



SEGMENT TYPE: Discussion and/or Question & Answer

Are fussy babies smarter? Or, is it that fussy babies are smarter...

GUEST(S) Frans Plooij, Ph.D, author of the international bestselling parental guidebook, *The Wonder Weeks* and one of the world's top specialists in infant/child development and parent-baby interactions; new moms and dads and/or parents-to-be.

WHY: "Forget the teething, belly aches and other old excuses for fussy periods. The real reason for these fussy phases is the leaps in mental development," says Plooij.

Worldwide studies show that all babies make these leaps at specific and predictable times during their first years. With each leap the baby sees the world with a new perception and this stirs up everything he thought he knew; it's as though he entered a new world.

GROWING BY LEAPS & PERCEPTIONS

This frightening new perception has an adverse affect on the baby's mood, sleeping and eating patterns. Vicious circles start: baby is fussy, parents get distressed, baby reacts to stressed out parents, and so on down the line.

The good news is that major developmental leaps happen during predictable times, so, given the right tools, parents can be well prepared to weather the stormy periods. Dr. Plooij can help new parents map out the first fussy and later magical leaps forward in their baby's mental development by:

- Mapping their baby's mental developmental stages (**visual**);
- Reassuring why one should not focus only on the physical development;
- What specific playtime activities (and at what stages) encourage the mental development (**visual/graph/video**);
- Helping babies rest up after new discoveries;
- How to handle parental stress

MORE BACKGROUND/STATISTICS

- According to AmericanPregnancy.org, there are more than 4 million babies born each year in the United States
- Moms-to-be and new moms are overwhelmed by their busy lives and responsibilities. Add a fussy baby to the mix, and they are as stressed out as any CEO – maybe even more so.
- All babies go through a difficult period around the same age.
- Research has shown that babies make 10 major, predictable, age-linked changes – or leaps – during their first 20 months of their lives. During this time, they will learn more than in any other time. With each leap comes a drastic change in your baby’s mental development, which affects not only his mood, but also his health, intelligence, sleeping patterns and the “three C’s” (crying, clinging and crankiness).
- Babies cry during a leap because they’ve reached a radical new step in their mental development. That is good: it gives them the opportunity to learn new things. The “difficult” behavior is actually a signal that great progress is underway.
- New parents are not looking for someone to tell them how to parent; they are the experts of their own baby. Instead, they want to be reassured and know that what their child is experiencing is “normal.”

The Wonder Weeks is available at www.thewonderweeks.com, Amazon.com, Amazon.co.uk and at most online booksellers.

More information about The Wonder Weeks, including details about the research behind the book, can be found at www.thewonderweeks.com and (in video) <http://www.youtube.com/thewonderweeks>. To schedule an interview with Dr. Frans X. Plooij or to receive additional background, please contact: Xaviera Plas @ +31 6 418 414 73 or email xaviera@thewonderweeks.com