

cravings

baby's health * stuff we love * great gear

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ditch the daycare guilt

New research finds surprising benefits for kids in group settings.

If your toddler attends group daycare, get ready to breathe a big sigh of relief. Two new studies support that this childcare option can actually bolster your kiddo's communication skills and immune system.

The first study, published in the journal *Early Child Development and Care*, shows that kids in daycare have markedly fewer language delays by age 3 than those who are looked after at home by a parent or a nanny. "It's likely that 1- and 1½-year-olds in daycare receive more intensive language stimulation from their peers than children at home, which leads to better language skills down the road," says study co-author Ratib Lekhal, a doctoral candidate at

the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Department of Children and Adolescent Mental Health.

All of that close proximity to other kids in daycare can help a child's health as well. The second study, in the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, acknowledged that although children who attended daycare (with at least 10 classes of eight or more children) before the age of 2½ tend to suffer more respiratory and ear infections early on, they benefit later. By age 5, these same kids had fewer illnesses than others cared for at home or in smaller group settings. That could translate into fewer sick days by the time they reach kindergarten. — HOLLY PEVZNER

Brittany
 Hazel
 Katie
 Madison
 Sophie
 Zoe

what's old is new again

Who says Hazel is an old-fashioned name? Not Julia Roberts, who named her twins Phinnaeus and Hazel. Find your favorite retro name at babytalk.com.

7%

of babies have their own e-mail addresses

33%

of babies have had their photos posted online from birth

read this before posting to facebook!

With the snap of a smartphone camera in the delivery room and an upload to Facebook, baby's "digital footprint" is made. While it's awesome for Grandma to see baby's photos in her newsfeed, "There are a lot of bad people out there with bad intentions," warns Donna Rice Hughes, president of Enough Is Enough, an organization that works to keep kids safe online. While your privacy settings are airtight, your friends' may not be. Your picture is a screen shot away from mass circulation. Hughes supports the idea of e-mailing photos directly to family and friends, and if you can't help posting them on social-networking sites, limit the people who can view them and ask folks not to repost. — KIM HAYS

FEEDING IN A FLASH

If we were Oprah, this would be one of our favorite things. Boddler Bites, Food in a Flash are A to Z flashcards loaded with ideas for when baby is ready to eat solids. For example, the K card includes a yummy recipe for kale chips and instructions on how to peel a kiwi and fun ways to prepare them for your older babies (aka boddlers). (\$20; boddlerbites.com)



not-so-silent night

Your new baby is just days old, but she's already snoring louder than Grandpa. Roughly 25 percent of babies make nasal noise while they sleep, and it usually isn't cause for concern. Babies breathe through their noses, so when their narrow nasal passages are stuffy, they don't instinctually know to open their mouths, says Thomas Andrews M.D., a pediatric ear, nose and throat specialist in the Tampa, Florida, area. **If baby is otherwise sleeping and eating well, doctors advise parents to endure the noise**, which should subside at about 6 months. "Snoring isn't necessarily a bad thing," Dr. Andrews says. "But if you're concerned, see your pediatrician." Keep a log of baby's symptoms to share. Closed or underdeveloped nasal passages, acid reflux, gastrointestinal problems and other ailments also can cause a baby to snore, as can an infection of the adenoid or inflammation of the nasal passages caused by allergens. — SARAH HALE MEITNER

FROM TOP: JON WHITTLE; VEER