

Your Baby's Development

The first 3 months are all about babies learning to feel comfortable, safe, and secure in the world. By responding to their signals and providing lots of love and comfort, you help them form a trusting bond with you.

How are you helping your baby learn to feel safe and secure?



What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I am getting to know you and the other people who love and care for me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I recognize your faces, voices, and smells. • I respond to your smile and touch with pleasure. 	<p>Talk and sing to your baby. This makes him feel loved and helps him bond with you.</p> <p>Hold your baby. Enjoy some skin-to-skin cuddle time with your little one.</p>
<p>I am learning how to “tell” you what I need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use my sounds, facial expressions, and body movements to tell you how I’m feeling—sleepy, hungry, happy, or uncomfortable. • I can show you when I want to play and when I need a break. 	<p>Watch your baby to learn her signals. Does she have a “hunger” cry? Does she rub her eyes or look away from you when she is tired? Smiles are easy to figure out.</p> <p>Respond to your baby’s signals. When her eyes are bright and she is awake and alert, it is time to play. Slow things down when she cries, turns away, or arches her back.</p>
<p>I am beginning to use my body to make things happen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can grip your finger or a toy you put in my hand. • When I am hungry, I might move my head toward my mother’s breast or the bottle. 	<p>Give your baby something to reach for and hold onto—a finger or toy. Let him touch objects with different textures and shapes. Hold a toy within your child’s reach so he can swat it with his hands or feet.</p> <p>Watch to see how your baby is “discovering” his body. Does he look at his hands, suck on his feet, or try to roll?</p>
<p>We are becoming closer and closer every day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am learning to trust that you will read and respond to my signals. • I rely on you to comfort me. This helps me learn to comfort myself. 	<p>Comfort your baby whenever she cries. You can’t spoil a baby. Soothing makes her feel safe, secure, and loved.</p> <p>Help your baby calm herself by guiding her fingers to her mouth, giving her a pacifier, or offering her a blanket or soft object that is special to her.</p>



As you use this resource, remember that your child may develop skills faster or slower than indicated here and still be growing just fine. Talk with your child’s health care provider or other trusted professional if you have questions.

Your family’s cultural beliefs and values are also important factors that shape your child’s development.

For more information on parenting and child development, go to: www.zerotothree.org.

What's on Your Mind

I have to go back to work. Will my 8-week-old be okay in child care?

Yes, as long as it is a high-quality program. Look for a clean and safe setting with no more than three babies for every caregiver. There should be toys and books at the baby's level and child care providers who will let your baby sleep, eat, and play according to her own schedule. Make sure that the caregivers talk and play with the babies, that they comfort them when they are upset, and that they are loving and nurturing.

Did You Know...

Babies whose mothers reported high stress cried and fussed more than babies whose mothers reported little stress.¹

What It Means for You:

Even very young babies pick up on how their loved ones are feeling. When you are calm and relaxed, your baby is more likely to feel calm. When you are feeling stressed out and overwhelmed, your baby is more likely to feel tense. So in order to take good care of your baby, **it's really important that you take good care of yourself.** Ask trusted friends and family members for help when you need a break. Make time to do things that make you feel good. And be sure to talk to a trusted health care provider if you are feeling down or depressed.

Spotlight on Crying

- Crying, as hard as it is to hear, is a normal way babies communicate hunger, discomfort, distress, or a need for your attention.
- Most newborns reach a crying peak at about 6 weeks. Then their crying starts to decrease. By 3 months they typically cry for about an hour a day.²
- Being with a crying baby who is hard to soothe can be exhausting, stressful, and frustrating. But keep in mind that just by being there—holding and comforting your baby—you are teaching him that

he is not alone and that you will stick by him through thick and thin.

- While all babies cry, some babies cry much more than others. This is known as colic and it's defined as crying that:

- ✓ begins and ends for no obvious reason
- ✓ lasts at least 3 hours a day
- ✓ happens at least 3 days a week
- ✓ continues for 3 weeks to 3 months³

What You Can Do

Talk with your health care provider. Crying may have a medical cause—a food sensitivity, heartburn, or other physical condition.

Try holding your baby more. Some babies cry less when they are held more.⁴ Wrap your baby snugly in a blanket—called “swaddling”—and rock her gently.

Use soothing sounds. Talk or sing softly to your baby. Try running a fan or humidifier in your baby's room. Sometimes babies are soothed by this background noise.

Reduce stimulation—lights, sights, sounds, and textures—for your baby. Sometimes less stimulation leads to less crying for babies with colic.⁵

Reach out for support. Extended families and friends may be able to step in to give you a needed

break. Everyone needs support, and nobody needs it more than the parents of a crying baby.

Stay calm. When you're calm, it helps your baby calm down. If you find yourself feeling frustrated, put your baby on his back in a safe place—like the crib—and take a short break. Crying won't hurt your baby, and taking a break will let you soothe another very important person...you!

Don't give up. Soothing your baby is a trial-and-error process. If one strategy doesn't work, try another. Hang in there, and remember that the crying will get better.

What are some things you can do to soothe yourself after a tough day?



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1 - Wurmser, H., et al., 2006.

