

'Truly groundbreaking ... a must read for EVERY new parent.'

Dr Rosina McAlpine, Director of INSPIRED CHILDREN

The Blossom Method™

VIVIEN SABEL

THE
REVOLUTIONARY
WAY TO COMMUNICATE
WITH YOUR BABY
FROM BIRTH



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About the Book

Imagine how much easier life would be if you could talk to your baby and understand his or her emotions, needs and wants. In *The Blossom Method™*, body language expert Vivien Sabel allows you to do just that – through learning your baby’s non-verbal communications. With this groundbreaking technique you will be able to meet your baby’s needs before he or she cries.

Discover how to:

- Understand your baby’s body language and ‘tongue talking’ signals
- Recognise when your baby is hungry, irritable or ill
- Help your infant feel understood and supported
- Feel less frustration and gain more parenting confidence

The Blossom Method™ allows you to understand and communicate with your baby from day one, leading to a happy settled baby and strong parent-child bond.

About the Author



Vivien Sabel is a UKCP Relational Psychotherapist, clinical supervisor, baby expert and mother. She is fluent in British Sign Language and formerly trained and registered as a Trainee BSL Interpreter.

<http://www.viviensabel.com/>
<http://viviensabel68.blogspot.com>



Praise for *The Blossom Method*[™]

'There are few books that can be called truly groundbreaking - this is one of them. Vivien Sabel shows parents how to communicate with their babies from day one. No more anxiety, frustration and confusion - just understanding and responding. Most importantly research shows that communicating with your baby makes a lifetime of difference supporting physical, emotional and cognitive development. A must read for EVERY new parent.'

Dr Rosina McAlpine, Associate Professor, The University of Sydney, Australia, founder of Inspired Children

'Ever uttered the words "What do you want?" in frustration to your crying, irritable or fractious baby? Well never again! Vivien Sabel outlines the many different, non-verbal but clear-cut clues to your baby's physical and emotional needs. Pay attention and you'll set the scene for a lifetime of enhanced intuitive response, communication and relationship.'

Janette Roberts, pharmacist, clinical nutritionist, pioneer in promoting preconception healthcare and bestselling author of the Better Babies and Healthy Parents, Healthy Babies series

'If you've ever been frustrated by your inability to interpret your baby's wants and needs, this book is for you. Vivien Sabel introduces The Blossom Method[™], a revolutionary technique for reading your baby's body language. The results: less frustration, a closer parent/child bond, and much more parenting confidence!'

Susan M. Heim, co-author of Boosting Your Baby's Brain Power

'A valuable book for all parents wanting to form a long-lasting connection with their children. By following The Blossom Method™ parents will be able to understand and communicate with their baby from day one.'

Claire Marketos BA Psych (Hons), HDipEd, founder of Inspired Parenting, parenting/educational consultant

'We all know that babies cry when they're in distress, and as parents we come to recognise many of our own child's particular signs and signals, but what if babies are trying to communicate with us at a much deeper level, and because we don't realise that we fail to understand them? In this groundbreaking book Vivien Sabel's exciting and astounding discoveries open up a whole new world to bringing up happy, contented infants through her simple method of Observing, Mirroring, and Responding - The Blossom Method™. This book is exciting because it will take non-verbal communication to a new level and challenge us to explore more fully the messages our babies are trying to tell us!'

Sue Atkins, parenting expert, broadcaster, speaker and bestselling author of Raising Happy Children for Dummies

'At seven days old we have already had a breakthrough using The Blossom Method™. And now we are using it all the time. We are becoming more familiar with her tongue patterns and we know we will discover so much more. I have read the book from start to finish. I couldn't put it down. It's life-changing.'

Sarah Spiers, new mother to Olive

'Vivien brings a unique perspective to the whole mother-child bonding relationship in its formative stages. This is a

fascinating insight into what we can learn as parents and professionals about subtle communication with our babies right from birth.'

Rosalind Arden, former lecturer in psychotherapy, Leeds Metropolitan University

'Would you like to enhance your understanding of the non-verbal communication between you and your baby? The Blossom Method™ is an enjoyable, accessible support "tool" for anyone to use. The author's own story of being mothered and mothering, as well as the birth and parenting story in her heart-warming case studies, really bring Vivien Sabel's concept of baby-body-talk to life.'

Adela Stockton, doula/doula educator, author of Gentle Birth Companions: Doulas Serving Humanity

'*The Blossom Method*™ by Vivien Sabel is an absolute gift. I highly recommend it to all parents or anyone who works with or has an interest in the positive development of our children. I was promised an easy to understand and apply method of developing the most amazing and enjoyable relationship with my child and I wasn't disappointed. In fact, through her fascinating and astounding discoveries, Sabel helps us all to enable our children to develop a deep sense of self and enrich their mental health and wellbeing.'

