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# Visits with You and Your Baby

12 to 24 Months and Beyond





## Vaccinations

### FOR YOUR BABY

Your baby needs to have shots to protect him from some diseases. Your baby will get his first shot, the Hepatitis B vaccine, before leaving the hospital. Then he will need shots every couple of months. This is when your baby needs to be vaccinated:

- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 12–15 months
- 18 months

For more information about vaccinations for your baby, call your local health care provider.

SOURCE: American Academy of Pediatrics

## Car Safety

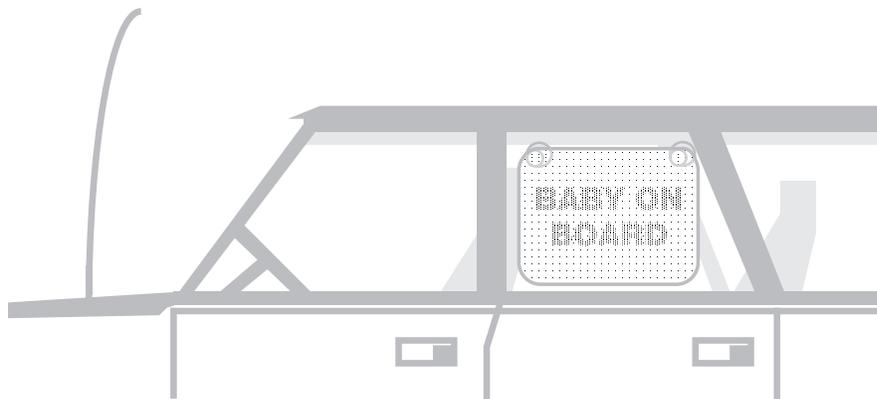
### FOR YOUR BABY

Car safety begins with your baby's first ride home from the hospital. Pennsylvania state law requires that babies and toddlers ride in an approved child safety seat. A child safety seat can save your child's life, but it's important to use it correctly.

- ◆ Always read and follow your vehicle owner's manual and your car seat instruction manual carefully.
- ◆ Babies should ride facing the back of the car until they are at least 1 year old and weigh at least 20 pounds. Small, lightweight infant-only seats are designed to face only the rear.
- ◆ You can also use a convertible car seat, which is designed to fit children from birth to about 40 pounds. (Note: some car seats have a starting weight of 5 pounds.) You can turn the seat around to face the front when your baby is at least 1 year old and weighs at least 20 pounds.
- ◆ The safest place for any child safety seat is in the back seat of the car. Never put a rear-facing child safety seat in the front seat of a car with a passenger-side air bag. This will endanger your baby during a crash.
- ◆ Be sure your baby is buckled into the car seat correctly. Use the correct harness slots (at or below the shoulders for rear-facing, and at or above for forward-facing), and keep the harnesses snug.
- ◆ Be sure the safety seat is buckled into the car correctly. Follow the vehicle manufacturer's instructions and those that came with the car seat. The seat needs to fit tightly so that it doesn't move more than 1 inch from side to side or toward the front of the car.
- ◆ If a friend or relative has given you a used car seat, or if you are thinking of buying one at a yard sale, be careful! A used car seat should not be more than 6 years old, should not have been in a crash, and should not have any cracks or missing parts. If the seat does not come with instructions, you should get a copy of the instruction manual from the manufacturer before you use the seat.

For more information, you can call **1-800-CARBELT** (in Pennsylvania).

SOURCE: Pennsylvania Traffic Injury Prevention Project, Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; National Highway Traffic Safety Association



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# How to Use “Visits with You and Your Baby”

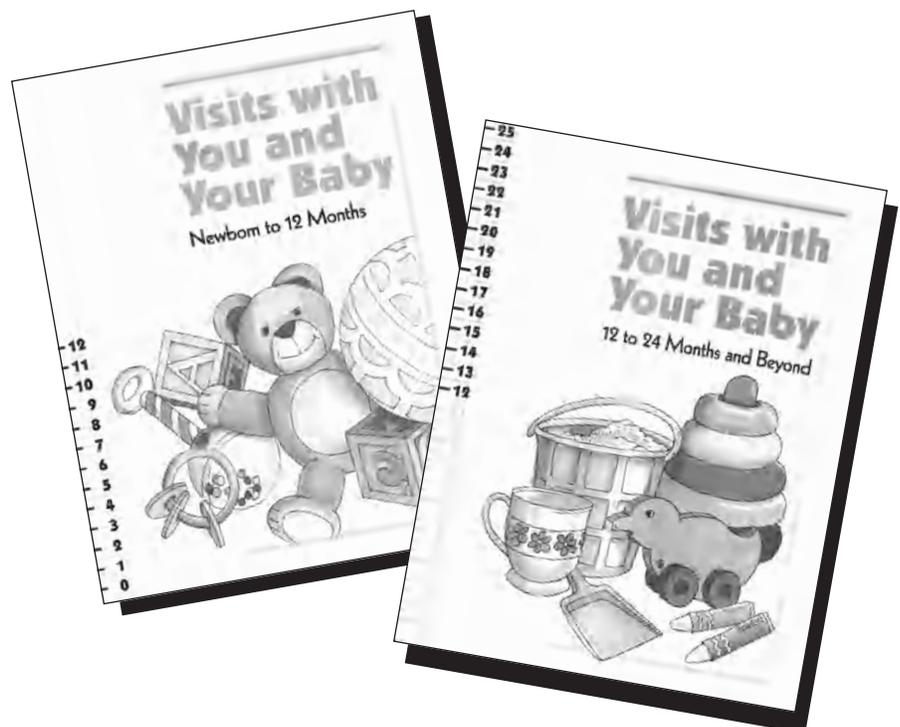
This is the second *Visits with You and Your Baby* book. If you don’t have the first book, which covers your baby’s first year, you may want to pick up a copy. Save these booklets for use in the future. You can use the activity pages in each one.

Do you have a baby book? If not, keep track of your baby’s growth by making notes on these pages. Here are some of the things you could write down:

- ◆ Your baby’s weight and length each month.
- ◆ Her eating and sleeping habits (whether she sleeps through the night, for instance).
- ◆ Her favorite toy.
- ◆ New skills. (When she learns her first words or takes her first steps. Look at the “Baby’s Growth” chart in this *Visits* to find out what to expect at different times.)
- ◆ When each new tooth appears.
- ◆ Important events (his first birthday party or trip to the zoo).

## He or She? Him or Her?

PLEASE NOTE: In this and all Better Kid Care publications, we refer to children alternately as “he” or “she.” When we use “he” or “she,” we include all children.





# Congratulations!

## You're beginning your second year as a parent!

Look back over the past 12 months. Your baby has grown and developed. You were excited when your baby rolled over for the first time. There were also times of sadness. Remember when your baby fell down while trying to stand up?

Soon your baby will be a “toddler.” Be prepared for times when your toddler will do the unexpected. She will get into everything. Be even more careful now. Make sure safety comes first. Lock up poisons, chemicals, and all medicines.

Once your baby begins to talk, he'll talk and talk and talk. You need to listen and talk with him.

Read to your toddler. She'll want the same story read over and over. That's okay. But read and read some more. Reading out loud helps her learn more words. Reading now will help your child do better in school in the years to come.

You might be tempted to just turn on the TV to entertain your child. Don't let her watch very much TV. Always suggest she play with a toy instead.

Spend time with your toddler. Play is important to him. Let him decide what he wants to play and play with him. Young children learn through playing. Don't spend big sums of money on toys. Always buy a good toy and don't waste money on cheap toys. It's better to buy one really good toy than it is to buy several cheaper ones.

Be especially careful about who takes care of your child when you must be away. Your child is almost helpless. He is counting on you to choose someone who cares for him and who will treat him well.

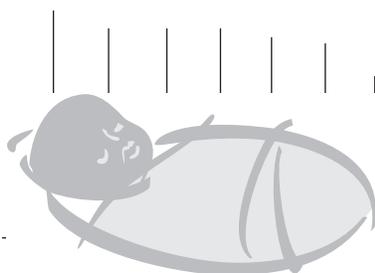
As your child gets close to her second birthday, be prepared for her to say “No.” She has her own ideas. She may even say something you never thought she would say. Don't panic! When she says something nasty to you, it's a sign that she is growing.

Always tell him how much you love him. Cuddle him. Hold him. Kiss him. Don't ever allow yourself to get so upset that you hit him. You could hurt him.

Remember to take care of yourself. That means when you get uptight or fed up, take a few moments to relax. Parenting is a hard job. It's tiring and at times it's frustrating. That's why you must get your sleep and take some time to do something you want to do. Try to think about how lucky you are to have such a wonderful son or daughter. This *Visits* will help you learn more about your child. The more you learn, the more fun and enjoyment you will get. Keep this *Visits* handy, and read about how your child is growing.

# Your Baby's Growth

Keep in mind that every baby is different. Children grow at different speeds. Your friend's baby may start to do something before or after your baby does. That's perfectly normal. Children usually learn things in a certain order, not at a certain age.



	<b>Here's How Your Baby's Body Will Grow</b>	<b>Here's How Your Baby's Personality Will Grow</b>	<b>Here's How Your Baby's Language Will Grow</b>
<b>3 months</b> 3	holds up head and chest while on stomach	smiles at faces	cries less and makes more noises
	eats and sleeps more regularly	stays alert and looks around more	responds to voices
<b>6 months</b> 6	reaches out for and grabs hold of objects	looks at objects closely	laughs and squeals
	sleeps in a favorite position	recognizes you (but may be afraid of others)	coos a lot
	gets his first teeth	smiles at other children	reacts to sounds
<b>9 months</b> 9	holds and shakes a rattle	self-feeds cookies or crackers	says “ma-ma”
	sits without help for up to a minute	holds own bottle	imitates sounds
	shifts objects from hand to hand	is shy with strangers	responds to own name
	can stand if held up	smiles at face in a mirror	watches others
<b>12 months</b> 12	sits without help for 10 minutes	acts more secure with strangers	waves bye-bye to people
	can pull self up to standing position	shows emotions like love and jealousy	understands “no-no”
	picks up objects with fingers	likes to be with adults	says two words
	crawls on hands and knees	helps to dress	turns pages of a book
<b>15 months</b> 15	cruises a room (holds onto furniture to move around)	tells you when diaper needs to be changed	points to things she wants
	can stand alone for a few seconds	doesn't always stop when you say “no”	says five words, names included
	scribbles with crayons	throws objects from high chair but wants them back	can follow simple commands
	walks for a few steps	is very curious	imitates adult talk
	crawls up stairs	approaches other children	points to clothes or parts of body when named
<b>18 months</b> 18	walks without falling	acts impatient with problems	says “no”
	walks up stairs if you hold hands	disobeys commands sometimes	points to pictures of people or objects when named
	can pull or throw toys	takes off shoes, flushes toilet	understands what you say but still babbles back
<b>21 months</b> 21	squats down without falling	pulls you to show you something	asks for food or to be taken to the bathroom
	kicks a ball	can drink from a cup	speaks in two-word sentences
	stacks up blocks and other toys	hugs you and toys	uses twenty words or more
<b>24 months</b> 24	runs without falling	imitates housework	speaks in three-word sentences
	walks up and down stairs	doesn't share, but will when asked	says “I,” “me,” and “you”
	turns pages of a book	puts on simple clothes	names and points to pictures
<b>Beyond 24 months</b> 24+	walks on tiptoe	washes and dries own hands	says first and last name when asked
	jumps with both feet	can play games with other children	uses plurals for objects
	stands on one foot	tries to order others around	names and points to colors

# 12–15 Months



**Remember:** Your baby will need to be vaccinated between the ages of 12 and 15 months.

## YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT

Children usually learn to walk at this age. Before they start, they must know how to crawl and how to stand up on their own. You may see your toddler “cruise” around a room: she’ll walk where there’s furniture and hold on to the chairs and tables for support. This will build up her confidence and make her stronger. She’ll take her first unsupported steps soon afterwards—and then you won’t be able to stop her! Stairs won’t even bother her then.