2 - Neuspiel, D. in www.healthology.com

3 - Wessel, M., Cobb, J., & Jackson, E., et al., 1954.

4 - Monfort, G. in www.americanbaby.com

5 - Garrison, M.M., & Christakis, D.A., 2000.

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Your Baby's Development

This time is all about parents and babies falling in love. Most babies are eating and sleeping more regularly. They are also responding more actively to parents and caregivers. Over the next few months, you will begin learning about your baby's preferences—what he likes and dislikes, how she prefers to sleep, eat and play. *What are you learning about your little one?*

What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I am learning to control my body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I push myself up to see the people I love and the things that interest me. I roll to try to get closer to you or to an interesting toy or object. • I can sit with help and hold my head steady. • I may start to rock back and forth on my hands and knees to get ready to crawl so I can get moving and explore. 	<p>Place your baby in different positions to help her develop new skills like rolling, creeping, and crawling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure she gets time to play on both her back and stomach. • Help her sit with support. This allows her to explore in new ways. • Be sure she is always put to sleep on her back.
<p>I use my hands and fingers to explore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I reach for and grasp objects and toys. I explore them with my fingers, hands, and mouth to figure out what they can do. 	<p>Offer your baby toys to explore that have different shapes, sizes, textures, and sounds. Show him ways to use these objects by shaking, banging, pushing, and dropping.</p>
<p>I communicate by using sounds, actions, and facial expressions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you shake my rattle, I may smile and move my arms and legs to let you know I want to keep playing. • I can make a few different sounds in response to your sounds—babbling, coos, and gurgles. 	<p>Watch and respond to your baby's signals. <i>You are smiling—I think you like looking in the mirror. Do you want to look at yourself again?</i></p> <p>Have back-and-forth “conversations” with your baby. When you reply to her babbles, she knows you care about what she is saying. This helps her learn to talk.</p>
<p>I am getting used to the world around me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may be starting to develop a more regular eating and sleeping schedule. • I am beginning to notice daily routines. When you turn the lights down, I am learning it is time for sleep. 	<p>Create routines for your baby.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help him learn it's time for sleep by doing the same things in the same order each night, such as bath, books, feeding, and then a lullaby. • Make up a song that you sing as you are getting ready to feed your baby. Each time he hears it, he'll know milk is coming. This may calm him and also help him learn to wait.



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Spotlight on Language Learning

Babies are not just listeners—they are talkers, too. Beginning at about 2-3 months, they use their voices to coo, laugh, and squeal. And even young babies are learning the “rules” of conversation. As early as 3-4 months, babies will stay quiet while someone else is talking. They wait for silence, then babble, then wait for your response.¹

By about 6 months, babies begin to repeat certain sounds like *ma-ma-ma* or *da-da-da*. Around 1 year, they make the connection in their minds between a sound they make—*baba*—and the object it stands for—a bottle. After they make this link, your baby's use of words really starts to grow!

What's on Your Mind

My 5-month-old hasn't rolled over yet but my sister's 4-month-old has. Should I worry?

There is a wide range of what is considered the “normal” time for learning new skills in the first 3 years. One baby may roll over at 3 months while another rolls at 6. If your child is making forward progress—working on moving her body in new ways—she is probably doing just fine. If you have any concerns, talk with your child's health care provider. In the meantime, lots of playtime on her back and belly will help her get ready to roll.

Did You Know...

When parents and caregivers notice and respond sensitively to their babies' signals, they are helping their children develop stronger thinking and social-emotional skills.³

What It Means for You:

Responding to your baby's cries and meeting his needs is not spoiling him—it's being a great parent. The following three steps can help you understand what your baby is telling you before he can talk:

- 1. Watch and Listen:** Look for patterns in his cries, sounds, facial expressions, and body movements. For example, does your baby suck her fingers when she's hungry?
- 2. Understand:** Use your child's signals to figure out what he needs or wants. For example, your baby may rub his eyes when he is sleepy.

- 3. Respond:** You might take a break from playing when she arches her back and looks away. Keep in mind that you may have to try several different responses before you figure out exactly what he needs or is trying to communicate.

What are some of the patterns you have noticed in your baby's behavior? How has this helped you understand him?



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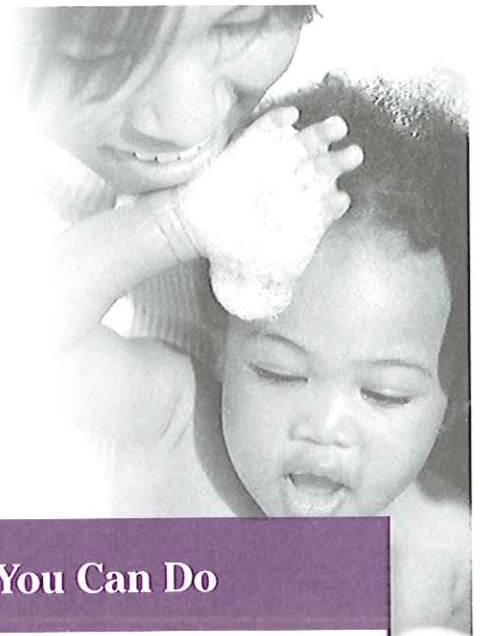


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- 1 - Berger, K.S., 2005.
- 2 - Hart, B. & Risley, T., 1995
- 3 - Eshel, N., Daelmans, B., Cabral de Mello, M., & Martines, J., 2006.

