

Back to Basics

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How it feels to be a toddler



12 to 18 months

- I can walk without help.
- I can drink from a cup and am learning to feed myself with a spoon.
- I'm beginning to use one hand (right or left) more than the other.
- I can say 15 or more words and like to repeat them often.
- I can follow simple directions such as "Come here" and play "Pat-a-Cake."
- I can scribble with a pencil or crayon.
- I show I love someone by hugging and kissing them.
- I'm beginning to learn what's allowed and what's not but have trouble remembering.
- I use a blankey or lovey to help myself feel comfortable with new people or situations.

18 to 24 months

- When I'm tired, angry or frustrated, I may have a temper tantrum or bite or hit someone.
- I'm still mostly interested in myself.
- I like running and climbing onto everything.
- I like to drag toys around and throw things.
- I can take off all my clothes and put most of them back on.
- I know what a toilet is for but am not too interested in using it yet.
- I can put together a simple picture puzzle of two to six pieces.
- I like to look at picture books and turn the pages by myself.
- I like saying "No" and sometimes do the opposite of what you ask.
- I understand what's mine and what's yours but cannot share.

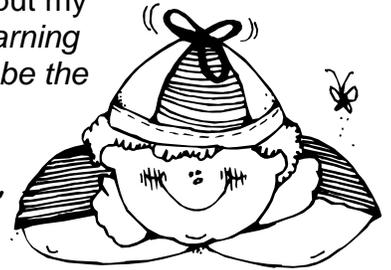
24 to 36 months

- I like to take things apart and put them together.
- I may object to an afternoon nap but once I'm asleep I enjoy it.
- I'm learning to use the potty but still have accidents.
- I understand simple concepts such as "big and little" and "hard and soft."
- I'm learning words quickly and building a vocabulary of 500 words.
- I can put two or three words together in a simple sentence.
- I like pretend games such as "Mommy and baby" and play alongside other children.
- I can't sit still for long.
- I may want the same toys and do things the same way every time.
- I may insist that "Me do it" and then cry when I can't.
- Even though I'm learning to be independent, I still need to feel safe and secure.

This is the second of several pages of development information. Look for each one, printed on card-stock for durability, in our upcoming newsletters; we encourage you to collect each one for your files.

When I Play, I Learn

- When I crawl into nooks and crannies, *I am learning where I fit in and about shapes and sizes.*
- When I push things off of the highchair tray, *I am learning that things fall and are still there, even when I don't see them.*
- When I play "Ring Around the Rosie," *I am learning a game with a rule—don't fall until the end.*
- When I imitate the actions of other children, *I am learning that I am one of them and can do things that others do.*
- When I chant sounds, *I am learning the sound and rhythms of my language.*
- When I am sticking things in holes, *I am learning to line things up properly to fit.*
- When I bang objects on the floor, *I am learning that things make all different kinds of noises and sounds.*
- When I crawl up and down steps, *I am learning to coordinate my arms and legs to balance.*
- When I push, pull and haul objects, *I am learning how heavy objects are & how they move.*
- When I lift flaps, *I am learning to hide things and make them reappear.*
- When I stack objects, *I am learning about shapes, sizes, balance, and gravity.*
- When I fit things inside of each other, *I am learning the relationship of negative and positive spaces.*
- When I pretend to feed my doll, *I am learning what it feels like to nurture someone.*
- When I dump things out of containers, *I am learning that I can make exciting things happen.*
- When I play "Pat-a-Cake," *I am learning to have fun with someone else.*
- When I dance to music, *I am learning to enjoy music and to move my body.*
- When I pretend to put my doll to bed, *I am learning what it feels like to be the powerful one.*
- **When I am loved, I learn to love.**



Dear Teacher,

Thank you for being so patient with me. You must really understand toddlers. I guess you know that I don't stay still for very long and really can't sit through a whole book. You must know too, that I can't share. I just don't get it.

I'm glad you don't get mad when I say "no." It's one of the few words that I know, and it's cool to be able to say something and get a reaction from big people. I'm sorry too about the biting thing. I know I'll do better when I learn more words to use! And I'm glad you understand that it's lots more fun to dump things out than to put them back. You make our room look nice - even when we spend our time making a mess. Thank you for making it a safe place to play, for always watching me, and for staying close by in case I need you.

I know I get cranky around 11 a.m. Thanks for saving my lunch on the days I fall asleep before I eat. (And I really do try to hit my mouth!)

You sure look tired at the end of the day, but I want to tell you - you are a very big part of my life, and I love you!

Your Toddler