear Friends of BabyLab

BabyLab at Westmead continues to get bigger and better. We are holding a variety of local community events, where our goal is to share science with the public. We encourage you to join any of the upcoming events to ask questions and meet new people. Check out our list of events below and save the dates!

We are also excited to be launching Season 2 of BabyLab Podcast, hosted by the fabulous Emma Watkins (former member of the Wiggles). The series of eight episodes includes topics such as socialisation, communication, screen time, and common parenting concerns. The first episode goes live on 12 July 2023. Stay tuned!

*Sue*

Professor Susan Hespos  
 Leader of BabyLab  
 The MARCS Institute of Brain, Behaviour and Development  
 Western Sydney University

## Discoveries & Tips

### How do we communicate with babies?

We use infant-directed speech. *Infant-directed speech*, also known as *baby talk* or *parentese*, is a type of speech that adults use when speaking to babies and young children. It is characterised by a higher pitch, slower tempo, exaggerated intonation, hyperarticulated vowels, simplified vocabulary, and shorter sentences.

#### Why do we use infant-directed speech?

- Babies prefer listening to this type of speech over adult-directed speech.
- Makes it easier for babies to identify the different speech sounds and learn the rules of language.
- Establishes social and emotional connections between caregivers and their babies.



Below are **6 useful tips** on how to use infant-directed speech. Chat away with your baby today!

# How to effectively use infant-directed speech



**1** **SPEAK SLOWLY AND CLEARLY**  
Use a slow and clear voice to help your baby understand the sounds you are making.

**2** **USE A HIGHER PITCH**  
Babies are more attuned to higher-pitched sounds.

**3** **EXAGGERATE YOUR INTONATION**  
Use exaggerated intonation to help your baby understand the different emotions and meanings behind your words.

**4** **EXAGGERATE YOUR VOWEL SOUNDS**  
Exaggerate your pronunciation of vowels and use exaggerated facial expressions such as opening your mouth wide, to help your baby see and understand how to form different vowel sounds.

**5** **USE REPETITION**  
Repetition is important for language development, so repeat words and phrases to help your baby learn.

**6** **USE SIMPLE VOCABULARY**  
Use simple words and short sentences to help your baby understand what you are saying.



Tips provided by BabyLab researcher, Eylem Altuntas. (pictured above)



Learn more about our research: [westernsydney.edu.au/babylab/research](https://westernsydney.edu.au/babylab/research)

## BabyLab Events & Activities

**BabyLab Podcast Season 2 with Emma Watkins**  
Starting from 12 July 2023\* (weekly episodes)  
\*new launch date

Topics include the importance of socialisation, communication concerns, screen time, and common parenting concerns.

Search "BabyLab" on your music/podcast app.

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**Pregnancy, Birth and Children (PBC) Expo**  
2 to 4 June 2023 | 10am to 4pm  
Sydney Showground, Sydney Olympic Park  
*Meet our friendly researchers and ask us anything!*

**BabyLab @ Wentworth Point Library**  
10 August 2023 | 11am to 12pm  
Wentworth Point Library  
*Come meet other parents and chat about child development and more.*

**Sydney Family Science Festival**  
19 August 2023 | 10am to 3pm  
PHIVE, 5 Parramatta Sq, Parramatta, NSW 2150  
*Learn more about interesting science facts and check out some cool equipment.*

**BabyLab @ Parramatta Library**  
7 September 2023 | 1pm to 2pm  
Parramatta Library  
*Join in the discussion about 'Screen Time' with Professor Susan Hespos, Leader of BabyLab.*

**Pregnancy, Birth and Children (PBC) Expo**  
16 & 17 September 2023 | 10am to 4pm  
Sydney Showground, Sydney Olympic Park  
*Meet our friendly researchers and ask us anything!*

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to get the latest updates.



## Reviews from Parents



"My baby feels comfortable coming in (to BabyLab) and that makes me comfortable. Plus, it's so adorable when they graduate – we still have every certificate on our fridge! I think there's no negative coming in. One of these studies might even end up helping our future children or our friends'."

— Participated in 8 BabyLab studies



"It's been a fun experience – interesting to see the study and what they're doing. Because of the study, I've become more aware and conscious of naming things – been labelling objects at home to help with (my child's) communication skills."

— Participated in 4 BabyLab studies

"It's good watching the development of my child through these studies – seeing her getting more and more interested in what's happening and more intrigued each time we come. Our BabyLab experience has been amazing, and I've already recommended it to a friend who recently had a baby."

— Participated in 6 BabyLab studies

## Keep in Touch

We love seeing your little ones grow. Feel free to tag us in your posts. Let's stay connected.



[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

For enquiries: [babylab@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:babylab@westernsydney.edu.au)

[Participate in BabyLab Studies](#)

[BabyLab Website](#)