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Your Baby's Development



This is a time of great fun for parents as they watch their babies become eager explorers who are thrilled to discover that they can make things happen. A 7-month-old knows, *When I smile, mommy smiles back!* A 9-month-old lifts her arms to tell her dad, *I want you to pick me up.*
How is your baby making things happen?

What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I am learning to think and solve problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a toy drops to the floor, I look to see where it went. • I figure out how things work by copying what I see you and others do. 	<p>Comment on what your baby does to make things happen. <i>You used your voice to let me know you wanted me to keep playing peek-boo.</i></p> <p>Let your baby explore interesting objects— like toys with buttons to push.</p>
<p>I can control my body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can pick up small objects using my thumb and other fingers. • I can sit on my own, which helps me explore in new ways. • I may crawl or scoot to get around. I might even pull up on furniture to stand. 	<p>Begin letting your child practice picking up baby-safe foods like slices of banana, if you'd like your child to learn to feed himself.</p> <p>Give your baby time to move around on his own. This builds muscle strength and coordination.</p>
<p>I am working hard to communicate with you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I babble a lot. When someone talks to me, I make sounds back. • I use my voice to express feelings, like joy and anger. • I copy actions you make, like waving "bye-bye" and shaking my head "no-no." 	<p>Use words to describe your baby's feelings: <i>You are mad that Daddy took away the crayon. You can chew on this rattle instead.</i></p> <p>If your baby is looking at something, point at it and explain: <i>That's a radio. It plays music.</i></p> <p>Copy your baby's sounds and actions. If she waves, wave back and say <i>Hello!</i></p>
<p>My personality is starting to show.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may love to meet new people or need time to feel comfortable with someone I don't know yet. • I may like lots of sound and activity or I may prefer things to be more quiet and calm. • I may be very active or more interested in watching. 	<p>Notice how your baby likes to play and explore. Does she like to move or does she prefer to sit and watch the world around her?</p> <p>See how your baby reacts to sounds, sights, and social activity. What does she seem to enjoy? What does she seem to dislike or get overwhelmed by?</p>



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What's on Your Mind

My 8-month-old used to love when my mother babysat but now she sobs when I leave!

This sounds like *separation anxiety*. Starting at around 8 or 9 months, babies may become upset and fearful when separated from a loved one. This happens because babies are beginning to understand that people still exist even when they can't see them. So they naturally protest to try to make their special person stay. To help your baby adjust to separations, read stories about saying good-bye (like *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell). And use a good-bye routine with your baby each time you leave—like a song, a kiss, and a big wave. Routines help babies feel safe. To help your child make the transition to her caregiver, suggest that the three of you play with one of your child's favorite toys or books before you leave. Most importantly, be sure to say a real good-bye to your baby. Sneaking out makes babies worry that you may disappear at any time without warning. This makes separations even harder and can create feelings of mistrust.

Did You Know...

Your baby is watching and learning from you?

What It Means for You:

At this age, babies begin to look to loved ones for clues about how to feel about a situation. For example, when a new person comes to the house, a baby looks to his parents to see how they respond: *Are they smiling and happy? Is this person okay? Can I trust him?* To help your baby adjust when meeting a new person, show with your own face, voice, and actions that he or she is nice and trustworthy.

How have you seen your baby observe and react to your signals?

Spotlight on Helping Your Baby Learn to Sleep Through the Night

By 6 months, most full-term, healthy babies are able to sleep through the night. (Certainly check with your health care provider to be sure.) If you'd like your baby to learn this skill, it's important to be patient and consistent with how you handle bedtime and night-wakings. This helps your baby learn to soothe himself and go back to sleep more easily and quickly.

What You Can Do

Use a bedtime routine. Loving and relaxing bedtime routines (like bath, story, milk, teeth-cleaning, and then lullaby) help babies settle down and learn when it's time to go to sleep. (Just be sure not to leave a cup or bottle in the crib or bed.)

Put your baby to bed while he's sleepy but still awake. We all wake up to some degree during the night as we move through different stages of sleep. If children are fed or comforted by a loved one to fall asleep, when they wake up in the middle of the night, they depend on that same kind of comfort to fall back to sleep.

When you put your baby down sleepy but awake, he learns how to fall asleep on his own.

Plan for protests. Make a plan for what to do if your baby cries while she is learning to fall asleep. Some parents choose to check on their child several times until she falls asleep. Other parents say a clear goodnight and do not return until morning. (For some children, having their parents come in and out can make it harder for them to calm down and fall asleep.) There is not one "right" way to help babies learn to sleep through the night.