As she grows up, she’ll try to show you that she’s not completely dependent on you. For example, she may not wait for you to notice that her diaper’s dirty. She may tell you herself.

She’ll make trouble sometimes. She might toss items out of her playpen, cry until you give them back to her, and toss them right back out again when you do. She might pretend not to hear you when you say “No!” It’s not because she wants to disobey you; it’s because she’s so busy. There’s so much that your toddler wants to know about the world.

## YOUR BABY'S GROWTH

Every baby is different. Every baby develops at his own rate. These signs of growth should be used only as general guides.



	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Body</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Personality</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Language</b> Will Grow
<b>12 months</b>	sits without help for 10 minutes	acts more secure with strangers	waves bye-bye to people
	can pull self up to standing position	shows emotions like love and jealousy	understands “no-no”
	picks up objects with fingers	likes to be with adults	says two words
	crawls on hands and knees	helps to dress	turns pages of a book
<b>15 months</b>	cruises a room (holds onto furniture to move around)	tells you when diaper needs to be changed	points to things she wants
	can stand alone for a few seconds	doesn't always stop when you say “no”	says five words, names included
	scribbles with crayons	throws objects from high chair but wants them back	can follow simple commands
	walks for a few steps	is very curious	imitates adult talk
	crawls up stairs	approaches other children	points to clothes or parts of body when named



*Special Memories  
About Your Baby  
(write them here)*

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**TEACHING YOUR TODDLER HOW TO SPEAK**

When your baby started to babble, you probably tried to reward her. Perhaps you laughed, clapped, or imitated the sounds she made.

Your efforts are about to pay off. Your toddler will say her first word soon. It could be “ma-ma,” “da-da,” or another short word she’s heard a lot. Before long she’ll say two-word sentences. By the time she’s 3 years old, you’ll wonder why you were anxious to hear her talk! She’ll ask a hundred questions a day—or the same question a hundred times.

**Here are some points to keep in mind as your toddler learns to speak:**

- ◆ She understands more words than she can pronounce. You can help her learn new ones. As you play together, tell her the names of various items—her toys, her clothes, and other objects around the house.
- ◆ Once your toddler learns how to say a word, she’ll use it for a lot of different reasons. “Up” may mean “I want you to pick me up,” “The cookies are up there,” or “That airplane is up in the sky.” You’ll have to decide what she means.
- ◆ Tell her the names of various parts of the body—her ears, her nose, her legs, and so on. This adds to her vocabulary. It also helps her realize that she is a separate, individual person.
- ◆ TV can’t help your toddler learn to speak. TV doesn’t respond to her the way people do.
- ◆ Be sure to speak correctly—not in “baby talk.” *Remember, your baby learns to talk by imitating what she hears.*

**MEALTIME**

It’s normal for children to eat less now than they did in their first year. They’re not growing as quickly as before. Let your toddler do what her body tells her. When she’s really hungry, she’ll attack her food, and no one will be able to stop her. Look for cues that tell you whether she wants to eat or not.

As children grow older, they become less interested in food. Your baby is becoming more interested in what is happening around her. She wants to learn and likes to do things for herself.

You and your toddler can work together as a “feeding team.” Your part is to do these things:

- ◆ select and buy the food
- ◆ prepare and serve meals
- ◆ decide when to serve meals and snacks
- ◆ make meal times pleasant
- ◆ help your baby learn to behave at the table



Your baby’s job is to decide how much she wants to eat and whether she wants to eat a particular food.

Don’t get involved in “food games” with your toddler. These games only make mealtime unpleasant for both of you. Here are some tips on how to avoid food games:

When your toddler says, “No!” she may mean, “Do I have to?” She’s started to think of herself as a separate, individual person. She may want to argue with you to test that idea. Let her do what her body tells her.

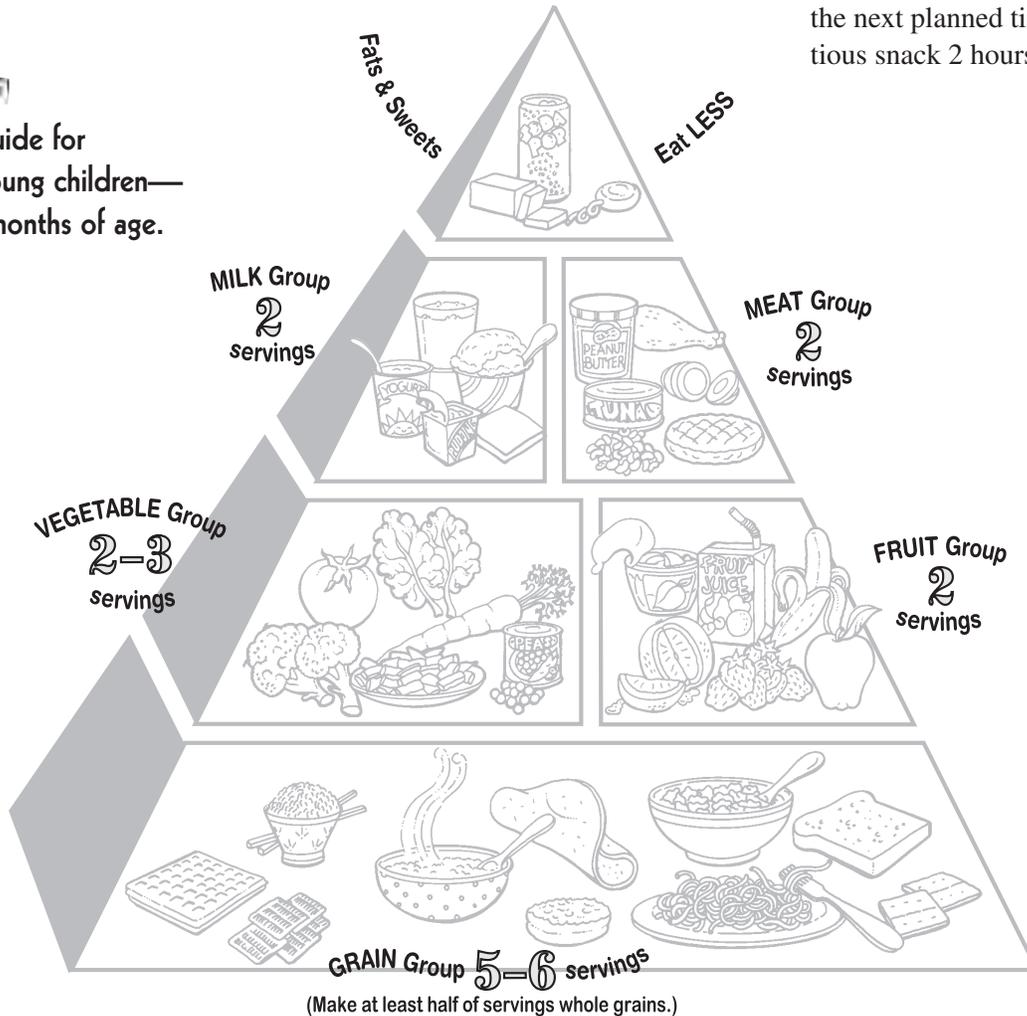
When she says she’s full, tell her that she doesn’t have to eat another bite. But keep her food within reach. See if she’ll stay at the table with you for a while. She may decide to eat a little more in a few minutes.

Let mealtime end when your toddler decides she’s really full. Don’t argue with her; you don’t want to draw attention to her refusal to eat.

Ignore bad behavior, as long as there’s no danger involved. Be sure she understands that she won’t have another chance to eat until the next planned time (a nutritious snack 2 hours or so later).



A daily guide for feeding young children—12 to 24 months of age.



**FOOD IS FUN...**  
and learning about food is fun, too. Eating whole grains, vegetables and fruit, milk and meat, and being physically active will help children grow healthy and strong.

**WHAT COUNTS AS ONE SERVING FOR CHILDREN 12–24 MONTHS?**

**GRAIN GROUP**

- 1/4 to 1/2 slice of bread
- 1–2 Tbsp. cooked rice or pasta
- 1–2 Tbsp. cooked cereal
- 1–2 Tbsp. ready-to-eat cereal

**FRUIT GROUP**

- 1–2 Tbsp. fresh fruit
- 1/4 cup 100% juice
- 1–2 Tbsp. canned fruit

**MEAT GROUP**

- 1–2 Tbsp. cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish
- 1–2 Tbsp. cooked dry beans
- 1/2 of a cooked egg

**VEGETABLE GROUP**

- 1–2 Tbsp. chopped raw or cooked vegetables
- 1–2 Tbsp. raw leafy vegetables

**MILK GROUP**

- 1 cup breastmilk
- 1 cup whole milk or yogurt
- 1/2 slice of cheese
- 1–2 Tbsp. small cheese pieces

**FATS AND SWEETS**

Limit serving these foods.

Young children may eat different amounts from one day to the next. Start with the serving sizes listed above and offer more if your child is still hungry.

*Special Memories  
About Your Baby*  
(write them here)

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### How much should you serve your toddler?

Give a 1-year-old a **1**-tablespoon portion from each of the food groups at a meal. Give a 2-year-old **2** tablespoons, and so on. This amount might be too much for some children and not enough for others. “Listen” to your toddler’s hunger and fullness cues.

As you have seen many times, your toddler is becoming a more independent person. What may look like “picky” eating may instead be your child showing you he wants to do things for himself—a natural part of growing up. Before a picky eater gets to be a problem eater, there are some things you can do to encourage even the pickiest eater to try a few bites of new, different, nutritious food at each meal.

Try these tips for handling the “ups and downs” of feeding your toddler. Try one, two, or a few on a picky eater you know!

1. Take things one step at a time. Offer your child just one new food at a time. Let him know if it will be sweet, salty, or sour.
2. A taste is just a taste. Let your child decide how much to try. A taste can be as small as half a teaspoon
3. What goes in, may come out—and that’s okay! Studies show that toddlers are more likely to try a new food if they do not have to swallow it. Show your child how to carefully spit the food into a napkin if he decides he doesn’t want to swallow it.
4. If at first you don’t succeed . . . try, try again. Many young children must be offered a food eight or ten times before they will try it. Keep offering that new food—don’t give up. Sooner or later, your child will want to give it a try.
5. Be a role model. Imitation is a powerful force in learning. If you want your toddler to drink milk, for example, make sure he sees you drinking milk.
6. To get your toddler to try something new, have him sit with a brother, sister, or friend who is a good taster when you introduce a new food.
7. Serve a new food with one your child already knows. He will be more likely to try it that way.
8. Color and texture make a difference. Most children prefer bright colors and interesting textures. Many prefer plain foods that they can easily recognize.
9. You can lead your child to try a new food, but you can’t make him eat! Never force your child to try a food. Offer it, but if he doesn’t eat it, just take the food away and try again another time.
10. Most of all, relax. Think about the good things your child is doing and the progress he is making.