Heather Bestel, child therapist

'An interesting, inspiring and enlightening book that every new parent really should read. Vivien's passion for her subject is evident throughout and left me wanting to learn much more about the subject of non-verbal communication between babies and parents. *The Blossom Method*™ is a must-read for all who want to further their understanding of the world of a baby. I think you have made a really important discovery here. I want more! A TV series and a DVD!'

Victoria Dawson is an author, consultant, trainer and sleep practitioner

'It's a nice strong "how to" - easy to read and experience for oneself. The Blossom Method™ is a simple three-step concept that allows for lots of personal adaptation. I enjoyed it. A great way to "read" your child as an open book (observe), "come to your senses" (mirror) and be "responseable" (respond). It is totally in sync with what I encourage in "learning partnerships" between parents and their children. This is indeed an example of leadership in action from the home tribe! Well done, Viv!'

Dr Yvonne Sum, author of Intentional Parenting and leadership coach

'I have read *The Blossom Method*™ and found it really clear and easy to read. I learnt a lot about "real" communication.'

Dr Minae Inahara

'This book is a jewel. A rare combination of practical techniques and research. If we all attended to pre-language communication in this way our whole lives would be clearer and more fulfilled.'

Julie Fawcett, business psychologist and executive coach, BA, DMS, FIPD, FRSA

The Blossom Method™

The Revolutionary Way to
Communicate with
Your Baby from Birth

Vivien Sabel

Vermilion
LONDON

To Vuyo, Blossom and Mum

Introduction

A baby starts talking from the moment she takes her first breath. A child's instinct for survival and human interaction drives her to communicate with her caregivers using unique movements, facial expressions, sounds, and mouth, lip and tongue shapes. Many of these go unnoticed in the early days of parenthood as everything focuses on providing the newborn with nourishment and comfort. After years of research involving parents and their children, I have mapped the behaviour of the babies I have worked with, including my own, and discovered a phenomenon that has never before been recognised.

Conversing with Your Newborn

As well as all the usual movements, signs and sounds that a baby makes in an effort to communicate how she feels, the shapes she makes with her tongue relate to very specific requests. It is possible to hear a baby's 'words', but only if you are 'listening'.

In this book I will introduce you to my revolutionary technique, The Blossom Method™, which will not only give you the skills to understand the language of the newborn but will also show you how to talk back so that your baby feels understood. Named after my own daughter, Blossom, who provided me with my first experience of tongue-talking, the term also echoes the blossoming relationship

between adult and child during those early hours, days and weeks of life.

A World Without Words

My research began when Blossom was born in 2004, but the knowledge and skills that enabled me to develop my communication techniques with my baby were instilled in me from an early age. I was brought up by a profoundly deaf mother and learnt from a very early age how to communicate without words. I grew up with a heightened sensitivity to the significance of actions and expressions and often sensed my mum's frustration at not being fully understood by those around her, observing fleeting moments of distress in the tiniest movement of her eyes. My memories of my mother's parenting were based around not *what* she said but *how* she looked at me or how she moved her body. The power of her non-verbal communication was (and still is) immense. Being raised by a deaf mother and a hearing father has gifted me with so much, but it has heightened my sensitivity to both verbal and non-verbal language. The power of words and indeed the power of non-verbal language are incredible.

My mother tends not to use sign language to communicate. She mainly lip reads and uses body and facial expressions to relay messages to me. In turn, I communicate with her in the same way. As I work and live with the unspoken word, communicating in a non-verbal way is very familiar to me. I see in an instant when body utterances match spoken words and, conversely, when someone's body language says something different to the words they are using.

I now realise that my communication with my mum was, and still is, different to many others. She, like many of her deaf peers, relies on getting a message across in a direct

fashion. I very much like this way of communicating. As a child it seemed a little bizarre that non-deaf people chose to communicate using so many words to convey a simple utterance. In British culture we seem to use flowery language to convey messages and sometimes it seems we skirt around the edges of our utterances, occasionally implying rather than simply saying it as it is.

When I was growing up, I only needed to glance at my mum to elicit information with regard to her wellbeing: her emotional self, her mood, her level of satisfaction, her state of health and even her level of hunger! This, of course, was a two-way process; my mum could elicit all of the above information by simply observing me. This made it possible to be and feel seen. Both mine and my mother's feelings and emotions appeared like words on our faces and bodies. For this reason, we were never really able to hide our true feelings from each other.

I can recall as a child an occasion when my mum met a casual acquaintance. This person spoke quickly, and I knew that my mother had missed much of what was said. My mother declared her deafness and, on doing so, the acquaintance began to over-exaggerate her lip patterns and words. My mum appeared saddened, ashamed and angry by this response - these feelings were written into her facial expressions and body language and are still unforgettable for me. During my childhood this was the only time I heard my mum *own* her deafness. Why would she if this was the way she experienced the responses of others to declaring her deafness? From that day forward I embraced my mum's deafness and tried to understand more about our differences. This supported our relationship and its development.

I think it was this relationship with my mother that aided my developing interest in baby communication. Interestingly, neither my mum nor I recognised this as our primary communication system. I have only become aware