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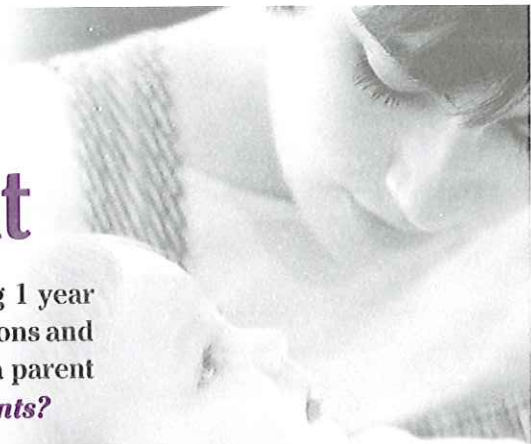


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Your Baby's Development

Babies are becoming good communicators as they get closer to turning 1 year old. This makes it a delightful time for parents. Babies can use their actions and sounds to let loved ones know what they want, like handing a book to a parent so that she'll read it aloud. *How does your baby "tell" you what he wants?*



What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I can understand more words than I can say.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am starting to understand what you say to me. I can even follow simple directions like <i>Go get the ball.</i> • I tell you what I want with my sounds and body movements. I may say a word or two, like <i>mama.</i> 	<p>Tell your baby what is happening and what you will do next: <i>After your milk, it is time for a nap.</i> This helps her learn language. Routines also let her know what to expect.</p> <p>Put your baby's sounds and actions into words. <i>You are pushing your food away. I think you are telling me you are all done.</i></p> <p>Name things your baby looks at or points to: <i>That's the moon. The moon comes out at night.</i></p>
<p>I can creep and crawl.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have found my own way of crawling—on my hands or knees, on my stomach, "crab crawling" by moving backwards and sideways, or even scooting on my bottom! • I walk while holding on to furniture or your hand. I may even start walking on my own. 	<p>Give your baby lots of time and a safe place to practice new skills like crawling and walking.</p> <p>Make a "trail of toys" in a child-safe place in your house. Line up several interesting objects (a wooden spoon, a plastic bowl, a brightly colored dishcloth) that your child can crawl to and explore.</p>
<p>I know that things still exist even though I can't see them—especially you!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may cry when you leave because I know you are still out there somewhere and I want you to come back! 	<p>Play hide-and-seek games. This helps your baby learn that things that disappear also reappear.</p> <p>Be sure to say good-bye to your baby. Never sneak out. This builds his trust in you and helps him learn to deal with difficult feelings.</p>
<p>I love to do things over and over again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is how I practice and figure out how things work. • Repetition also helps build my memory. 	<p>Help your child take the next step in her play. If she is banging two blocks together, see if she'd like to try stacking them.</p> <p>Offer your child a ball to toss, a rattle to shake, or a scarf to swing. These activities help children learn how things work. They also build the muscles in their hands that will help them learn to write.</p>



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What's on Your Mind

Yesterday my 1-year-old picked up my cell phone and babbled into it. How did she learn that?

Between 9 and 12 months, your baby is developing a better memory. She can now imitate something she has seen others do—like chat on the phone. Your baby is also learning how objects are supposed to be used. From watching you, she knows a phone is for talking. One way you help your child figure out how the world works is by letting her play with safe objects—like a hairbrush or sponge—and talk about how they look and feel and what they do.

Did You Know...

The more parents respond to their 1-year-olds during playtime—showing their own enjoyment and excitement in their child's play and noticing what their child is interested in—the better their child's language skills are at age 3.¹

What It Means for You:

When you and your child take turns talking and listening, your child is learning to tell the difference between sounds. Later, he will put these sounds together into words. To build your 1-year-old's early language skills during playtime, talk with him about what the two of you are doing together.

Spotlight on How Babies Connect Their Thoughts and Actions

Between 9 and 12 months, babies take action with a goal in mind. For example, your child may crawl off as fast as he can when he sees you holding a clean diaper. He doesn't want a diaper change so he crawls away to avoid it! It's important to understand that babies don't

do this to make us angry. They simply want to make their needs and feelings known. These purposeful actions also show that babies have developed a better memory. They remember that they don't like lying still or feeling those cold, wet wipes!

What You Can Do

To support your baby's growing thinking skills, you can:

Show your child how *cause-and-effect* works, like letting her press the doorbell or turn on the light switch.

Follow your baby's lead. Notice what your child is interested in and let him (safely) explore an object in his own way.

Encourage your baby to use all her senses to learn. Let her touch an ice cube. Notice when it melts. Crinkle leaves in your hands and see what

happens. Let her shake a plastic container of dry rice and one full of dry beans. How do they sound different?

Child-proof yet again! Now that babies have a goal in mind, like touching the television remote, they are harder to distract. Make your home child-safe so you spend more time playing, and less time saying *No*.

Follow your child's lead about what interests him. When a child is engaged and having fun playing, he is learning. Offer new challenges as your child masters new skills—like suggesting he try to stack more blocks on top of his three-block tower.

What captures your child's attention?