Sometimes toddlers are hard to feed. They have lots of energy and may not want to sit still for meals. Also, they can be very picky about what they eat. You’ll want to do everything you can to encourage your toddler to eat the right foods. To keep his teeth healthy, use a cup now, not a bottle.

If you offer your toddler a variety of nutritious foods, she won’t starve. Try to stay calm and be a good example to her. These are some of the toughest and most entertaining months of your life! Keep meal times fun, and enjoy the time you spend with your child.





## SAFETY

- ◆ Keep all household cleaners, bug sprays, detergents, alcohol, cosmetics, and medicines out of your toddler’s reach and locked in a cupboard or cabinet.
- ◆ Have a rubber mat in the bathtub to prevent falls, or stick slip-proof decals to the floor of the tub.
- ◆ Lock all windows that your toddler can reach. Lock doors, too; now that she can stand, she’ll start to turn doorknobs. If there’s a door you want to secure, put a hook on it that only grown-ups can reach.
- ◆ If you have a woodstove or a fireplace, install a screen to keep your toddler away from it.
- ◆ Your 12- to 15-month-old child will be very active and very curious. He is constantly exploring everything around him. If you have alcohol any place in your house where your child can reach it, you are inviting him to explore it. Alcohol can seriously hurt toddlers, even in small amounts. If your baby weighs 30 pounds and drinks 1 ounce of 80 proof alcohol, her blood alcohol level could be high enough for her to be considered legally intoxicated. This level of alcohol in the blood results in unclear thinking and personality and behavior changes. The baby should be seen by a doctor right away. If you do decide to keep alcohol in your house, keep it in a closed or locked cupboard that is up high out of your toddler’s reach.

## SELF-HELP SKILLS

What are self-help skills? You use them when you eat, when you get dressed, when you go to the bathroom, when you wash your hands, and when you brush your teeth. Self-help skills are the tools you use to lead an independent life every day.

Part of your job as a parent is to help your toddler become independent. You want her to learn how to eat—that’s the first important task. You can help her start on the other skills now as well. Here’s how:

- ◆ Use a soft brush or a washcloth to clean your toddler’s teeth. Let her play with the brush or the washcloth when you’re finished.
- ◆ When you dress her, describe what you’re doing: “Hold your hands up high. Now put your arm in the sleeve. Button all the buttons. You’re all dressed!” Slowly, as she learns what the words mean, she’ll start to help out.
- ◆ Buy clothes with wide necks, big zippers, and buttons in front. Then you can start to dress your toddler and let her finish.
- ◆ Find dolls that have clothes your toddler can put on and take off. This isn’t meant only for girls. Boys can learn a lot from dolls too. Don’t worry about sex roles. Children learn about them from their parents, not from their toys.



## DISCIPLINE

“No!” is such an overused word. What else can you say? Here are some ways to avoid using the word “no”:

“Come over here and play with your pots and pans”—instead of “No! Get away from the stove.”

“Bring it over here to me” when your toddler takes a glass from a table—instead of “No! Don’t touch that.”

“Walk in the yard here with me” when she heads toward the street—instead of “No! Stop that this second.”

Do this for a while. It’s very hard at first. We’re so used to the word “No!” Just ask yourself: How can I tell my child what I want her to do, not what I don’t want her to do? The two of you will be much happier if you learn to think and respond in this manner.

Of course, sometimes you have to say “No!” For example, what if your toddler starts to climb on a bookshelf or a windowsill? She could fall and hurt herself. How do you teach her not to climb there?

Here’s one answer: Say “No!” and walk over to her. Pick her up and take her to a safe part of the room (the couch, for example, or a clear space on the carpet). You don’t have to shout at her. You don’t even have to make her stay in that safe place for long. Do this every time your toddler tries to climb on that bookshelf or windowsill. She’ll learn not to climb there if you’re consistent about it.

Use this technique only when your toddler is in real danger. The basic rules still apply at all other times: Reward the good (what you want her to learn). Ignore the bad (what you don’t want her to learn). Redirect her into safe activities every time you can.

## TEMPER TANTRUMS

Your toddler may start to throw temper tantrums. She may scream, kick, arch her back, and jerk her head from side to side. What’s the cause? Maybe she’s frustrated. Maybe she wants your attention.

Don’t pay attention to her (as long as she can’t hurt herself where she is). Don’t scold her. Don’t try to hold or talk to her either. If you have to move her, do it in a calm, matter-of-fact way. Once she calms down, return to what you were doing when the tantrum started.

If you know what caused it, for example, if she wanted a cookie, don’t let her have the cookie. Soon she’ll learn that tantrums don’t work.

This advice is hard to follow. You know how hard it is to listen to your toddler cry. It’s even harder in a public place, like a park or a store. Still, it’s important not to reward such behavior with your attention. Don’t scold her once she calms down. Just return to where you left off.





*Special Memories  
About Your Baby*

*(write them here)*

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**ACTIVITIES**

Your toddler is ready to play with blocks now. You don't have to buy her a fancy set, though. You can make them at home out of empty milk cartons. Here are some other games the two of you can play:

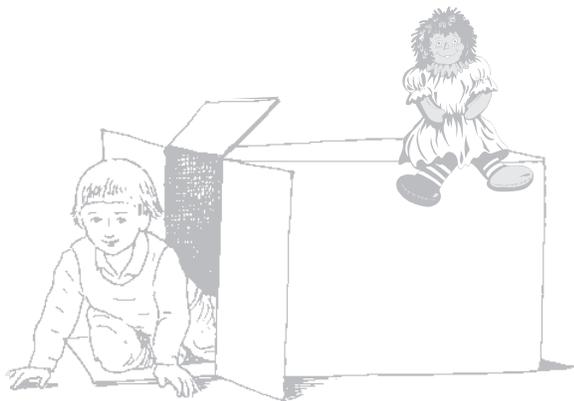
**In and Out**

Find a clear plastic jar with a wide mouth. Show your toddler how to twist the lid on and off. Then hand her some colorful items to put into the jar. Use the words "on," "off," "in," and "out" to describe her actions.

*(To prevent choking, any toy or object that is small enough to drop through a cardboard toilet paper tube should not be given to children under three years of age.)*

**Knock Me Down**

Balance a stuffed animal or doll on the back of a couch or the end of a low table. Then ask your toddler to knock it down. Move it to a new place, and see if she'll do it again. See if you can keep up with your toddler!





## Nurturing With Nutrition: 12–15 Months

It's hard to believe that your baby is a toddler already. It seems like only yesterday that you were learning how to tell whether she was full. Now that she feeds herself, you don't have to guess anymore!

Now, your toddler wants to make more decisions on her own, but she doesn't know how to start. Sometimes when she says "No," she means "Yes," sometimes she means "Do I have to?" and sometimes she means "No." You'll have to decide what she means. That won't be easy.

### THE FEEDING TEAM

Now more than ever, you and your toddler work as a team at mealtime. You each have certain parts to play.

You serve a variety of healthful foods in a form that your toddler can handle. You schedule the meals and snacks. Try to have her taste each of the new foods you serve. At the same time, always provide something that you know she likes.

Be patient with her. She probably won't like every new food—at least not the first time. Sooner or later she'll like all sorts of things. Set a good example. Eat lots of different foods yourself—even vegetables!

You also set "the rules of the table." Don't be afraid to discipline your toddler for bad behavior—when she spits out food or throws her dish, for example.

Discipline does not mean hitting or yelling at a child. Take her away from the table or take away her dish for 1 minute. Spitting out food or throwing the dish may be signs that she doesn't like the food or that she is finished eating.

Those are your responsibilities. Your toddler decides whether she wants to eat and when she's had enough.

That doesn't mean that you have to be a short-order cook. If she won't eat the food you prepared, calmly take it away. Tell her that she'll be able to eat again at the next planned time. Don't give her anything until then—not even a bottle of juice or milk. (Water is okay.) She won't like that very much. She may not even understand it. If you're consistent about it, she'll learn not to demand too much from you.

What about dessert? Serve it with her meal. That way, it won't be a reward or a punishment.

All this advice may sound weird if your family had different rules when you were a kid. Scientists have researched these ideas. Their purpose is to reduce the chance that your toddler will develop unhealthy food habits. So avoid "food games." Make the rules now, before your toddler can come up with a battle plan.



Babies and young children can choke easily on some foods, such as fruit seeds or pits, pieces of hot dogs, and some raw fruits and vegetables, including grapes, apples, carrots, and celery. Using grated or finely chopped foods may reduce the risk of choking. Never leave a baby or young child alone while eating.

# 15–18 Months

Remember: Your baby will need to be vaccinated at 18 months.



## YOUR TODDLER'S DEVELOPMENT

It may seem as though your toddler's personality changes daily. He may get angry if he can't get your attention or put a puzzle together or stack his blocks in just the right way. He may even disobey you. This may make you angry sometimes, but don't be too hard on him. This is part of growing up. He learns about the rules of his world when he discovers what he can and cannot do.

Look for other signs of independence, too. Soon he'll help you dress and undress him. He'll be able to take his shoes off in a snap. Don't be surprised if you hear him flush the toilet—especially if he's watched you flush it before.

In the last few months, he's learned what the word "no" means. Now, he'll start to use it, too. He'll say "No!" if he doesn't want to do what you want him to or if he doesn't like something that's going on. This is also a normal part of growing up. (Not all children act like this. If your toddler doesn't behave this way, he's okay. It's not a bad sign at all.)

Your toddler knows what many words mean. He just can't say them yet. Ask him where an object is (in the room or in a picture), and see if he can point to it. He can follow simple instructions now. Ask him to hand you a book or move his blocks to one side of the room.

He'll still feel frustrated a lot. There's so much that he wants to tell you, but he doesn't know how! You'll have to be patient with him. It will be hard to make sense of his words at times.

## YOUR BABY'S GROWTH

Every baby is different. Every baby develops at his own rate. These signs of growth should be used only as general guides.



	Here's How Your Baby's Body Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's Personality Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's Language Will Grow
15	cruises a room (holds onto furniture to move around)	tells you when diaper needs to be changed	points to things she wants
	can stand alone for a few seconds	doesn't always stop when you say "no"	says five words, names included
	scribbles with crayons	throws objects from high chair but wants them back	can follow simple commands
	walks for a few steps	is very curious	imitates adult talk
	crawls up stairs	approaches other children	points to clothes or parts of body when named
18	walks without falling	acts impatient with problems	says "no"
	walks up stairs if you hold hands	disobeys commands sometimes	points to pictures of people or objects when named
	can pull or throw toys	takes off shoes, flushes toilet	understands what you say but still babbles back



## INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

During their first year, children grow very quickly. Their development slows in their second year, and individual differences start to show up. Some children start to walk at 9 months, while others start at 18 months. Some speak in whole sentences at 14 months, while others haven't said their first word. Try not to worry if your toddler can't keep up with your friend's or your sister's child. Every child is an individual, with her own inner schedule.

