

(This article was published on April Fools' Day of 2013 by *Pregnancy & Newborn* magazine, and can be viewed here: <http://www.pnmag.com/baby-buzz/communicating-with-your-baby-in-utero/> Please note that this article is an April Fools joke and not a serious health piece.)

Baby Buzz April Fools
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[head] Communicating with your baby in utero

[deck] Groundbreaking evidence shows that babies can communicate from the womb via Morse code.

Every expectant mama wants to connect with her baby as early as possible. Many choose to talk, sing or read to their developing bumps, hoping that their baby will be able to hear them. But for Georgia native Ellie Sue Hodgson, the results were beyond her wildest dreams.

It began when Hodgson's husband Mike, Head Metal Detector for Bluffton Beach, purchased a book on Morse code. "We had just seen *Transformers*, where they have to send an SOS to stop the Decepticons, and Mike thought, 'What if that happened to us? How would we call for help?' We're surrounded by trucks every day. Besides, it's not just us anymore - we've got to be thinking about the baby's safety, too. So he bought us a book." The couple spent an hour every night studying the book, and Hodgson would tap out the rhythms on her belly as they went.

Then, after about two weeks, something amazing happened: The baby tapped back. "At first, we thought he was just babbling," said Hodgson, "but then we got out the book and transcribed the taps, just to see if it meant anything." The results were astounding. "It said, 'Send tacos,' clear as day," said Hodgson. "So we went down to Taco Bell and bought every taco they had."

As time went on, the baby's vocabulary grew. "One day, after about four weeks, the baby wanted some pizza," explained Hodgson, "but I just couldn't keep it down. I puked up the whole thing." Afterwards, the baby expressed his disapproval. "He said, 'I thought I was clear. I do not like anchovies.' I should have guessed that - Mike's family doesn't like them either."

Ellie Sue's story made headlines, and grabbed the attention of linguist Anne Expert. "What we're seeing here is an early manifestation of linguistic development, or Early Onset Communico-Frequentive Linguo-Expressionist Tendency Level 2 (EOC-FL-ETL2)," said Expert. "This is definitely a breakthrough for psychology." Inspired by Hodgson's story, Expert, in association with the Morse Code League of America and the Primate Research Center for Zoo Atlanta, is planning on replicating the circumstances with gorillas. "Before, we could only communicate with them via sign language. This new study opens up whole worlds for us."

The breakthrough also gives us a unique look at life in the womb, which was previously a complete mystery. Child psychologist Sara Bellum has begun working with the Hodgsons, keeping a record of the baby's messages. "Like many pregnant women, Ellie Sue was having some incontinence problems," explained Bellum. "We made careful note of the baby's messages, which said 'Poop LOL!' Thus we can clearly deduce that the baby is a boy."

To commemorate this unique pregnancy, Hodgson has recently launched a Twitter page, @ThoughtsFromFetus, where she tweets the baby's messages. After a string of tweets listing the top ten coolest dinosaurs, a journalist commented to Hodgson that the baby was "certainly very loquacious." "Yeah," replied Hodgson. "I don't know where he gets it from."

-APRIL FOOLS!