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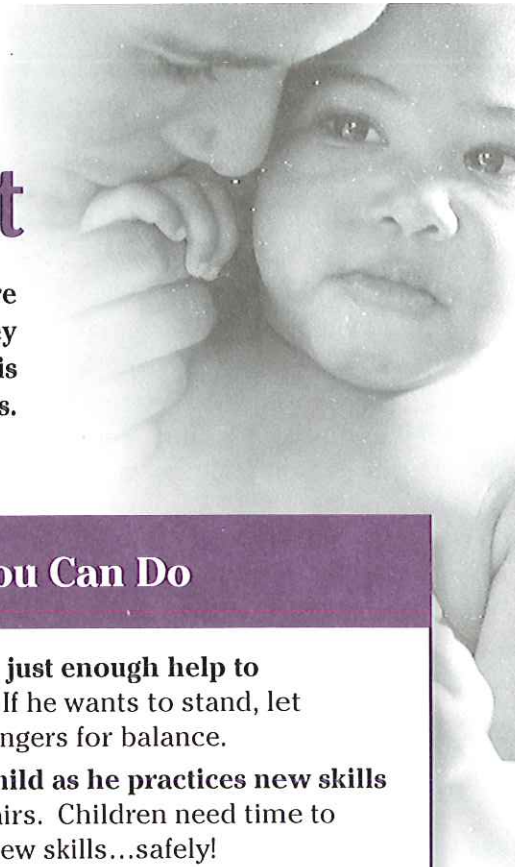
1- Silven, N., Niemi, P., Voeten, M. 2002.

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Your Child's Development

This is a really fun time for parents, as 1-year-olds are able to explore the world in new ways and are eager to do things *all by myself!* They watch their loved ones very carefully and copy a lot of what they see. This is one of the most important ways toddlers learn how the world works.

How do you see your child learning from watching you?



What Your Toddler Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I'm moving!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may walk on my own or by holding your hand. • I am learning to crawl up stairs but can't come down yet. • I can throw a ball and turn pages in books. 	<p>Give your child just enough help to reach his goal. If he wants to stand, let him hold your fingers for balance.</p> <p>Support your child as he practices new skills like climbing stairs. Children need time to work on these new skills...safely!</p> <p>Encourage your child to turn the pages when you read together.</p>
<p>I'm starting to talk and understand so much more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may use some words like <i>duhduh</i> for <i>dog</i>. • I can show you what I want through my actions. I may bang my high chair when I want more food. • If you ask me to, I can point to a body part or a picture in a book. 	<p>Choose books about things that interest your child like animals or other children.</p> <p>Build your child's vocabulary. If she points to or says <i>bus</i>, you can say: <i>The school bus is driving down the street.</i></p> <p>Name the people, places, and things that your child sees each day: <i>That's a garbage truck taking our trash.</i></p> <p>Play games that involve following directions: <i>Throw the ball to me.</i></p>
<p>I want to do more for myself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I say <i>no</i> or show you in other ways that I want to do things on my own. 	<p>Involve your child in self-help tasks like washing his hands.</p> <p>Follow your child's lead. Let him choose what toys or games to play.</p>
<p>I love to imitate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I copy actions I've seen other people do, like stir a pot or talk on the phone. 	<p>Join in your child's play. If you see her putting a blanket on her toy bear, ask: <i>Does Teddy need a bottle before bed?</i></p> <p>Give her objects to play with that she sees in "real life," like plastic dishes, a toy telephone, a small dust broom.</p>



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What's on Your Mind

My 14-month-old is such a picky eater! Sometimes I worry that she is not eating enough to stay healthy.

Picky eating is very common at this age. Most children are feeding themselves. This means they are able to choose what to eat—or not eat. The key is to avoid turning mealtime into a power struggle. Offer your child three or four healthy food choices that she usually likes at each mealtime (like pieces of turkey and cheese, cooked peas, and some banana). Then let her decide what and how much she wants to eat. Remember, as long as your child seems to enjoy eating and has the energy to play and interact with you, she is probably doing just fine. Be sure to talk to your child's health care provider if you are concerned or have questions.

Did You Know...

The majority of parents (51%) believe that 15-month-olds are able to share? Actually, most children learn to share and take turns between the ages of 2 and 3. Even after that, they need a lot of practice and help with these important social skills.¹

What It Means for You:

Young toddlers can seem like "big kids" in many ways. They understand so much of what they hear and see that it can be easy to expect a lot from them—more than they really can do yet. At 15 months, toddlers do not yet have the self-control necessary to share and take turns. They can't stop themselves from reaching for a favorite toy, even while someone else is playing with it. This is because the part of their brains responsible for

Spotlight on Temperament

Every child is born with his own individual way of approaching the world— this is called his temperament. For example, some children are easygoing about changes. Others react very strongly to what seems like a small change, like new pajamas. Some children are very active. They love to move. Other children prefer to sit and watch the world around them. Some children enjoy new experiences and meeting new people. Others are slower to warm up in new situations. These are all examples of different temperaments.

There is no right or wrong, better or worse temperament. Temperament is not something your child chooses, and it is not something that you created. It's very important for children to be accepted for who they are. Use what you know about your child's temperament to

encourage his strengths and to support him when needed. For example, if your child has a hard time with separations, you can guess that bedtime might be challenging. You can help your child by using the same bedtime routine each night (story, milk, toothbrushing, and lullaby).

Your temperament matters, too. You might love to meet new people and try new things but your child doesn't. Being aware of this difference is important. It helps you understand how your child's needs may be different from yours. It also helps you learn what to do in order to support and respect your child for who she is.

How would you describe your child's temperament? How do you see her temperament influencing her behavior?

self-control is still developing. But you can begin teaching your child about sharing. Explain the rule: *We are going to take turns with the jack-in-the-box. Derek is going to use it now.* Then help your child focus on another activity while his friend has a turn. Most importantly, stay calm and be patient. Sharing is a skill that comes with time, and with your support and guidance.