Keep two facts in mind. First, changes happen in a certain order—not at a certain time. In your baby book, write down when your toddler reaches the growth milestones described in these pages.

Suppose that she hasn't taken her first steps yet, but she can sit up by herself, pull herself up to stand, and crawl on her hands and knees. This is the normal order of development. Your toddler just has a slower growth rate in this instance.

Second, different skills develop at different speeds. If your toddler is behind in one area, she may be ahead in others. Maybe she doesn't talk at all yet, and she's still afraid of strangers—but she learned to walk when she was 9 months old!

If you're still worried about your toddler's progress, talk to your doctor or nurse. Take your baby book to show them what milestones she's reached.

## MEALTIME

What should you do when your toddler asks for juice or milk? Is he hungry or just thirsty? Offer him some water first. It's best to save other drinks for meals and planned snacks. You don't want him to fill up on juice or milk and not eat at meal time. Keep some water cold in the refrigerator. Your toddler will think it's special if it comes from there instead of the faucet.

To keep your toddler's teeth healthy, use a cup and not a bottle now. His teeth can actually rot away if there's a bottle in his mouth all day or night.

Now he is able to eat the things that you eat. Give him foods from the family table, which he can feed to himself. It will take more effort now to plan his meals. You won't just be opening a jar. He still has special needs that you must consider. Serve him a variety of foods prepared in healthy, appealing ways.

The foods on our sample menus don't have much sugar or fat. That doesn't mean they're dull or bland. Choose foods that have lots of nutrients instead of foods from the tip of the Food Guide Pyramid and other foods high in sugar or fat. Your toddler needs the "power" in those nutrients to grow and stay healthy. On the next page are some smart choices.



	Day One	Day Two	Day Three
<b>BREAKFAST</b>	1/2 cup milk 1/4 cup oatmeal 1/2 banana	1/2 cup milk 1/4 cup orange juice 1/3 cup dry unsweetened cereal	1/2 cup milk 1/4 cup pineapple juice 1 scrambled egg 1/2 slice toast with jam
<b>SNACK</b>	1/4 cup orange juice 1 graham cracker 1/4 cup yogurt	1/4 cup apple juice 3/4 oz. cheese cubes	1/2 cup orange juice 3 or 4 saltines 1 Tbsp. cooked meat or chicken cubes
<b>LUNCH</b>	1/2 cup milk 1/2 peanut butter sandwich 2 Tbsp. peas 2 Tbsp. cauliflowererets 1/4 peach (sliced)	1/2 cup milk 1/2 cup split pea soup 1/2 roll zucchini sticks 1 small oatmeal cookie	1/2 cup milk 1/2 tuna fish sandwich 2 Tbsp. broccoli flowerets
<b>SNACK</b>	1/2 cup milk 1/4 cup dry unsweetened cereal	1/2 cup yogurt 3 or 4 saltines 2 Tbsp. peanut butter	1/2 cup milk 1/4 bagel
<b>DINNER</b>	1/2 cup milk 1/2 roll 1 chicken leg (remove small bones) 1/4 cup rice 2 Tbsp. carrots 1/4 cup applesauce with cinnamon	1/2 cup milk 1/4 bun 2 oz. hamburger 1/3 cup noodles 2 Tbsp. green beans 2 Tbsp. coleslaw 2 small cubes of angel food cake	1/2 cup milk 1/2 piece cornbread 1/2 cup beef stew with potatoes and vegetables 1/4 cup pear slices 1/4 cup frozen yogurt

### HEALTH AND MEDICAL TIPS

Not all houseplants are harmless. Some are poisonous. Keep all of them out of your toddler's reach. Remember, he puts things in his mouth to find out more about them.

What if your toddler eats a part of a houseplant? Call the poison control center right away. Tell them what kind of plant it was, or at least what it looks like. If you take him to a hospital, take a part of the plant with you. Then the doctor will know exactly how to treat the child.

Children between the ages of 15 and 18 months are still actively exploring and having fun with everything around them. Smoke in the air around your toddler will sting her eyes and nose. She won't be able to enjoy the things she's learning about nearly as much.

When children start to walk, stairs are a danger. But they'll never learn how to use stairs if they don't practice. Once your toddler takes his first steps, you can help him practice.

You know the gate that you keep at the bottom of the stairs? Move it up to the third step. Place a favorite toy there in front of the gate. Tell your toddler to climb the stairs to the toy. Then ask him to crawl back down to you. You'll have to hold onto him the first few times. Soon he'll want to practice on his own. As he improves, move the gate up the stairs (one or two steps at a time).

Toddlers are a full-time job! Sometimes it takes all your time and energy just to take care of your toddler. Parents need to be on their toes, alert and aware of everything their children do and how they are developing. If parents or child care workers drink alcohol, they have less energy



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and are less aware of all the children may be doing. Not only will special moments with your child be missed, but you may not be as alert as you need to be in case of accidents or illnesses.

Keep your toddler’s playthings in two or three different boxes. Don’t set them all out at once. If he’s bored with the toys in one box, put them away and set out another. This may keep him interested in his own toys—and out of places he’s not supposed to be.

Children have a lot of energy. Scientists have found that children have more accidents at certain times of the day: late in the morning (10:30–11:30 A.M.) and late in the afternoon (3:00–4:00 P.M.). Why? Perhaps this is when they start to feel tired and hungry.

Plan a nutritious snack for your toddler at 10:30 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. Some milk or water and an oatmeal cookie may be all he needs. Enjoy this time together. Talk about your snack and what you plan to do the rest of the day.

**DISCIPLINE**

Problems happen when parents don’t communicate well with their children. It’s not only what you say, but how you say it. To avoid conflicts that hurt both you and your toddler, say what you mean—and mean what you say.

For example, suppose your toddler starts to tear pages out of a book. Don’t say, “You’re a bad boy!” He’s not a bad person. He’s just doing a bad thing. Tell him that books are to be read, not torn. Take the book away from him. You might also tell him that you get mad when he tears up books. This links your anger to a specific behavior. Your toddler will learn not to do that anymore. After all, he doesn’t want to make you mad at him.

Here’s another example. At night, don’t ask, “Want to get ready for bed?” If he were to say no, you’d probably be annoyed. That wouldn’t be fair. You made it sound as if he had a choice! Say what you mean in this situation: “It’s time to get ready for bed now,” “Let’s wash your hands before supper,” or “Hand me your bib before you start to eat.”

Say what you mean—and mean what you say. Sometimes you have to set rules to keep your toddler safe. Don’t set a lot of rules. Enforce the ones you do set every time, no matter what. You have to be consistent if you want your toddler to obey you.

Suppose that your toddler isn’t allowed to climb on the chairs in the dining room. You made that a rule because you don’t want him to fall off the chairs and hurt himself. Now suppose that friends are over. Your toddler tries to climb on a chair. You tell him “no,” and he throws a temper tantrum.

You’re embarrassed. To calm him down, you let him climb on the chair. He’s just learned that “no” only means “no” sometimes—and that a good tantrum can change a “no” to a “yes.” This is a recipe for trouble later on!

If you’re a predictable and consistent parent, your toddler will learn to accept your rules more quickly. Have just a few rules for situations that you think are really important. Then say what you mean, and mean what you say.



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### TOILET TRAINING

Your toddler probably isn't ready for this yet. Don't expect results too soon. You'll only run into headaches. However, there are things you can do now to help him train himself later on.

There's more to toilet training than learning to use a toilet. For example, your toddler has to pull down his pants and his underwear first, and he has to pull them up again when he's done. You can teach him how to dress and undress for now. That will be one less detail you'll have to worry about later.

You've noticed by now that your toddler imitates the things that you do. Let him watch you in the bathroom. He'll learn that this is a natural, grown-up act. Let him flush the toilet too. He'll discover that it's nothing to be afraid of—and that he's expected to flush it after he's used it.

Don't yell at him if he takes off his diaper and plays with his bowel movements. You don't want him to think that bowel movements are bad. Explain that they belong in the toilet. Help him put them there and flush. Then, show him how to wash his hands.

Don't make your toddler use the toilet too soon. Be calm and patient. Have him practice the skills he'll need later: how to dress and undress and how to wash his hands afterwards. In 6 months or so, he'll catch on to this much more quickly.

### ACTIVITIES

Your toddler knows what many words mean. To help him learn more, tell him the names of objects he sees. Describe his actions to him. Games like these can help too.

#### Show Me!

Keep a pile of old magazines with lots of colorful pictures. Sit with your toddler, and talk about the pictures. Let him turn the pages. Ask him to point to things in the pictures. ("Show me the lady. Now show me the cat.")

#### You Do It!

For this game, you need a doll or stuffed animal and a block. Move the doll and the block around, and describe each motion. Then ask your toddler to do it. For example:

"I'll make the doll sit down. Now you do it."

"I'll make the doll lie down. Now you do it."

"I'll make the doll sit on the block. Now you do it."

"I'll put the block on the doll. Now you do it."



### Family Picture Album

Make a photo album with pictures of family members and familiar objects. Sit with your toddler and talk about the pictures. Ask him to point to things in the pictures. Later, ask him to name them.



## Nurturing with Nutrition: 15–18 Months

Let's review the basic rules of discipline. They apply at feeding time, too!

Set just a few hard-and-fast rules. Here are some you may want to set for your toddler: He can't throw food or spit it out. When he's done, you'll take the food away from the table. He won't be able to eat between scheduled meals and snacks.

Say what you mean. If he's not supposed to throw food, tell him so at every meal.

Mean what you say. Be consistent, no matter where you are or who you're with.

Some of the things children do with food seem very strange to grown-ups. For example, your toddler may keep a spoonful of food, especially meat, in his mouth for a long time, or he may want the same food daily for a month. Then one day he'll refuse to eat it.

Any change in his routine, even a little one, such as a piece of bread cut in a triangle instead of a square, may upset him. He doesn't understand that it's still bread no matter what shape it's in.

All these things are perfectly normal for children between the ages of 15 and 18 months. As long as he doesn't break the rules, let him be. Work with him to find solutions to food problems.

This may not be the way your friends or family members handle such problems. Talk it over with them. You'll find out that all children do the same kinds of things. Treat behavior at meal times the same way you'd treat it any other time.



Babies and young children can choke easily on some foods, such as fruit seeds or pits, pieces of hot dogs, and some raw fruits and vegetables, including grapes, apples, carrots, and celery. Using grated or finely chopped foods may reduce the risk of choking. Never leave a baby or young child alone while eating.

# 18–21 Months

Remember: Your baby will need to be vaccinated at 18 months.



## YOUR TODDLER'S DEVELOPMENT

Your toddler can probably walk quite well now. In the next few months, she'll become even better at it. Her sense of balance will improve too. She'll be able to bend down to play with her blocks without falling over. She'll learn how to kick. Once she knows she can kick objects out of her way, she may not throw them as often.

She can control smaller muscles as well. She will be able to do more with her fingers, and her eye-hand coordination will improve. She can stack her blocks easily now. She may even try to do it with other objects. Look out for rickety towers made with boxes, cans, and other toys!

