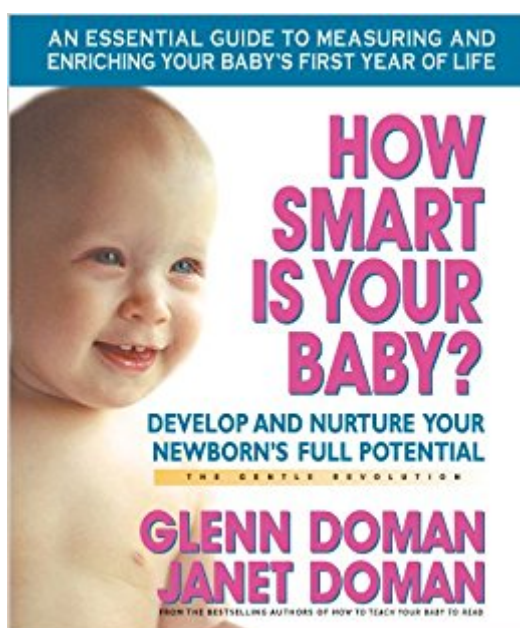


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# How Smart Is Your Baby?: Develop And Nurture Your Newborn's Full Potential (The Gentle Revolution Series)



## Synopsis

The first months after birth are vital to the long-term well-being of a child. Yet parents do not have the information they need to make their baby's life as stimulating as it should be. *How Smart Is Your Baby?* provides parents with all the information required to help their baby achieve full potential. The authors first explain infant growth, and then guide parents in creating a home environment that enhances brain development. A developmental profile allows parents to track their child's progress, determine strengths, and recognize where additional stimulation is needed.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Glenn Doman received his degree in physical therapy from the University of Pennsylvania in 1940. From that point on, he began pioneering the field of child brain development. In 1955, he founded The Institutes' world-renowned work with brain-injured children had led to vital discoveries regarding the growth and development of well children. The author has lived with, studied, and worked with children in more than one hundred nations, ranging from the most civilized to the most primitive. Doman is also the international best-selling author of six books, all part of the Gentle Revolution Series, including *How To Teach Your Baby To Read*, *How To Teach Your Baby Math*, and *How To Give Your Baby Encyclopedic Knowledge*. Janet Doman is the director of The Institutes and Glenn's daughter. She was actively involved in helping brain-injured children by the time she was nine years old, and after completing her studies at the University of Pennsylvania, devoted

herself to helping parents discover the vast potential of their babies and their own potential as teachers.

**Introduction** The majestic organ that is the brain starts developing in utero. Although learning continues throughout life, there is a special window of opportunity for permanent brain growth and special learning that occurs in the first year of life. The newborn period, or first few weeks, is a remarkable time and incredible things are occurring. This is not just a passive beginning; it is the explosive start to learning and brain growth. During the first year the baby's amazing growth and learning continues. The baby's brain is rapidly growing, which is reflected in the astonishing changes in head circumference. This period is vitally important for brain development. Doctors, scientists, and educators now acknowledge that the first several years of life is a critical time for the acquisition of skills and that appropriate stimulation and experience is critical to optimizing a child's growth and development. These early years are extremely important. It is now recognized that the sooner the baby receives sensory stimulation and opportunity for mobility and language expression, the more likely that brain growth, development, and skills will be optimized. It is important to understand how this occurs in order to maximize your understanding of the programs in this book. The baby in utero is creating billions and billions of brain cells prior to birth. Those brain cells only await stimulation to create networks of function that will allow the child to see, hear, feel, taste, and smell, and the experience that develops mobility, language, and manual ability. The normal newborn will have some basic functions at birth, but must incorporate sensory stimulation and motor experience in order to grow or enhance these functions and learn or make associations. When an object is perceived by the five sensory pathways and gains meaning for the baby, a type of learning has taken place. The newborn must also learn to integrate sensory information in order to produce coordinated mobility, sounds, and manual competence. Sensory pathways must supply information to association areas, to primary sensory decoding areas, and to memory and planning areas of the brain in order to produce proper output (such as motor action). The motor pathways (mobility, language, and manual competence) must be monitored by the sensory pathways to refine output. In the healthy "normal" newborn, this is a wonderful cycle that reinforces learning. In the brain-injured newborn, this may be a vicious cycle in which poor sensory input will result in poor or inappropriate output. A premature newborn has earlier access to sensory stimulation than the term infant who is still in utero. For example, the premature baby has the advantage of seeing light-dark contrast while the baby in utero does not have access to such stimulation. Visual maturation begins immediately for the premature infant. In the newborn, the brain is undergoing three natural but