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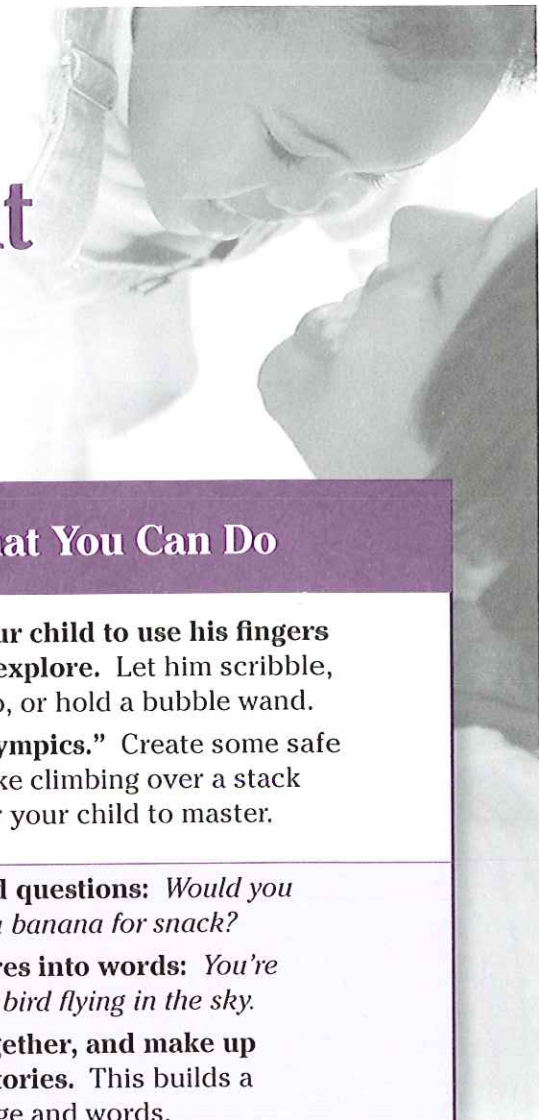
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Your Child's Development

Your toddler is using all his new physical, thinking, and language skills to be a good problem-solver. He might push a stool to the counter and try to climb up as he points to the cookie jar and says something like, *Mine!* *How do you see your toddler figuring things out?*



What Your Toddler Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I'm using my body to explore and learn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am walking and may be running and climbing. • I can scribble with a crayon and build a block tower. • I can feed myself. 	<p>Encourage your child to use his fingers and hands to explore. Let him scribble, tap a toy piano, or hold a bubble wand.</p> <p>Play "baby olympics." Create some safe challenges—like climbing over a stack of pillows—for your child to master.</p>
<p>I'm using language to understand the world around me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand simple questions and directions like <i>Kick the ball to me.</i> • I communicate by combining sounds and actions—pointing to a cup and saying <i>wawa</i> for water. • By 18 months, I may say as many as 20 words. 	<p>Ask your child questions: <i>Would you like yogurt or a banana for snack?</i></p> <p>Put her gestures into words: <i>You're pointing at the bird flying in the sky.</i></p> <p>Read, sing together, and make up rhymes and stories. This builds a love of language and words.</p>
<p>I am beginning to understand my feelings and others' feelings too.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may try to comfort someone who seems sad. • I repeat sounds and actions that make someone laugh. • My feelings can be hard for me to handle. I may start having tantrums and will need your help to calm down. 	<p>Read books that talk about feelings. Connect what you are reading to your child's experiences: <i>That little boy in the book felt sad saying good-bye to his daddy, just like you do sometimes.</i></p> <p>Stay calm during tantrums. Take deep breaths, count to 10, or whatever helps you to <i>not</i> react. Staying calm helps your child recover more quickly.</p>
<p>I'm becoming a good problem-solver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may do something over and over to figure out how it works. • I use objects the way they are supposed to be used—like talking on a toy telephone. • I imitate what I see others do—like trying to wipe the table with a sponge. 	<p>Let your child repeat the same activity, if he wants to. It may be boring to you but is important practice for him.</p> <p>Once your child has learned a new skill, like throwing the ball, add a twist: Set up a laundry basket for him to toss the ball into.</p>



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Spotlight on Problem-Solving

What's on Your Mind

My 16-month-old wants to do everything by himself, which just isn't possible sometimes. What can we do?

Be creative. If he wants to feed himself but can't yet use a spoon, give him one spoon to hold while you feed him with another.

Find an alternative. Explain: *These sharp knives are for Mommy and Daddy to use.* Then show her how to use her hands or a blunt plastic knife to cut her food.

Be his coach. Offer just enough support so that he can achieve the goal himself. You might put your hand over his to help him zip his jacket.

Let your child safely practice new skills. She can practice pouring water out in the backyard or by using a small plastic pitcher in the bathtub.

The ability to solve problems is very important for being successful in school and in life. When you see your toddler getting into everything, think of it as his way of problem-solving—figuring out how things work.

Toddlers problem-solve by using their bodies and their minds to make a plan to reach their goals. For example, toddlers are solving a problem when they tip over their sippy cup to see how to make the liquid come out.