Relief may be near if your toddler has made life difficult for you recently. She's about to become more sociable and interested in people. If something attracts her, she'll want to show it to you. She may be more affectionate too, so expect a few extra hugs and kisses. She'll want you to see how grown-up and independent she is. Maybe she'll only want to drink out of a cup—and she'll only spill a little bit.

She'll be able to ask for more juice or water soon. The words may not come out just right. When she holds her cup and says “joo” or “wa,” you'll understand. She may tell you she wants to be taken to the bathroom. There are about 20 words in her vocabulary now. Soon she'll use them in two-word sentences like “Mama home.” This marks the start of adult speech.



## YOUR BABY'S GROWTH

Every baby is different. Every baby develops at his own rate. These signs of growth should be used only as general guides.

	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Body</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Personality</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Language</b> Will Grow
<b>18 months</b>	walks without falling	acts impatient with problems	says “no”
	walks up stairs if you hold hands	disobeys commands sometimes	points to pictures of people or objects when named
	can pull or throw toys	takes off shoes, flushes toilet	understands what you say but still babbles back
<b>21 months</b>	squats without falling	pulls you to show you something	asks for food or to be taken to the bathroom
	kicks a ball	can drink from a cup	speaks in two-word sentences
	stacks up blocks and other toys	hugs you and toys	uses twenty words or more



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**YOUR TODDLER WITH OTHER CHILDREN**

Your toddler may get into trouble when she’s around older children. Maybe she’ll walk in front of the swings or into the middle of a baseball game. When she’s out with older children, you shouldn’t be too protective. Stay calm. Keep these points in mind.

Children need to be watched by grown-ups, especially when outdoors. Make sure your home is child-proof. Yards and playgrounds should be checked too. Look for broken bottles and cans, unsafe pieces of equipment, and other dangers.

Keep a close eye on your toddler around swings, jungle gyms, slides, and teeter-totters. She could fall off or be hit by the parts that move.

In the sandbox, have buckets, cups, shovels, and spoons for her to play with. Children love to play in sand and water at this age. Be sure to check the sandbox for broken bottles and other dangers. Any time your child is around water, stay within an arm’s reach.

When older children push your toddler away, don’t rush in to defend her (as long as she’s not hurt). This is part of the way children act with each other. Your toddler will do it to someone else next year. Most of the time, children can settle their disputes by themselves. Have a favorite toy on hand to keep her busy and away from the older children.

The main reason to watch your toddler is to make sure she doesn’t hurt herself. If you can, find people with children your toddler’s age. While the children play, you can share your experiences with the other parents. You’ll probably learn a few useful tips.

**“LET ME DO IT!”**

This is a difficult time for both children and parents. Children want to do more themselves. They also like to have Mom around to do things for them. Your toddler may shout “No!” when you try to help him, but he may still want your help. How can you tell?

There is no simple answer. Just be calm and patient. Leave plenty of time for him to eat, dress, wash, and take care of himself in other ways. He’ll be able to do a lot more on his own soon. Here are some tips on how to make him more independent.



- ◆ Keep his clothes and toys in the lowest drawer of a dresser or on shelves he can reach without help.
- ◆ Put up a coat rack he can reach, and let him keep his coat there.
- ◆ Ask him to do little chores with you. He could carry silverware to the table or help you dust or fold clothes. He may even want to run the sweeper.
- ◆ He should have his own toothbrush, washcloth, and towel.
- ◆ Place a solid stool at the sink. He can stand on it to wash, brush his teeth, and comb his hair without falling.
- ◆ At meals, let your toddler feed himself. Don’t focus on his table manners. Expect spilled milk! Give him half a cupful of milk or juice. It’ll be easier for him to handle, and you’ll have less to mop up.
- ◆ Remember what we said about routines that make life predictable for your toddler? He probably resists now when you tell him to wash up for dinner. So plan ahead. Remind him that it’s almost time to wash up



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5 minutes before you want him to start. He'll be able to finish whatever he's in the middle of. Maybe he won't fuss as much when you finally make him go to the sink and wash.

- ◆ Reward him when he remembers the routine before you remind him. Ask him what he does before he eats. If he says "Wash!" or walks to the sink, cheer and give him a "love" squeeze. You've helped with memory skills.

**MEALTIME**

Your toddler may start to like foods that have different flavors. Add a little seasoning (but not salt) to some of her meals. It'll keep her interested in what you serve. Still, she may not want to try new foods. She's more likely to be interested if you eat them with her, but even that's not a sure bet.

**Here is some advice on how to interest your toddler in new foods:**

- ◆ Serve a familiar item like bread or crackers at every meal, but don't let her fill up on that familiar item alone.
- ◆ Your toddler likes to look at bright colors. Be sure that at least one item on her plate is red, yellow, orange, or green.
- ◆ Talk to her while you eat. She won't think about the food on her plate as much, and she may eat better. Ask her to name the foods. Or talk about the colors and shapes.
- ◆ Think about how foods feel as well as how they taste. Offer her different textures at every meal: a soft item (like a banana), a juicy item (like watermelon), and a crunchy item (like a cracker).
- ◆ Serve dessert with dinner. Put it on the same plate. Choose nutritious desserts, like fruit or oatmeal cookies. If you have time, the two of you can make oatmeal cookies at home. Use half the sugar. They'll taste the same and be a lot better for both of you.
- ◆ Don't use food as a reward or a punishment; it'll only start fights—the kind where you both lose. Your toddler may develop food problems as a result.
- ◆ Children love to help out in the kitchen. They love to eat what they helped to make. Your toddler can shake cartons, stir food in bowls, wipe the table, and even tear lettuce. Be patient as she learns new tasks. When she's in the kitchen, look out for open drawers, knives she can reach, hot pots, and slippery floors.
- ◆ Sometimes let your toddler decide on her foods. Don't just ask her what she wants. Direct her decision. Ask if she wants apple slices or apple-sauce. That way, you still control what is served (apples). She can feel more like a grown-up because she makes the choice.
- ◆ Your toddler could still choke on some foods, even though she seems so big now. Don't serve foods with pits like olives and cherries, whole grapes, hard candies, nuts, peanut butter when it's not served on bread or a cracker, or hot dogs and meat sticks when they're not cut into thin strips.
- ◆ Any food can stick in your toddler's throat if she walks around with it in her mouth. Make this a household rule: She has to sit down at the table when eating.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

Because this is a rough time for her, your toddler may start to suck her thumb more often. It's how she deals with stress. No need to worry about it (or to punish her for it). If you ignore it, she'll probably grow out of it before her fifth birthday. It won't cause major dental problems now.

If you still think she sucks her thumb too much, keep track of how much time is spent that way. Do this for 2 weeks. Then take the totals to your doctor, and ask for advice.

### Other health and safety ideas:

- ◆ Keep all household cleaners, bug sprays, detergents, alcohol, cosmetics, and medicines behind locked doors.
- ◆ Does your furniture have sharp edges? Your toddler will fall down a lot as she starts to walk. She could hit her head on the corner of a table or chair. To prevent this, tape towels or bits of cloth over all edges.
- ◆ Don't let your toddler run when she has something in her mouth. Stop her, and take the object out. Make this a household rule!
- ◆ Another good rule: Your toddler shouldn't cross the street unless a grown-up holds her hand and leads her across. She needs someone to watch her whenever she's outside. It's best to have a closed-in play area outside—one she can't escape from by herself. Is your yard like this? If not, lock your doors from the inside to make sure that your toddler doesn't sneak outside.



There are lots of serious health risks to you and your toddler if anyone in your house, including you, smokes. Another very important thing to consider is cost. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2006, middle-income parents can expect to spend about \$9,230 each year on a baby. This includes housing, food, transportation, clothing, health care, and other expenses. According to the September 2006 Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids report, the national average cost of one pack of cigarettes is \$4.40. If a person smokes one pack of cigarettes a day at \$4.40 per pack, that's a cost of \$1,606 per year. That's something to think about.

Let's face it: alcohol is used by a lot of people to help them cope with stress. Having a toddler around the house can be very stressful, but we've talked about a few of the dangers of drinking even a little bit of alcohol or having it in your house. So what's the answer? Find other ways to deal with stress. If you're feeling uptight, call someone you can talk to. Ask your mother or a friend to babysit for an hour or an afternoon, and treat yourself to a long walk, a relaxing hot bath, an uninterrupted exercise session in your living room, or a soda with a friend.

## CAR TRAVEL

By now, your toddler doesn't fit into an infant-sized car seat. She needs a toddler-sized car seat.

All children must be in federally approved car seats from birth until age four. Children ages four to eight must be in approved booster seats, using both shoulder and lap belts. When you put a car seat in your vehicle, follow the manufacturer's instructions.

See the inside front cover for more information about keeping your toddler safe in the car.

## DISCIPLINE

Suppose you had a difficult day with your toddler. She wrote all over the walls in the bathroom. She scratched the coffee table with her toy tractor. Now, she's started to play with her blocks and not cause trouble. You probably don't want to bother her now that she's quiet.

But remember, your toddler wants your attention. If you ignore her when she behaves, she may think you'll only notice when she misbehaves. So show her how happy she makes you.

All the adults in the house should enforce the same rules. Otherwise, your toddler won't know who to listen to. Suppose you want her to eat at mealtime. That's your first concern. What if someone else in your household is more concerned with the child's table manners? Your toddler will be confused, and mealtime will be unpleasant for all of you.

Meet with the other adults in the house once a week to talk about the rules for your toddler. Talk in private, not in front of the child. Find out where you agree and where you don't. Then work out the differences. It's easier for your toddler to learn one set of rules.

You can help your toddler learn to make decisions now. Give her some choices. Suppose she crawls onto the coffee table and you don't want her there. Pick her up and tell her, "You may not crawl on the coffee table. You can play in your room, or you can help me dust the furniture." No matter which choice she picks, you've redirected her. She can feel more like a grown-up because she makes the choice. Be sure you offer her two clearly defined choices. Don't just tell her to find something else to do.





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**CHILD CARE**

How does your toddler act when someone else looks after her or when you take her to a day-care center? Does she still cry and carry on? That’s normal. She may make less of a fuss if the same person is there every time. A reliable caregiver can be hard to find.

When someone watches your toddler for the first time, spend some time with your toddler and caregiver before you leave. Try to make your toddler feel comfortable with this person. Tell the new caregiver where you will be, how she can reach you, and when you’ll be back. Write down the telephone numbers of your doctor, hospital, and poison control center (1-800-222-1222).

