

BENEFITS OF INFANT MASSAGE FOR BABY AND PARENTS/ CONNECTIONS WITH SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Helps the baby's capacity to express and regulate emotion:

- relaxation
- promotes better sleep (learning to calm self down for sleep)
- balances respiration
- supports general well being (digestion, skin condition, immune system)
- pleasurable experience
- helps build baby and parent's self esteem
- stimulates production of oxytocin, associated with pain relief and calm

Helps the baby form deep attachments with caregiver:

- infant/parent bonding times
- helps baby feel loved
- provides eye to eye contact, skin to skin contact, vocalizations, smell, responsiveness during interaction
- provides parents additional way to provide comfort and nurturing
- helps parents feel more confident in caring for baby
- hormones stimulated are associated with attachment

Helps baby explore and learn:

- facilitates body awareness
- provides sensory stimulation to teach sensory cues and their meaning
- helps baby and parent learn about what feels good/what works
- provides avenue for baby and parents to experiment with new ways of interacting and expanding what they know about each other