Toddlers are also solving problems by using their past experiences to help them understand new situations. For

example, your child may begin throwing everything into the trash—garbage or not. He is remembering that throwing his napkin out after lunch makes you happy. He just hasn't learned yet what *not* to toss out!

Children also learn how to solve problems by imitating what the people who care for them do. So when they see these adults staying calm and not giving up when they face a challenge, children learn to keep trying, too.

How do you see your toddler solving problems?

What You Can Do

Support your child in reaching her goal. If her block tower keeps falling, suggest she add some more blocks on the bottom for support

Do chores together. Pushing a broom, for example, helps children solve problems like how to get the crumbs into the dust pan.

Teach your child to ask for help. When you see him getting frustrated as he tries to solve a problem, you might say: *It can be hard to get that jack-in-the-box to pop up! Would you like some help? Let's try turning this knob together.*

Did You Know...

Children begin to understand how others are feeling—to empathize—by 18 months.¹

What It Means for You:

At 18 months, children begin developing a sense of self-awareness—the knowledge that they are individuals with their own feelings, thoughts, likes, and dislikes. Next, they realize that other people have *their* own feelings, thoughts, and preferences, too. This helps children learn empathy. They can imagine how another person feels. To help your child develop empathy:

Talk about others' feelings. *Kayla is feeling sad because you took her toy car. Let's give Kayla back her car and then choose another one for you.*

Suggest how children can show empathy. *Let's get Jason some ice for his boo-boo.*

Empathize with your child. *Are you feeling scared of that dog? He is a nice dog but he is barking really loud. That can be scary. I will hold you until he walks by.*



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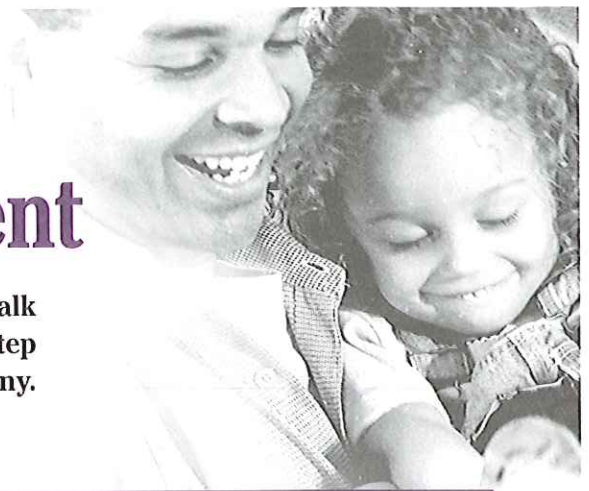
1 - Repacholi, B.M., & Gopnik, A., 1997.

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Your Child's Development

This is a delightful stage as children begin to talk and talk and then talk some more. Toddlers are also starting to pretend. This is a big step in their development and makes life really fun and often very funny.

How do you see your child starting to use her imagination?



What Your Toddler Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I am learning new words every day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may say as many as 50-100 words by my second birthday. • I may even put 2 words together to make my first sentences! 	<p>Turn your child's words and phrases into sentences. When he says, <i>More milk</i>, you can say: <i>You want more milk in your cup.</i></p> <p>Talk as you read. Ask your child questions about the pictures and stories you read together.</p>
<p>I need help to begin learning self-control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand <i>no</i> but I still can't control my feelings and actions. • I may get frustrated when I can't do something by myself. Please be patient with me! 	<p>Put your child's feelings into words. <i>I know you're really mad that I turned the TV off. It's okay to feel mad. Instead of TV, would you like to read or play with blocks now?</i></p>
<p>I am beginning to use my imagination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may feed my doll pretend food. • I might make <i>brrrummm</i> noises when I play with cars. 	<p>Play pretend with your toddler. You can be a puppy, barking and running after a ball.</p> <p>Jump-start your child's imagination with dress-up clothes, animal figures, blocks, and plastic food and dishes.</p>
<p>I am a little scientist, always testing things out!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I love to fill and dump and open and close things to see how they work. • I may start to sort objects. I might put all my trains in one place and all my cars in another. 	<p>Help your child practice sorting. Ask your child to help you sort the laundry by putting socks in one pile and shirts in another.</p> <p>Encourage lots of exploration. Fill and dump with water or sand. Make an indoor "sandbox" of dry oatmeal or fall leaves.</p>
<p>I am becoming an even better problem-solver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may blow on my food when you tell me dinner is hot or try to get my own jacket on. 	<p>Help your child solve a problem but don't do it all for him. The more he does, the more he learns.</p> <p>Play games that use problem-solving skills. Try three- or four-piece puzzles or building with blocks.</p>



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What's on Your Mind

My 2 year-old definitely understands the word *no* since he uses it all the time. But when I say, *No touching the lamp!* he stops for a minute but then does it anyway.

Toddlers understand a lot of what you tell them. They just don't have much self-control yet. So while your son may stop when he hears you say *No*, he cannot stop himself from doing it again. He can't tell himself: *I really want to play with this lamp, but it's against the rules so I better not.* For now, make your home as child-safe as possible so you can use fewer *Nos*. When you do set a limit (*No touching the lamp*), guide your child away from it and offer a substitute—like a flashlight—to play with. Self-control takes years to develop. Your child will need lots of patience and consistency from you along the way.