important processes that we can call pruning, learning, and myelination. Pruning is an interesting and basic brain phenomenon. In the young baby, billions and billions of brain cells are in place at birth. However, only those brain cells that are used and properly stimulated with sufficient frequency, intensity, and duration early on will be reinforced and become permanent neurological connections functioning as important circuits or networks. Those that are not sufficiently used are pruned. That is, if they are not used they die away. Unfortunately, there have been cases of children who were born with essentially normal or uninjured brains who have been placed in environments of sensory deprivation and lost the opportunity to develop significant abilities. Some have been in overcrowded orphanages. Others have been in caring homes, but due to a lack of knowledge on the part of the parents or caretakers these babies have been placed in bland, uninteresting, quiet, unstimulating environments and received little sensory stimulation or motor opportunity. They may have been confined to baby carriers, cribs, walkers, or other restrictive devices that do not permit free movement and appropriate sensory-motor stimulation and integration. Studies have shown that children placed in walkers can be developmentally delayed compared to children who are allowed to crawl, creep, and walk in a safe environment. In addition, devices like walkers are a leading cause of injury in young children. To the degree that a newborn is deprived of sensory stimulation or motor experience and opportunity for expression, the baby will lose the opportunity for some function. While the pruning of brain cells may appear to be a harsh or unproductive phenomenon, it represents the realities of brain-body economy. The brain requires a constant, high-quality source of energy and nutrients, and an astonishing twenty percent of all incoming oxygen. Those areas that are not used are shut down to send these resources elsewhere as needed. At the same time pruning is occurring, its opposite, learning, occurs. This reinforcement of brain neural circuits allows the permanent acquisition of neural networks if proper stimulation is given. Myelination is also occurring. This process, in which neurons develop the insulated covering on their processes, helps establish connections and speeds up information exchange. Simply put, the brain grows by use and one must use it or lose it. But how does the brain work? Can it be influenced for the better? Why are the newborn and infancy periods so special? How does the brain and nervous system develop? What does the brain and nervous system do? How does it function? What can a mother do to help the process of sensory and motor development? Could mother unknowingly do something that might inhibit or stop optimal development of the brain? Is your child well? Is your child normal? What is normal? If your child has an injury to the brain, how can you recognize this? How can you help your baby if he does have a problem? These and dozens of other questions run through the minds of concerned parents. The Institutes for the Achievement of

Human Potential, founded in 1955 by Glenn Doman, has been posing these questions and finding the answers for a half-century. This book explains exactly how to evaluate the sensory and motor pathways of the baby and exactly how to design a program that will enhance the growth and development of these pathways. It is an inspired guided tour of the first twelve months of brain growth and development. All of the information in this book is presented so that any mother and father, without a medical background, can benefit from it. In it we gain a sense of what the world may look like and feel like to our newborns. We acquire a better understanding of the challenges and frustrations the newborn experiences. Armed with this knowledge, we know what our baby needs and wants and we can have the great joy of creating an ideal environment for him. Every day is precious, and your baby is hungry for knowledge about the world around him, starting from the moment of birth. To feed your child's brain is as important as feeding his stomach. The goal of this book is to help parents understand the brain and nervous system. Parents may then follow a clear pathway to enhance the abilities of their child. This is not only an extremely important process—it is also a very joyous one for mother and baby. —Denise Malkowicz, M.D.

I love all the Glenn Doman books and have used them with varying degrees with all my children. We are now into the second generation. I attended the course at the Institute and am a firm believer that it does make a difference. My kids are very well adjusted and extremely accomplished and people always ask how I raised such smart, well adjusted children. Did I do everything as those who participate in the Institute did. NO! I have a very busy career, am a community volunteer, wife, & daughter to aging parents! I did what I could, and made it fun for all of us. People thought I was nuts at the time so I seldom talked about the program but enjoyed seeing the results. When my daughter was in ninth grade and took European history, she could name all the European painters without studying them. She was amazed! She kept asking, "Mom how do I know this?" I confess, I love art and spent a great deal of time making cards on the great artist when she was little. I am an interior designer. I believe her brain stored this information until she needed it. Today, this child is working on her M.D./PhD in neuroscience. She is happy and well adjusted as are my other kids. I find it so interesting to see how all the areas, such as physical, math, reading, speaking, relate to each other. By the way, I always played foreign language tapes in the car when the kids were little, and we watched foreign language cartoons I checked out of the library... all my children are fluent in several languages, even tho I can only speak English! The brain is amazing and babies are sponges wanting to learn! Regardless if you choose to believe in this program or not, make learning fun for your little one and you will be amazed at the results! For me personally, this was best thing I ever

did!

This book was a bit intense for me. I love the research behind and they have everything to back it up. I'm sure everything spot on. However, just a bit intense. I will be picking and choosing pieces, but even doing that, this book was well worth reading.

This book is my baby training bible. I love the way Glenn & Janet talk about these precious newcomers. I have learned so much from all their books. I am a Nanny and this has helped me in training and teaching the little one assigned to me. It has touched my soul. I have been amazed after working 1 year with the same child how smart, eager to learn and quickly he responded to new ideas. I now have another charge and I am doing it again. What fun to learn by these brilliant little gurus. Time to reread it again. I have bought all Domans' books. We all wish we were raised this way. What a society we would be.

Have enjoyed using the method with my son. Been using it three months and like some of the exercises as ways for me to play with him. Some of the elements are unusual like the crawling track; we improvised with a fitness mat to give him a space to work in crawling and being on his tummy.

The most important book that I have read as a parent. Hands down. These people know what they are doing and know how to teach you to do it. Even if you learn 5 things from this book, they may be 5 things that drastically change the well being and future of your child. My respects to the Doman family for their endless dedication for over 50 years to the healthy, respectful, and honorable education of children everywhere in this world.

I highly recommend this book as it has many very interesting examples of activities you can do with your babies. My twins enjoy them all, some more than others but we have a great time during the day and they sleep very well at night. :)

This book is so old that some of the info is harmful .like holding your baby by the feet .i will never order books that are so old and not updated again.

A must read for every expectant mother or mother of a child in his/her first year of life. I only wish I'd had this critical information for my first 5 kids!

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