

# Ministering To Babies in Orphanages

## Biblical Foundations

**A. Psalm 27:10** *“Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.”*

B. Psalm 68:5 “A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.”

C. James 1:27 “Religion that God our father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

## Ultimate Goal – To Glorify & Love God

### How Do We Glorify & Love God Ministering To Babies In Orphanages?

1. By providing the babies a warm, caring and stimulating environment
2. By keeping the babies safe, free from injury or trauma
3. By giving them attention and showing them love & affection
4. Helping the babies with their physical development
  1. Baby exercises- basic massage, stretching and strength program
  2. Balance activities- my observation is that a lot of children in orphanages have poor balance
    1. Motor development activities- head up, rolling, scooting, rocking, crawling, sitting, standing up and walking

2. Through our interaction with the administrators and staff
3. By denying ourselves
4. By growing in qualities, knowledge and skills that help us to best minister to the babies

## **Books**

[Baby Massage: The Calming Power of Touch](#)

[Baby Steps: Exercises for Baby's First Year of Life](#)

[Baby Play \(Gymboree\)](#)

[Toddler Play \(Gymboree\)](#)

[Adopting the Hurt Child: Hope for Families With Special-Needs Kids: A Guide for Parents and Professionals](#)

[Parenting the Hurt Child : Helping Adoptive Families Heal and Grow](#)

## **Web Sites**

<http://www.attachmentdisorder.net/> Attachment Disorder Site

<http://www.syix.com/adsg/> Attachment Disorder Support Group ( Christian links on page so most likely person who sponsors this page is a Christian)

<http://www.radkid.org/> Reactive Attachment Disorder

<http://www.attach.org/> Association for Treatment and Training in the Attachment of Children

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?objectid=DF5FC775-6937-4259-A9578B6425B9F149>

Infant development during the first three months

<http://www.envisagedesign.com/ohbaby/develop.html> Infant Development by month

<http://www.ecsu.ctstateu.edu/depts/edu/textbooks/infantdev.html>

INFANT DEVELOPMENT Electronic Textbook

[http://www.quolkids.com/information/Education/early\\_years/infant\\_brain\\_research.htm](http://www.quolkids.com/information/Education/early_years/infant_brain_research.htm)

article on infant brain research

<http://www.lalecheleague.org/NB/NBMarApr01p44.html> article – “Brain Dance For Babies”

<http://www.sfu.ca/mediapr/Releases/News/1997/March97/orphans.html>

article – “ADAPTING TO NEW LIFE DIFFICULT FOR ROMANIAN ORPHANS”

If you know of other books, articles and web sites that would be helpful and informative in regards to working with infants and young children in orphanages please let me know.

## **Working With Babies**

1. Goal – Love the babies by helping them to develop to the best of their potential (you need to desire to be the best you can be so you can maximize the help you give)

### ***A. Babies***

1. Keep them safe, free from injury or trauma
  1. Be observant with all that is going on in the room at all times- do not just focus on the baby you are giving attention to
  2. Make sure babies are not harming one another
  3. Look for things that babies could possibly get a hold of that would harm them, especially things they might put in their mouths
2. Give them attention and show them love & affection- talk to them
3. Provide as stimulating an environment as possible- toys, music, etc.
4. Help them with their physical development (see below)

1. Baby exercises- basic massage, stretching and strength program
2. Balance activities- my observation is that a lot of children in orphanages have poor balance
3. Motor development activities- head up, rolling, scooting, rocking, crawling, sitting, standing up and walking

#### B. Interaction with Staff

1. Be courteous and respectful
2. Look for ways to be helpful- like opening door, putting toys away
3. Do not be a burden or complain – don't make lots of requests

#### **C. *Yourselves - deny yourself***

1. Keep your talking to others to a minimum- focus on babies
2. Give more time to children with special needs rather than those who are the cutest as the cute ones will get plenty of attention- it's the handicapped and not-so-cute who won't get much attention- it is to have favorites but don't show favoritism

## 2. Qualities To Grow In

**A.Faithful - being dependable and keeping your word**

**B.Available - for helping/serving and for additional training**

**C.Teachable**

1. Have a humble and submissive spirit
2. Open to instruction and correction
3. Desire to improve

## **Baby Basic Exercises**

### **Warm Up**

Spend your first minute holding them so you can see their face and talk to them as you stroke them lightly and slowly from their heads down to their toes several times- smile/laugh and talk to them as you do the exercises

### **Exercises**

Start at the head and work your way down to the feet

### **Upper Body**

Massage – Head, Neck, Shoulders and Arms

- a. the head lightly being careful of the soft spot on the top of head
  1. the face - forehead, eye brows, nose, ears, cheeks, jaw and chin
  2. the neck area
  3. the shoulder area and do shoulder circles
  4. the arms - start at the shoulders and work down to the fingers using very light effort then with firm effort work your way back from the fingers to the shoulders

Joint Stimulation – Upper Body

Put a hand on each side of the joint and firmly but carefully push and pull ten times on the joint area

1. shoulders
2. elbows
3. wrists - also put your thumb in their palms and make circular motions with their hands (wrist circles)
4. fingers - you can do the four fingers together then the thumb

## Arm Stretches

Put your thumbs in their palms and stretch arms out slowly

- a. alternating arms - one arm up, the other down then reverse
- b. jumping jacks - both arms up and down at the same time
- c. cross overs - brings the arms over the front of their bodies like they were hugging themselves then stretch out to the sides as far as possible then cross over in front again with the other arm on top
- d. arm circles - stretch out the arms to the sides as far as possible then do large arm circles several times

