Babies love to laugh—tiny laughs as well as belly laughs. Seeing and hearing other people talk, laugh, or smile can make a baby laugh. Being surprised—like when you play peek-a-boo—can make a baby laugh.

Here YOU are as a baby!
(Put a picture here of your child as a baby, smiling or laughing.)

He got so excited, he laughed the biggest belly laugh.
Most babies crawl before they walk. Some never crawl at all, but pull themselves up until they are standing—and then walk. Most walk on their own for the first time sometime after their first birthday. Some walk on their own before their first birthday.

A few weeks later, Benny let go of his daddy’s hands and took two steps on his own—for the very first time!

Here YOU are as a baby!

(Put a picture here of your child as a baby, crawling or standing.)
Babies find out about things by using their whole hand to grab, pick up, drop, throw, squish, turn, tickle, touch, and squeeze things. They also smell things, put things in their mouths, and taste them. Once babies can use their thumb and finger to pinch things, they can pick up smaller things and look at, play with, and find out about more new things.

Here YOU are as a baby!

Benny knew what he liked and didn’t like to eat. Benny loved bananas!
Babies and children often cuddle up with a “lovey”—a special, soft, cuddly blanket, quilt, scarf, cloth, or stuffed animal—to help them go to sleep, or feel safe, or feel comfy, or feel that everything will be okay. They also love to be cuddled by someone who loves them.

Here YOU are as a baby!

(Put a picture here of your child at his/her first birthday or napping.)

On his first birthday, Benny was 1.

Benny was GROWING UP!
Creating GROWING UP STORIES

Using the technique she has used together with Michael Emberley for previous books, Harris read, researched, and consulted with parents, teachers, infant, and early childhood researchers, scientists, and health professionals. These experts also checked the text and illustrations for accuracy, insuring that the books are as up-to-date and as scientifically accurate as possible. The result—illustrations and text that are remarkable in the way they capture the story of the first five years of life.

Each picture book in this five-book series tells a different story about a child and his or her family. The first book, HELLO BENNY! WHAT IT’S LIKE TO BE A BABY, celebrates the baby Benny’s first year of life—from his very first sounds and very first smile to rolling over, sitting up, and standing, from discovering he loves bananas and hates peas to shoving cake in his mouth on his first birthday! GO! GO! MARIA! WHAT IT’S LIKE TO BE 1 tells the story of baby Maria’s second year of life and will be published in summer 2003. The books celebrating and exploring the third, fourth, and fifth years of life will be published once a year through 2006.

“GROWING UP STORIES are a wonderful opportunity for parents to share with their children the exciting stories about how babies learn and grow up. Parents will learn as much as the child will from reading these books together.”

T. Berry Brazelton, M.D.
Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School
Author, Touchpoints and Touchpoints Three to Six

“Any growing family should find this volume a welcome addition.”
—Publishers Weekly, starred review

HELLO BENNY! is a recipient of the Oppenheim Toy Gold Book Award.
While doing the research for GROWING UP STORIES, it became clear to the author that many of the amazing facts about how babies, toddlers, and young children grow and learn would fascinate children. In addition to loving stories about their first years, children love knowing the facts about how they grow and learn. That’s why, in addition to the main story, each book is laced with facts and illustrated with artwork that is appealing, warm, full of feeling, and often humorous.

“GROWING UP STORIES are a thoroughly delightful way to show young children how remarkable they are and have been since birth . . . [and] will add immeasurably to everyone’s knowledge about babies, toddlers, and young children . . . These books are a joy for all generations: children, parents, and grandparents.”

Barbara T. Bowman, M.A.
Founder & Past President, Erikson Institute
Past President, National Association for the Education of Young Children
Reading, talking, remembering, laughing, and sharing *Hello Benny!*

When an adult shares *HELLO BENNY!* with a child, it can be an invitation for the child and adult to have “a conversation” and tell their own stories to each other. The ritual of storytelling is also a means of engaging children in the stories and books and piques children’s interest in all kinds of books. It’s also fun and interesting for children to look at, or “to read” the illustrations in *HELLO BENNY!* on their own for pleasure, and for older children to read the book on their own, helping to foster a life long passion for reading and books.

Reading *HELLO BENNY!* provides an opportunity to talk about values. *HELLO BENNY!* portrays the fact that a baby is not just a blob, but that babies think, play, and “talk” and have feelings, too, and most important of all—that a baby IS a person. This can help children to understand and appreciate other people, including babies, and help to develop a sense of empathy.

Asking children questions after reading *HELLO BENNY!* such as: “Do you think it’s fun being a baby? Do you remember what it’s like to be a baby? Do you think you did all the things Benny did when you were a baby? What “growing up” fact was the most interesting fact you remember about babies?” helps children learn the value of asking questions.

If there is a baby in the family or neighborhood, it can be fun for a child to become a “scientist” and “observe” a baby and then ask the baby’s father or mother or sister or brother questions about the baby. It can also be interesting for children, after they have been with a baby, to tell their own GROWING UP STORIES and/or create their own “growing up” drawings about babies—or about themselves.
About the creators

ROBIE H. HARRIS and MICHAEL EMBERLEY are the award-winning team who created the nonfiction book IT’S PERFECTLY NORMAL! CHANGING BODIES, GROWING UP, SEX & SEXUAL HEALTH, winner of the Parenting Magazine Reading Magic Award and Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor, as well as HAPPY BIRTH DAY!, HI NEW BABY!, and IT’S SO AMAZING! A BOOK ABOUT EGGS, SPERM, BIRTH, BABIES, AND FAMILIES. Robie H. Harris is also the author of GOODBYE MOUSIE, illustrated by Jan Ormerod, which was named an Oppenheim Toy Portfolio 2002 Gold Seal Award winner, a Parent’s Guide Children’s Media Award winner, and a Publishers Weekly Best Book of 2001. Robie Harris lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Michael Emberley lives in San Diego, California.