

L LIFESTYLE

Baby talk *Interaction during reading helps toddlers develop language*

NEXT TIME YOU read to your baby, pay attention to the babbling as interaction is the key to language development during reading, reveals a new study. The researchers found that babies made more speech-like sounds during reading than when playing with puppets or toys. They also discovered mothers were more responsive to these types of sounds while reading to their children than during the other activities.

"A lot of research shows that book reading even to infants as young as six months of age is important to language outcomes, but I am trying to explain why by looking at the specifics, which could be responding to speech-like sounds," said study co-author Julie Gros-Louis from University of Iowa in the US.

"If we know what specific interactions are occurring between care-giver and child and we can link that to language outcomes, then it would not just be telling parents, 'Read a lot of books to your kids,'" Gros-Louis added.

The study looked at how mothers responded to their



12-month-olds during book reading, puppet play, and toy play. Researchers observed the interactions of 34 mothers and their 12-month-olds during three 10-minute periods of different activities: puppet play, toy play, and book reading.

The babies were seated in a high chair to control proximity

to their mothers and to prevent them from getting up and moving around the play room. The study also found that no matter the context, mothers' responses to speech-like sounds were often imitations or an expansion of the sound.

"The current findings can contribute to understand-

ing how reading to preverbal infants is associated with language outcomes, which is not well understood in contrast to reading interactions with older toddlers," according to the study. The study was published in the journal *Language Learning and Development*. IANS

Get fit

Exercise cuts heart disease risk among the depressed

REGULAR EXERCISE CAN reduce heart disease risk in people suffering from depression, suggests new research. Depression is commonly associated with worse outcomes for patients with heart disease and other conditions.

As many as 20 percent of people hospitalised with a heart attack report symptoms of depression, while patients with heart disease have three times the risk of developing depression compared to the general population, the study pointed out.

"Our findings highlight the link between worsening depression and cardiovascular risk and support routinely assessing depression in patients to determine heart disease risk. This

research also demonstrates the positive effects of exercise for all patients, including those with depressive symptoms," said study author Arshed Quyyumi from Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, US.

The researchers studied 965 people who were free of heart disease and who had no prior diagnosis of an affective, psychotic or anxiety disorder. They used questionnaires to evaluate patients for depression and levels of physical activity and also looked several early indicators of heart disease. The researchers found that depressive symptoms were more pronounced in people who were inactive.

The study was published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. IANS



ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Space Clearing and Feng Shui

As the New Age wave has spread across the world, and as a result space clearing has become widely popular. Many products are sold across the world to help people get rid of bad energy from their living environment. It's a big business. I really don't know why, but space clearing is now considered part of Feng Shui. Many Feng Shui books have separate sections on it and also recommend as one of the cures.

But is space clearing really Feng Shui?

Feng Shui was invented about 6000 years ago by the Chinese to harness the wind and water for better living conditions and prosperity. The science was used by royalty for protection and power and was practically banned for common citizens. Over the years the texts were hidden and the knowledge was passed on. What we know of and practice today is very different form of Feng Shui. In olden days, there were mountains and lakes. It was easy to manage energy through rice fields and farms. These days we have to take into consideration the tall skyscrapers and massive traffic junctions. Mountains are diminishing in the cities and open space is a luxury. However the basic principles remain the same.

Space clearing is more Western concept of clearing energy from within your office or apartment without use of feng shui formulas. Space clearing focuses on letting in new energy in your apartment and getting rid of old energy. This includes giving away old unwanted items such as clothes, books and furniture. Opening up different areas of the house for better energy movement. Creating space for new things to follow. Space clearing also recommends use of scented oils, bakhour or incense sticks. The smoke from these space clearing agents helps in cleaning clogged energy and make the residents feel better. However there are no Feng Shui calculations involved. It is as simple as that.

Space clearing is recommended when someone has been through prolonged period of illness in a home, or moving into a new home, or when sometimes performed at the end of the year. If it makes you feel good and different; please go ahead with it. There is no harm involved.

However is it Feng Shui? The answer is no. So before you dabble in Feng Shui, look into it deeply to know if its just a myth or actually part of this amazing science of energy management.

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