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Rhymes and Reasons

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Sherry Gardner Howell: Time goes poof while we sing 'Puff'

Someone is supercharging my new grandson's growth.

He will be 7 months old next week, and already my little snuggly, fragile, blanket-cocooned infant is becoming a memory. I am loving every moment spent with him, but I'm finding I have to adjust my expectations so quickly! It's a good thing I have a great son and daughter-in-law who send lots of pictures and videos, or the weeks that pass between visits might cause me to wonder if they've swapped babies!

When I think of Trey's and Brett's baby days, I remember endless, long stretches of babyhood. In my memory, the months of caring for those helpless infants seem to go on and on. I do remember turning around once or twice and suddenly having a 2 year old, but my memories of the months leading up to that transition are filled with baby memories.

Maybe it is because I am not really a "baby" person. My favorite ages are every day beyond age 2. Toddlers, preschoolers, school-age, tweenagers and teens — bring them on! I always felt kind of lost during the baby years, maybe because by the time I figured out what to do, the baby had outgrown that stage/problem.

I look at King now, and he is this little person. His sturdy little body sits straight, his ever-moving arms and hands grabbing anything within his reach. His expressions either melt your heart immediately or give you pause, wondering just what he has figured out about the universe that he isn't sharing. He is holding dominion not only over parents and grandparents, but over two very large boxers who are at his beck and call. The largest boxer, Kota, gets down on his stomach and scoots on the floor in what seems to be an attempt to help teach King how to crawl.

I can still scoop him up and hold him close, rock and sing "Puff the Magic Dragon" as he drifts off to sleep. Already, however, the song is losing some of its magic. King is getting



wise to the routine, figuring out that it means "go to sleep" and starting to protest. So far, the song and rocking are still winning, but I wonder...

My husband and I recently watched a movie in which a father traveled back in time to talk to Einstein. I am thinking perhaps I need to borrow that machine and have a few words with the genius as well. You can put what I know about the theory of relativity and the fabric of time in a thimble, but I know what I see. Time has sped up. The evidence is all around us.

If you don't believe me, take a look at your Facebook pages from last week. Thousands of moms can't be wrong with pictures of their babies on the first day of kindergarten, first grade, middle school, senior year. Their voices are raised in protest over time that has disappeared or gone too fast, and I'm adding mine to the melee.

We need the days to slow down. Until they do, my only advice is trite, but true: Savor every moment. Lock these fleeting days in a time bottle so we can compare notes later!

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