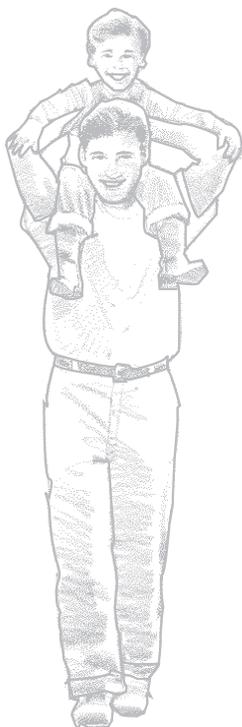
Remember when we talked about what you want from your caregiver? Here’s that list again:

- ◆ Is the center as clean and toddler-proof as your own home?
- ◆ Are there toys available? Are they safe ones? Is there a separate room or quiet corner for children to sleep in?
- ◆ Are there toys and swings outside? Is the area fenced in?
- ◆ Can you come and watch your child any time, or does the center prefer you to call in advance? Whenever you take your child to a new caregiver, plan to watch for a few hours.
- ◆ Has the caregiver had a medical checkup recently? Looking after children is hard, tiring work!
- ◆ Does the caregiver play with the children? Does she laugh and smile with them and show them warmth and affection? Remember, you expect a caregiver to do more than just keep an eye on them for a few hours.
- ◆ How does the caregiver handle behavior problems?
- ◆ Does the caregiver listen to your suggestions and answer your questions?
- ◆ Does the center have a phone with which to contact you in an emergency?
- ◆ At pick-up time, does the caregiver talk to parents about their child’s day?

**A SPECIAL TIP FOR THE BUSY PARENT**

Your toddler’s second year is important. He wants to become more independent, but you are still the No. 1 person in his life.

Save a special time for him every day after you get home from work or school. Read a book together, play with blocks, or take a walk. Do whatever the two of you enjoy best. Whatever you do, your toddler will realize that he’s the No.1 person in your life.



## PARENT EDUCATION

Want to talk to someone about the experience of parenthood? Want to learn more about nutrition, growth and development, or how to prepare your toddler for school? Many places run parent education classes. You don't need to have a problem with your toddler to sign up.

Call your Penn State Cooperative Extension office, ask your doctor or minister if they know about any parent education classes, check the newspaper, look on the bulletin boards at the supermarket and the library, or call the local school district or family services office. Chances are you'll find many different classes to choose from.

## ACTIVITIES

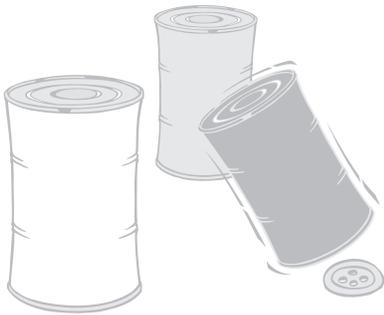
How can you tell that certain objects are alike? What makes others different? This is a skill your toddler needs to practice. It will help her learn what words mean. Games like these can help.

### Sort the Laundry

Clothes can be sorted in different ways: by color, by kind (shirts, socks, etc.), by whose they are, or by where they are kept. Let your toddler help you sort them. Be patient! Even if you have to do it over later, it's a worthwhile experience for her. Tell her about each item as you sort them.

### Name That Part

This is like the "Show Me!" game that was described earlier. Ask your toddler to point to different parts of your body. Tell her what each part is called. When she knows that, ask her what each part does: "What do we see with? What do we talk with?" Noses and ears will be difficult for your toddler to understand.



### Button, Button—Where's the Button?

Find three cans that are different sizes and colors. If the colors are too much alike, cover the cans with colored paper. With your toddler watching, put a big button or some other object under one of the cans. Move the cans around. Then ask your toddler where the button is. Give her clues like this: "Is it under the blue can? Is it under the one in the middle?"

*(To prevent choking, any toy or object that is small enough to drop through a cardboard toilet paper tube should not be given to children under three years of age.)*



## Nurturing with Nutrition: 18–21 Months

Does your toddler run all over the house most of the time? You must wonder how she can do that, especially on days when she hasn't had much to eat. She doesn't need a lot of food, because she's not growing as fast as she used to. She does need a variety of food prepared in ways she can handle.

Don't let your toddler carry around a bottle of juice or milk all day. She'll fill up on that and won't eat at mealtime.

Direct all that energy into play and other fun activities. Limit the time she spends in front of the TV. You'll have a healthier child.

What do you serve for snacks? How about graham crackers, cheese chunks, or pieces of soft fruits and vegetables? Try them yourself, instead of candy or chips.

If you have time, why not make your own oatmeal cookies? Throw in a few chocolate chips as a special treat! Here's another snack recipe:

### Vegetable Dip

1 cup cottage cheese

1 cup plain yogurt

1/8–1/4 tsp. herbs

(such as parsley, dill, garlic, chopped green onion)

Mix ingredients to taste. (Let your child help stir.) Chill.

Serve with bite-sized, washed vegetables such as zucchini sticks, broccoli flowerets, cucumber slices, radishes, and pepper slices, or with crackers.



Babies and young children can choke easily on some foods, such as fruit seeds or pits, pieces of hot dogs, and some raw fruits and vegetables, including grapes, apples, carrots, and celery. Using grated or finely chopped foods may reduce the risk of choking. Never leave a baby or young child alone while eating.

# 21–24 Months

## YOUR TODDLER'S DEVELOPMENT

Your toddler can balance on one foot now. He can jump. He can climb stairs. He can kick. He can even handle small items.

He can hold a crayon like you hold a pen. He'll learn to draw more neatly sometime in the next few years. Draw a line or a circle for him and see if he'll copy it. This involves coordination and control. As this develops, he'll learn how to feed and dress himself better—and how to use a toilet.

Your toddler is not an infant anymore. He wants to play games with other people, like hide-and-seek and follow-the-leader. He and his new friends can jump from one activity to the next and not miss a beat. How do they keep track of it all?

He'll start to understand pronouns—words like “yours” and “mine” (this will be one of his favorite words). He'll also learn to share a little and not to hurt others on purpose. When someone is hurt, your toddler will become concerned. He'll want to make that person feel better. If you bump your head, he may run over to “kiss it and make it better.”

He can do a lot more on his own. He can feed himself and not make a mess. You can start to teach him a few table manners if you want. He can dress himself—and undress himself (this is still easier). He can undo snaps and large buttons now. He'll learn how to deal with zippers soon.

Here's some welcome news: By the time he's 2 years old, your toddler will tell you when he needs to use the bathroom—most of the time! When that happens, you can start to teach him how to do it himself.

Remember how quiet it was before he learned to speak? He learns new words every day now, and he talks in two-word sentences. He'll be able to answer simple questions soon. He'll also be able to follow directions: “Pick up your blanket. Now put it in your room.”

Children learn by imitation. You can play “Simon Says” with your toddler and teach him a number of tasks. You can read him stories now. He can sit still for one, and he's sure to be interested if you act it out a little for him.

## YOUR BABY'S GROWTH

Every baby is different. Every baby develops at his own rate. These signs of growth should be used only as general guides.



	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Body</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Personality</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Language</b> Will Grow
21 months	squats without falling	pulls you to show you something	asks for food or to be taken to the bathroom
	kicks a ball	can drink from a cup	speaks in two-word sentences
	stacks up blocks and other toys	hugs you and toys	uses twenty words or more
24 months	runs without falling	imitates housework	speaks in three-word sentences
	walks up and down stairs	doesn't share, but will when asked	says “I,” “me,” and “you”
	turns pages of a book	puts on simple clothes	names and points to pictures



*Special Memories  
About Your Baby  
(write them here)*

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**TEACHING YOUR TODDLER HOW TO SPEAK**

Here are some points to keep in mind as your toddler learns to speak:

Be sure to speak correctly. Don't use "baby talk." Remember, your toddler learns to talk by imitating what he hears.

To ask for some object, he may just point to it. Tell him what it's called, and have him repeat the name before you hand it to him. It doesn't have to be perfect! He can learn a lot of new words in this manner.

Read stories to your toddler. Ask him questions, or see if he'll finish the sentences. Maybe he'll just want to look at the book and name what he sees. You can tell him about the story as he does this.

**MEALTIME**

Remember how important mealtime is to your toddler. It may be the only time your family spends together. Make it an enjoyable time for your toddler. Try not to be too busy. Keep the television off. Don't be pulled into any battles.

What if you don't have time to eat at home? Can you eat out with your toddler? Absolutely! For fast food, find a place that offers a lot of choices. Order foods from each food group. Here are some healthful choices:

- ◆ junior hamburger, salad, and milk
- ◆ charbroiled chicken, biscuit, coleslaw, and milk
- ◆ pizza, salad, and juice
- ◆ taco, refried beans, rice, and milk

As much as you can, avoid restaurants that serve only fried foods. If you do end up at one, choose foods carefully. Order juice or milk for your toddler, instead of soda. Choosing only those foods which are high in fat and sugar and low in vitamins and minerals might make your child gain too much weight and slow down his physical and mental development.

You can take your toddler to a sit-down restaurant also. You'll have more choices there. How can you keep your toddler busy while you wait for your meal? After all, you don't want him to fill up on bread or water at the table. Try this: order your meal, and then take your toddler for a walk outside, or hand him a favorite toy. Other customers will appreciate how well he behaves.

Let's say you'll be home for dinner, but you didn't have time to prepare a full meal. Here are some quick dinner ideas:

- ◆ soup, sandwich, fruit, and milk
- ◆ tomato sauce and grated cheese on a muffin, sliced vegetables, cookies, and juice
- ◆ refried beans and cheese on a flour tortilla, peas, low-fat frozen yogurt, and juice
- ◆ thin meat slices in pita bread, lettuce, tomato, fruit slices, and milk
- ◆ chili, cornbread, coleslaw, and milk
- ◆ omelet with sliced vegetables, toast, an orange, and milk
- ◆ stir-fried beef with sliced vegetables, bread, cookies, and milk



You can prepare a lot of this ahead of time and keep it in the refrigerator until dinner—the salad, the vegetables, even the meat. Just be sure to keep them cold.

One more reminder: Don't expect your toddler to eat a lot. Be realistic about what it takes to fill him up.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

Your toddler is out with other children a lot now. He'll catch his share of colds and other childhood illnesses, like the chicken pox. Check with your doctor before you make your toddler take any medicines or home remedies.

He'll scoot around outside on tricycles and kiddie cars now. Expect more scraped knees and elbows and an occasional bump on the head. Make sure you watch him outside so he doesn't ride into the street.

Keep the poison control center's telephone number near your phone—even if you're sure all your medicines and household cleaners are out of reach. You never know what your toddler might find. Even some common houseplants can harm your toddler if she were to eat them.

It's easy to tell yourself that you really don't smoke that much, or that you grew up around cigarette smoke and it hasn't hurt you, or that you only smoke when you're not around your toddler. The truth is that nine out of ten people who smoke "casually" will eventually become addicted to nicotine. There is no safe number of cigarettes and no cigarette that's safe to smoke.

We've seen that no amount of alcohol is safe for a youngster. So if you don't have alcohol in your house, or if you keep it in a high locked cupboard and drink responsibly, your child should be safe—right? Wrong! There are different forms of alcohol and some forms are in many common household products. Here are a few other things that have alcohol in them. All these products should be kept in locked, out-of-reach places. One 4-year-old drank 12 ounces of a mouthwash and died because of it. Keep your toddler safe—put these out of reach!

- cologne and perfume
- aftershave
- kerosene and gasoline
- rubbing alcohol
- incense
- mouthwash
- inks
- antifreeze
- iodine solutions
- antiseptics
- lotions and creams
- brake fluid
- denture products
- polishes
- deodorant
- room deodorants
- laundry and dishwashing soaps
- shampoo
- dyes
- wood stains
- paint thinners

For more information, look in the front of your phone book for "Poison Control." Put that number where you can find it in a hurry in case you ever need it. There is a page at the end of this book for you to write important numbers.

