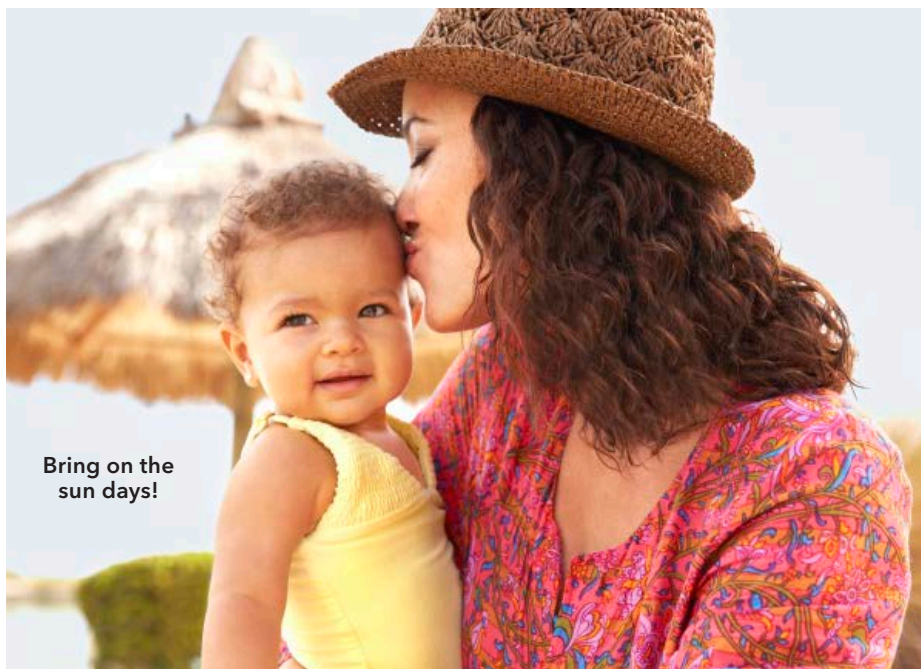


BABY'S FIRST SUMMER

They'll be long walks! Trips to the beach! You have #goals. And yet. The AC feels reeally nice. Wait, don't lose steam! Try any of these outings and be the summer mama you want to be. **BY KATE ROCKWOOD**



Bring on the sun days!

STAY LOCAL

FUN IN YOUR OWN YARD

HAVE A BREAKFAST PICNIC Skip the hot noon sun and instead spread a blanket in the morning (or late afternoon). When you're done eating, lay back with your baby and watch clouds drift by (when's the last time you did that?), pointing out the elephant-shaped stratus that you see.

BRING OUT THE INFANT BATHTUB Because those kiddie pools look Olympic-size to a 4-month-old. Fill it so you have just enough water to get him wet while you play outside.

OR TRY A SPRINKLER Move your garden sprinkler to the patio, so that your babe can toddle around it or you can run through it holding her.



Time for a Field Trip

● **Zoo**

Identifying animals in a book is one thing; teaching your baby the zebras and elephants by having them right in front of you is a whole other level! You don't have to make a day of it, either. Have a laugh with the monkeys and then head home for naptime.

● **Butterfly conservatory**

Strap your sweetie into your baby carrier for a stroll through a world of fluttering, colorful creatures. When one lands

on your baby's head, make sure someone's there to snap the moment.

● **Botanical Garden**

Many now have playgrounds and fountain areas that are a haven for toddlers. And you get to smell the roses and feel like an earth goddess.

● **Animal Farm**

The snorts and brays may fascinate or startle your baby at first, but if you enjoy the sounds, he'll take his cue from you. Plus, chickens bobbing around!

Invite your gal pals out for brunch al fresco. They can fight over who holds the baby next while you turn your attention to those berry pancakes.

Okay Let's Do This!

● Pool Hack

Many community pools have designated times for family swim, when the crowds thin out and you don't have to avoid splashing teenagers or begrudging lap swimmers. Hop in and watch your baby's face as she experiences the feeling of weightlessness for the first time.

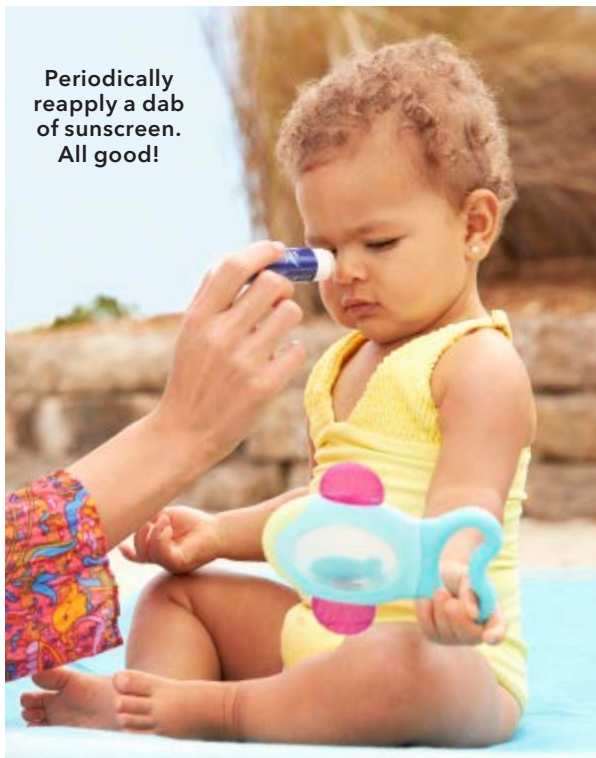
● Craft Hack

Grab a \$2 box of chunky sidewalk chalk and sit beside your babe, doodling on the sidewalk. It doesn't matter if he isn't old enough to make stick figures—he'll enjoy "helping" you and you'll be rewarded with a colorful driveway.

● Nature Hack

If your backyard feels bereft of wildlife, hang a bird-feeder and wait a few days. Watching sparrows swoop in for a snack while you swing in a hammock

Periodically reapply a dab of sunscreen. All good!



with your babe or just lay on a yoga mat together takes lazy-day lounging to a whole new level.

● Sanity Hack

When you can't decode why your baby's fussy or you've just had it with standing over your sink,

get out the stroller or baby carrier and walk off your frustrations with your little one. After all, it's not winter—you don't have to worry about coats or hats for either of you, and it's light outside well after dinner, so take advantage!

BEACH HACK Bring an inflatable baby pool, park it under your beach umbrella and fill it with a couple of inches of water and some toys. Your cutie will have a ball without getting sand in every nook and cranny.

PACK YOUR SUMMER DIAPER BAG

1

Include a hat with a brim for your baby (and one for you).

2

Toss in a blanket you can lay down in the grass.

3

Be sure to stay stocked with some sunscreen.

GO OUT AND ABOUT

THE BEST PIT STOPS

JUST ADD WATER

Dip Baby's toes in one of your town's fountains and get rewarded with peels of laughter.

TAKE IN A TRUCK SHOW

Pause across the street from a cement mixer; it's fascination for wee ones, and really for everyone. How do those things work?

STOP AT THE FARMER'S MARKET

Life is good when you can teach your baby his colors by strolling the produce stands! Also, it's an opportunity to hit up the dog moms so your baby can pet a furry friend.



The sights, sounds, and tastes of your town are the tops.