## Chest and Back

Massage - chest and stomach areas

Pushups - put the baby face down on the floor

1. hold them under their thighs **and** hip area
2. lift them off the ground so that they straighten their arms
3. hold until they get tired then lower them back down-rest then repeat- do three to five times
4. if they are really strong you can swing and lift them slightly side to side so they walk forwards on their hands
5. can finish with a forward roll

Tummy Tightners - do light tickles on the abdominal area to get them to tighten their muscles

## Sit-Ups

1. be sure the baby can hold its head up, if they can't then give them more support with your hands on their upper back, neck and head areas- also make sure you are not holding their legs down as you do the sit-ups- start out with two or three sit-ups but over time increase number and duration
2. put your thumbs in their palms while the baby is laying on their back and hold their lower arms
3. slowly lift them to the sitting position and hold for several seconds- while lifting them up you may see their legs lift into the air- if that happens hold them in that position until they get tired
4. slowly lower them back down- when they are back to beginning position - give them some tickles for fun

Back Straightening Reflex- have baby sit on one of your legs- put your fingers

of one hand on both sides of the spinal column on the lower back area and slowly stroke up toward top of back- you should see the baby straighten up their back- use other hand to keep the baby from falling forwards

Massage the back area

## Lower Body

Massage the legs- very lightly start at hip area and work down to toes then firmly work your way back from the toes to the hips

Joint Stimulation- Lower Body

Same as arms

1. hips
2. knees
3. ankles
4. toes (all at same time)
5. feet - finish with holding feet and moving them in a circular motion to stretch ankles- also point and flex toes up and down and side to side while holding their ankles-hold in stretched position for several seconds

## Hip Stretches

1. grasp the lower legs below the knees
2. bend knees up towards chest area – hold – then straighten legs
3. alternate bending one leg up towards the chest area while the other leg is kept straight – hold – then switch legs to opposite position
- d. bending both legs up towards chest make circular motions with knees going out to the sides then down and then up towards the chest again
- e. keeping one leg straight and flat on the floor bend the other leg bringing it over the straight leg - hold then reverse leg positions – do the same with the other leg

## Leg Stretches - try to keep the legs straight as you do the exercises

1. Up and Down - keep one leg flat on the floor as you lift the other one as high as you can up toward their upper body- hold then switch legs - do it three times- hold the lower thigh and knee area with your hands - finish with doing both legs up at the same time - hold - then return to starting position
2. Out and Cross - holding their legs straight in the air stretch their legs out to the sides carefully as far as possible - hold - then cross them over - hold – then stretch their legs out to the sides again – cross over but this time put the other leg on top – do three times
3. Circles - keeping their legs straight by pushing down on the knees as you hold

them by their thighs and knees - make big circles with their legs several times then reverse direction

4. In and Out- keeping the legs straight rotate the legs to the inside as far as possible and hold then turns legs to the outside as far as possible and hold

Massage bottom of feet - finish with doing firm massage with your thumbs on the bottom of their feet - start at heels and do little circular motions up to their toes - then, using knuckles rub fist into bottom of feet - then do light tickles and strokes - finish with slaps on bottom of feet

Vestibular Stimulation (moving the fluid in the inner ear helps develop balance)

Start by holding them under their armpits in the air facing you - rock back and forth, keeping child facing you tip side to side, twist/rotate side to side

Finish – Hold them for a while and if possible rock back and forth and side to side as you hold them- hold them laying sideways cuddled in your arms so you see their face

**Important!!!** When you are done and put the baby down or in their bed **do not** pick them back up again if they cry. If you do you will be teaching them that if they cry they will get attention and when you leave they will be crying all the time

## **Balance Activities**

1. **Snow Saucer**- use a snow saucer to tip and spin the babies (on back) - when you spin the babies be sure to do it both clockwise and counter clockwise - when introducing spinning for the first few times do the spins slowly and only a few circles as the babies can get scared- over time increase the speed and number of circles

2. **Beach Balls** (slightly deflated at first)- place baby on stomach and hold thighs

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moving them forwards and backwards, side to side and in small circles - when baby can sit up place them on beach ball and hold their hips firmly - moving front and back, side to side and small circles

## Motor Development Activities

1. **Heads Up** - get baby to lift head off floor while on stomach - turn head side to side - use rattle or toy to get attention

2. **Roll Over** - front to back and back to front - stretch one arm of baby out above head

and then roll them over

2. **Scooting** - baby on stomach - place your hands on bottom of the babies feet -

push feet up towards babies bottom and stroke bottom of feet - baby will push

against your hands trying to straighten out their legs

3. **Rocker** - baby rocks back and forth while on knees and hands- a related activity is to place baby over your leg or something so you can tip them back and forth so they alternate touching the floor with their hands and knees/legs/feet

4. **Sitting** - put them in different sitting positions so their feet rest on the floor - use a stool or your leg and have them sit so that they have to balance front to back then try putting them so they have to balance side to side - if they are on your leg wiggle it a little to make them shift and correct their balance position

5. **Crawling** - try to get them to crawl around by putting a toy out in front of them

7. **Standing** - put your index fingers in their palms, hold their wrists if needed and help them to stand - do it several times to strengthen leg muscles - put them next to objects that they can use to help themselves to stand up (assist them at first)

8. **Walking** - assist them to walk around - help as little as possible - as with standing put the child next to objects or structures that they can use to help hold and balance themselves while they walk around - you may need to physically move their hands and legs at first to help them get the idea of what to do