*Special Memories  
About Your Baby*  
(write them here)

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### DISCIPLINE

At this age, children sometimes start to hit other people. Maybe your toddler has tried to hit you. You’ve probably seen him hit a playmate. Why has this started all of a sudden?

It could be frustration. It’s hard to learn a new language and make yourself understood. You expect so many other things from him. He’s supposed to learn how to eat and drink, how to dress, how to wash, how to brush his teeth, and how to use a toilet—that’s a lot! No wonder he’s grumpy sometimes.

It may be that he’s seen other children hit people. You know how children imitate what they see. They are like vacuum cleaners—they pick up everything. The cause isn’t that important. Do what you can to stop this behavior. Here are a few ideas:

- ◆ *Don’t strike back.* This shows your toddler that it’s not okay to hit someone who’s smaller.
- ◆ Redirect him to another activity. Don’t make a big deal of the punch. No lectures! When he can understand, talk to him about how he feels. “I know you’re mad at me,” you could tell him. “But you shouldn’t hit people. Come over here, and let’s play with your blocks.”
- ◆ Have a special chair or room for him to calm down in. Here is the rule of thumb: The child sits 1 minute for each year of age. A 3-year-old sits for 3 minutes. Better yet, let him decide when he’s ready to come back and play without violence.

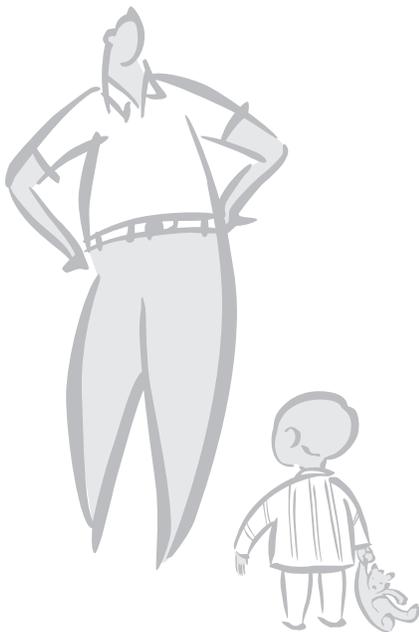
Your toddler still can’t understand the idea of right and wrong. He knows when you’re happy with him and when you’re not. Be consistent, and show him that you care, just as you’ve done for 2 years now. He’ll learn the rules faster that way.

### WHEN HE DOESN’T FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

Has this happened to you? You want to serve dinner in a few minutes, so you tell your toddler to put his blocks away, wash his hands and face, and sit down at the table. Your toddler walks directly to the table and sits down in his chair. What about the rest of what you asked him to do?

Maybe he didn’t disobey on purpose. Most children will follow directions most of the time. But if he is asked to do three or four things at one time, he may only remember the last direction he heard. Keep your directions simple, give them to your toddler one at a time, and don’t yell.

Teach him to hear you when you use a normal voice.





## TOILET TRAINING

### How can you tell when it's time to toilet-train your toddler?

Look for these signs:

- ◆ Can he pick up a raisin between his thumb and index finger? This isn't as crazy as it sounds. It means he can control the small muscles, like those in his hand. He may have control over his bowel and bladder too.
- ◆ Does he have words for bladder and bowel movements? Does he tell you that he needs to be changed?
- ◆ Does he sometimes stay dry for 2 hours or more? If not, he may not be physically prepared for toilet training.
- ◆ Can he dress and undress himself? If not, you'll have to help him.
- ◆ Does he understand directions? Does he follow them? If not, you'd better wait until he's ready to cooperate.
- ◆ Your toddler will learn how to use a toilet faster if he can communicate well—if he can talk to you and understand what you tell him.

### Do you think it's time to toilet-train your toddler?

Here are some ways you can help him learn:

- ◆ Let him watch others in the bathroom. Remember, children learn by imitation.
- ◆ Let him sit on the toilet with his clothes on. He needs to know how it feels to sit up there.

## ACTIVITIES

### Match the Picture

Find a magazine with colorful photos. Then find two copies of the same issue. (Maybe you can trade copies with friends.) Cut out identical photos and paste them onto cardboard. Divide them into two complete sets.

Show your toddler a picture from your set. Then ask him to find the picture in his set of photos. You can talk about the photos in other ways too: What are the objects in the photos called? What are the colors called?

### Simon Says

As we said before, your toddler should be able to follow simple directions. Give him some small task to do. "Put the book on the table. Good! Now fetch me the teddy bear from your bedroom." Praise him when he does what you said. You can also act out an activity and have him imitate you.

### It's Fun to Scribble

Your toddler probably loves to draw—even if what he makes is a total mess! He needs to practice the motions. It'll help him later, when he learns to write. Give him fat crayons or fat pencils, and jumbo pieces of paper. Even old newspapers will do. Let him work on a surface that he can't hurt if he runs off the paper sometimes, or put newspapers on the surface first to prevent accidents.

### Catch

You and your toddler should sit down on the floor and face each other with your legs spread apart. Touch your feet to his. Now roll a tennis ball back and forth between the two of you. It sounds too simple, but your toddler will love it!



# Nurturing With Nutrition: 21–24 months

Can you believe how much your toddler has grown in 2 years? Look at all he's learned to do! He was so helpless as a newborn and so dependent on you. But you know how much he still needs you to love and care for him.

Here's a list of foods you can offer him now. It's almost the same list as last year. He needs a little more at each meal now to stay healthy and develop right.

## A Daily Food Guide

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### Breads and cereals

*6 servings per day*

- 1/2 slice bread **or**
- 1/3 cup dry cereal **or**
- 1/4 cup rice, pasta, or cooked cereal

### Fruits

*2 or more servings per day*

- 3 tablespoons cooked **or**
- 1 small fruit **or**
- 1/2 cup fruit juice
- Include good sources of vitamins A and C

### Vegetables

*3 or more servings per day*

- 3 tablespoons, cooked **or** uncooked
- Include good sources of vitamins A and C

### Milk and milk products

*4 servings per day*

- 1/2 cup milk or yogurt **or**
- 1 ounce cheese

### Protein foods

*2 to 3 servings per day*

- 2 tablespoons cooked meat, fish, or poultry **or**
  - 1 cooked egg **or**
  - 1/2 cup cooked beans **or**
  - 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 

Now is a good time for your toddler to learn to handle food. He can use his arms. Your child can scrub tables or the floor and even scrub vegetables. Fingers can be used to tear lettuce, break celery, or snap beans.

Use these activities to teach colors, shapes, and textures, to compare sizes, and to learn new words. After helping with the above activities, let the child dip vegetables and fruits into cheese spread, yogurt, or peanut butter.

As children get older, they develop medium and small finger muscles and master more difficult food handling tasks, such as pouring, mixing, and peeling.



Babies and young children can choke easily on some foods, such as fruit seeds or pits, pieces of hot dogs, and some raw fruits and vegetables, including grapes, apples, carrots, and celery. Using grated or finely chopped foods may reduce the risk of choking. Never leave a baby or young child alone while eating.



# 24 Months and Beyond

## YOUR TODDLER'S DEVELOPMENT

When you came home from the hospital, your baby could only cry. It was the only sound she could make. Now she probably knows how to say whole words. Maybe she can put a couple of words together to form a sentence. Soon she'll understand some of the basic rules, for example, plurals: It's one "shoe," but two "shoes."

You can help. When she makes a mistake, don't correct her. Just repeat what she said the proper way. For example, suppose she tells you that she "goed" to the store. Respond, "Oh, so you *went* to the store!" Chances are she'll get it right the next time.

Don't worry if your toddler can't speak yet. She may not start for another year. For now, she'll communicate with sounds and motions. Practice with her; tell her what objects look like and what they're called. Remember to speak correctly. If you still think she may have a problem, talk to your doctor at one of your regular visits. The doctor will know what to look for.

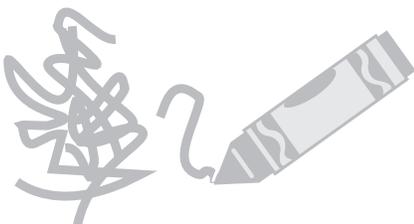
Your toddler plays with other children, but she may not know how to share yet. She'll get better. As she learns to talk, she'll be able to tell her playmates what she likes and what she doesn't. She'll work out deals with them. Fights may still break out sometimes, but the children will be able to solve many problems by themselves. You can help with tips on how to share, how to take turns, and how to work as a team.

Children imitate what they see. If you yell at others, you set a bad example for your toddler. If you wait your turn, stay calm, talk over your problems, and work peacefully with others, she'll learn how to do this also.

Once your toddler learns to walk, physical skills seem to become less important. You wait for her to talk or dress herself or use the toilet on her own. She still needs to find out what her body can do. She has to learn how to run, jump, and climb. Does it matter if she knows how to keep her eyes on a ball and hit it with a bat when she's 5 years old? Yes! It'll help her learn how to parallel-park or build a table later on. So lend her a hand. Play ball with her, or make frequent trips to a nearby playground.

In our last *Visits with You and Your Baby*, we said that you could start to toilet-train your toddler if she could pick up a raisin between her thumb and her index finger. It means that she can control her small muscles, like those in her hand.

Those are the same muscles she needs to pick up a crayon or a pencil. The more she scribbles, paints, and works on puzzles, the better! These skills may seem less important than others, but they're not. Your toddler needs to master them before she can learn how to do much else. Give her plenty of chances to practice.



### YOUR BABY'S GROWTH

Every baby is different. Every baby develops at his own rate. These signs of growth should be used only as general guides.

	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Body</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Personality</b> Will Grow	Here's How Your Baby's <b>Language</b> Will Grow
<b>24 months</b>	runs without falling	imitates housework	speaks in three-word sentences
	walks up and down stairs	doesn't share, but will when asked	says "I," "me," and "you"
	turns pages of a book	puts on simple clothes	names and points to pictures
<b>Beyond 24 months</b>	walks on tiptoe	washes and dries own hands	says first and last name when asked
	jumps with both feet	can play games with other children	uses plurals for objects
	stands on one foot	tries to order others around	names and points to colors

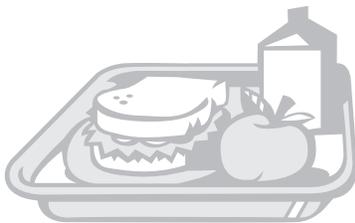
### MEALTIME

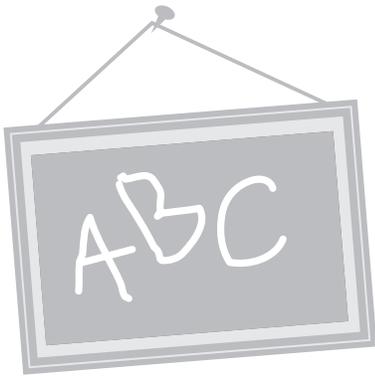
Your toddler can do so much for herself now. But she's not perfect! Try to be patient. She may spill a few drops (or a lot more) when she drinks from her cup. That's because she hasn't mastered eye-hand coordination. She also needs time to learn how to put food on her fork or cereal on her spoon, or how to cut her own meat, or pour her own milk.

Convince her to try new foods, and don't spend time on table manners now. You can set a few firm rules. Don't let her throw food, for example. Don't let her eat anywhere but at the table. Praise her when she does what she's supposed to. Ignore bad behavior if she doesn't know better yet.

Your toddler will be ready for preschool soon. Maybe she's in day care already. Do you need to pack her lunch? Include an item from each of the food groups. Keep it simple so your toddler can feed herself. You could let her decide what kind of sandwich to take or what kind of fruit to include. Here are a few lunchtime ideas:

- ◆ Sandwiches (peanut butter; slices of lean ham, meatloaf, chicken, or turkey; tuna or egg salad)
- ◆ Cheese and crackers, a chicken leg, or bean salad
- ◆ Yogurt, topped with fruit and dry cereal
- ◆ Be sure to include milk (or a milk product), fresh fruit, and vegetables. Throw in a cookie or a muffin for dessert. You can make lunch the night before. Just keep it in the refrigerator until your toddler leaves for preschool or day care the next day.





## Aim, Build, and Choose—for Good Health

Here are the ABC's of nutrition for you and your child:

### **A**im for fitness

- ◆ Aim for a healthy weight.
- ◆ Be physically active each day.

### **B**uild a healthy base

- ◆ Let the Food Guide Pyramid guide your food choices.
- ◆ Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- ◆ Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- ◆ Keep food safe to eat.

### **C**hoose sensibly

- ◆ Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
- ◆ Choose drinks and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- ◆ Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
- ◆ If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

When you began feeding your baby, we were not concerned with the amount or type of fat she was getting. However, around the age of 2, health professionals suggest you begin choosing foods lower in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol. These changes should be done slowly and carefully.

Low-fat or fat-free foods may not provide enough energy for growing children. When a low-fat food replaces a high-fat one, calories are reduced. This may be great for adults, but not for children. You must replace those calories. How will you know if, and when, your child needs more food? Listen to her. If she says she's hungry, believe her, and offer her larger amounts of healthful foods.

How do you begin? Below are two different ways. Do not try to do both until your child is over 4 years old. You also can help reduce saturated fat by choosing products made from corn or safflower oil.

### **Either**

- ◆ *Switch to lower-fat milks.* One percent and skim milk are fine as long as your child doesn't drink more than 2 to 3 cups daily.

### **Or**

- ◆ *Switch to leaner cuts of meat, tuna packed in water, lower-fat cheeses, and egg substitutes.* Read labels. Ask your butcher which meats are lower in fat.

When you start choosing lower-fat foods, you do not need to eliminate any foods. After all, some of our favorite foods, such as fried chicken, bologna, peanut butter, grilled cheese sandwiches, and hot dogs, are high in fat. Just be aware of how much and how often you serve higher-fat foods.



*Special Memories  
About Your Baby  
(write them here)*

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**NUTRITION AND DAY CARE**

Here are some questions to ask about meal and snack times at your child’s day care home or center:

**Questions about Toddlers**

- ◆ Does the caregiver believe that a toddler should decide how much she wants to eat? This idea may be new to her. You may want to share these ideas with the caregiver. Your toddler learns faster when the rules stay the same every day.
- ◆ Does the caregiver sit down and eat with the children?
- ◆ If food is provided, is it served in a way that’s appropriate for your toddler?

**HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS**

Now that your toddler spends more time with other children, she’ll catch colds more often. She may also run into infections and childhood diseases like chicken pox.

Remember the self-help skills we talked about? Your toddler needs to learn how to brush her teeth, how to wash her hands and face before dinner, and how to use the toilet and wash up afterwards. You can help her learn healthy habits like these.

**Here’s how:**

- ◆ Be a model or example for her.
- ◆ She should have her own toothbrush, washcloth, and towel.
- ◆ Place a solid stool at the sink. She can stand there to wash, brush her teeth, and comb her hair without falling.
- ◆ Praise her and thank her when she remembers to wash on her own.
- ◆ Your toddler will be ready for her first visit to the dentist after she turns 3.
- ◆ We’ve spent a lot of time going over the bad effects that smoking can have on you and your toddler. We want to make sure that you also know that there are lots of people in your situation who have quit smoking—and you can quit too. Many people are out there who would like to help you to quit—for *free*! And look at the rewards you get: fewer illnesses for you and your child, a better sense of smell and taste, healthier skin and teeth, some extra cash, and a better feeling about yourself. For information about people and groups that will help you to stop smoking, look in your phone book under American Lung Association, American Heart Association, or American Cancer Society.

What dreams do you have for your child? Will she be a famous actress, a well-known doctor, a banker, or the president? Maybe your dream is for your son or daughter to lead a happy, healthy life and live life to the fullest. It’s great to dream about the wonderful lives our children could lead and what may happen in the future.

As parents, we want to do everything we can to see that our children get the chance to be whatever they want. Think about those dreams again.

Do they include seeing your child drunk during his teen years, convicted for a DUI offense, or failing in school because of alcohol abuse? It's hard for parents to even think about those things.

At the same time, it doesn't make sense to children to stay away from alcohol and drugs when they see famous people using them—and it makes less sense when they see their parents using them. Being a parent is a big responsibility—you have a whole new life to guide and protect. But think back to those great dreams you were thinking for your child. Isn't it all worth it?



## DISCIPLINE

Reward your toddler when she does something good. Have a positive word for her three or four times a day, at least.

Ignore bad behavior as long as there's no danger involved. Save "No!" for risky or dangerous situations.

If she does something she's not allowed to do, don't just tell her to stop. Offer her some choices. Suppose she starts to throw her heavy wooden blocks. Go to her and say, "You can't throw those blocks. You can come with me and throw a ball outside, or you can put your blocks in that box."

Don't lose your temper with her. (A lot of times, this won't be easy!)

If you're a predictable and consistent parent, your toddler will learn to accept your rules more quickly. She'll still test you once in a while. She wants to be sure that your "No!" still means "No!"

## PRESCHOOL: YES OR NO?

In a year or two, you'll have to decide if you want to send your child to preschool. It's not a necessary experience, but it may prepare her for school later on. Here are some concerns to keep in mind:

- ◆ Some preschools teach children how to act with each other. Others concentrate on skills. Which is right for your child?
- ◆ At home, can she play with other children several times a week? If not, preschool may be good for her.
- ◆ Do you still take time out to read with her, teach her what letters and numbers look like, and watch her draw with pencils or crayons? You don't have to be an "A" student to be a good teacher. If you take time, you can show her that education is important.
- ◆ Suppose you decide to send her to preschool. How do you choose one? To start, look at the questions you asked before you selected a caregiver. (The list is in the *Visits with You and Your Baby* for 18- to 21-month-olds.) Here are a few more:
  - ◆ Can you come in and observe the classroom? Can you spend at least 2 hours there?
  - ◆ Are there plenty of toys and materials for everyone?
  - ◆ Do the adults seem to enjoy their work with the children?



## TELEVISION

Some children watch 3 or more hours of TV every day. They're only awake for 12 or 15 hours! Think about the effect television has on your child's development. Shows like Sesame Street and Mister Rogers have educational value. Cartoons do not. There is a lot of violence on TV—on cartoons as well as prime-time shows.

What if your set broke and you couldn't afford to fix it for a month? Would your toddler be able to entertain herself, or would she be lost and need to be entertained? You don't want TV to smother her creativity.

How much time do you spend watching TV? Use some of that time to read, talk, and play with your child.

## ACTIVITIES

### Paint the Fridge

The door of your refrigerator can be a temporary pictureboard. A washable finger paint recipe is shown below. Stir up a batch and let your toddler create a masterpiece! When you're both tired of it, wash it off and let her start another. Here are three recipes:

#### Finger Paint Recipes

1. Mix equal parts liquid dish detergent and water, and then add powdered tempera paint (powdered tempera paint may be found in an art store or a local variety or department store). **or**
2. Use liquid starch with powdered tempera paint. **or**
3. Use shaving cream with powdered tempera paint.



### Body Outlines

Have your toddler lie down on a sheet of paper. (You'll need a big one!) Trace the outline of her body with a pencil. Then let her draw in the details—the face, clothes, hair, and so on.

### Mom's Helper

You know how much your toddler likes to imitate you. Help her out. When you're in the kitchen, provide her with a pot and a spoon to play with. When you do laundry, have a little washtub for her. This will keep her out of your way when you're busy. She'll learn about each different task.

### Feelie Box

Start with five pairs of objects. For example, you can use two small cars, two wooden blocks, two balls, two books, and two spoons. Leave one of each out on the floor. Put the others inside a box. Then tell your toddler to reach into the box and feel the objects inside. Don't let her look!

Ask her to match the objects in the box with the objects on the floor. Go over them one at a time. Once she knows how to play, try it with items that feel very different. For example, try two pieces of sandpaper, two cotton balls, two hunks of wood, two smooth rocks, and two sponges. Talk about how they feel—how some are hard while others are soft and so on.



## Nurturing with Nutrition: 24 Months and Beyond

Most likely you feel more confident now than you did when your baby was just a newborn! Your toddler feels more confident, too.

Remember the different roles you and your toddler play on the “feeding team”:

- ◆ As the parent, you decide what foods to offer and how to serve them. That means you buy the food. You prepare it. You schedule meals and snacks. You make sure your toddler can eat what you serve. You keep mealtimes enjoyable. You set and enforce the rules at the table.
- ◆ Your toddler decides whether she wants to eat and when she’s had enough.

You have done your best to nurture your child with nutrition in these past 2 years. Keep up the good work!



Babies and young children can choke easily on some foods, such as fruit seeds or pits, pieces of hot dogs, and some raw fruits and vegetables, including grapes, apples, carrots, and celery. Using grated or finely chopped foods may reduce the risk of choking. Never leave a baby or young child alone while eating.









# This is the end of *Visits with You and Your Baby.*

We hope it has been helpful!

Your Penn State Cooperative Extension office also offers programs and more materials on topics such as nutrition, parenting, and child care.

For more information, contact:

County /agent name: \_\_\_\_\_

County office phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes you can feel alone when you're at home taking care of your baby. It's important to know where to go to keep connected in case of an emergency, or when you just need to talk to someone. Use this page to write down important phone numbers, and keep it handy.

## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency numbers: **911**

Police \_\_\_\_\_

Fire \_\_\_\_\_

Ambulance \_\_\_\_\_

National Poison  
Control Center **1-800-222-1222** \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor or clinic \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Friends: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Visits With You and Your Baby* was adapted by Beth Van Horn, certified family life educator and extension agent in Centre County, from *Off to a Good Start*, by James Van Horn, professor of rural sociology and certified family life educator; Community Demonstration Project; and others. Nutrition material was prepared by Madeleine Sigman-Grant, Ph.D., RD, professor and MCH-Nutrition Area Extension Specialist, The University of Nevada, Reno.

Editor: Krista Weidner

Special thanks to Katherine L. Cason, former associate professor of food science, The Pennsylvania State University; and Libby Ungvary, M.Ed., The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Healthy Child Care Pennsylvania, Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS).

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