Did You Know...

Parents may deal with challenging behavior in their toddlers every 3 to 9 minutes.¹

What It Means for You:

Testing is part of a toddler's healthy development. They do this by trying out different behaviors and seeing what reaction they get. How you respond makes a big difference in what your child learns and how she behaves. When you set limits:

Be clear about rules. Toddlers need lots of reminders about rules because their memory is still developing.

Be specific. Say *Please put the blocks in the box* instead of *Clean up your toys.*

Spotlight on Language Development

Learning to talk is one of the most important milestones of the first few years. How and when young children learn to use spoken words is different for every child. Some children may use words early and often, while others may take longer to speak. (If you have questions about your child's language development, talk with your health care provider or other trusted professional.)

Build your child's vocabulary through repetition. When your child uses the same sound over and over to name an object, it is considered a "word." If your child always says *muh* when he wants milk, it means that he understands this sound stands for a specific object—that yummy white stuff. Correct pronunciation will come over time. You can help him learn how to pronounce words by saying what you know he means: *You want more milk?*

Notice how your child uses his actions to communicate. Non-verbal communication is very important. When a toddler takes your hand and leads you to a toy, she is using her actions to say, *I want to play with this toy.* If your child is communicating through

actions like this, her spoken language skills will likely follow. You can help by repeating the message your child is sending: *You'd like me to play with you. Here I come!*

Talk together with your child. The more you talk with your child, the more words he will learn. He's learning language from you—his first, and best, teacher.

Young children benefit from learning two languages at the same time. This is a wonderful way for children to develop a close bond with their community and culture. As your child's language skills grow, be prepared for some "language mixing." It is common for children to combine words in English and in their home language in the same sentence.

Be consistent. Use the same consequences. For example, every time your child throws a toy off the high chair take the toy away for a few minutes. Then let him try again.

Stay calm. All children test the rules. The more calmly you respond, the more effective you will be at teaching your child self-control.

What is most challenging about limit-setting for you? Why? What might you do differently to feel more successful?



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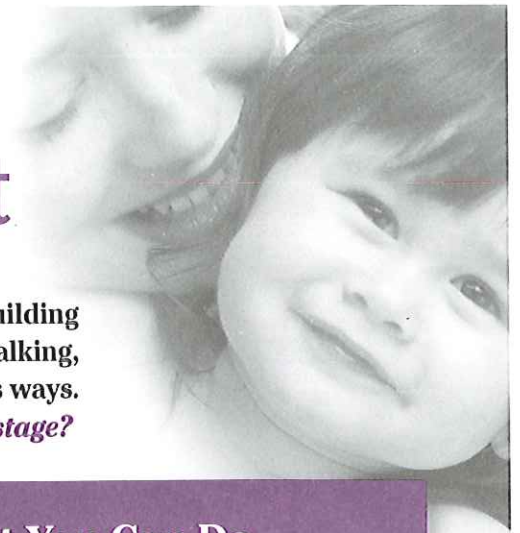
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1 - Lytton, H. & Zwirner, W., 1975; Minton, C., Kagan, J., & Levine, J.A., 1971; Power, T.G., & Chapieski, M.L., 1986.

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Your Child's Development

This is an exciting time as older toddlers are using their growing language skills to tell you what they are thinking and feeling. They are also building friendships with other children. And their growing physical skills—walking, running, and climbing—help them explore the world in more adventurous ways. *What do you find most amazing about your child's development at this stage?*



What Your Toddler Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I use my body to get me places!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can walk up stairs one foot at a time. • I can walk backward. • I can balance on one foot which helps me climb. 	<p>Go on a neighborhood walk. Let your child stop to check out what's interesting to her.</p> <p>Play "island hop." Line up pieces of paper on the floor and help your child jump from one to the next.</p>
<p>I am using language to tell you what I'm feeling and thinking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can make longer sentences: <i>Mama play truck?</i> • My favorite words may be <i>no</i>, <i>me</i>, and <i>mine</i>. • I may get overwhelmed by my strong feelings and have trouble putting them into words. I might need your help to calm down. 	<p>Ask about your child's ideas: <i>What part of the book did you like?</i></p> <p>Acknowledge feelings and teach social skills at the same time: <i>I know the doll stroller is your favorite toy, but Thomas would like a turn pushing it.</i></p> <p>Help your child recover from a tantrum. Some children respond to being comforted. Others do better with some alone time in a safe, quiet place.</p>
<p>I am getting really good at playing pretend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use one object to stand in for another. A shoebox may become a bed for my stuffed hippo. • I laugh at silly things, like the idea that my toy car might go <i>moo</i> instead of <i>beep beep</i>. • Sometimes I get scared. I am getting so good at using my imagination but am not always sure what's real and what's pretend. 	<p>Use pretend play to help your child handle challenging situations. You might act out a story together about meeting a new babysitter.</p> <p>Let your child lead the play. Ask: <i>Who should I be? What will happen next?</i></p> <p>Respond sensitively to your child's fears. Explain what is real and pretend. This builds trust and security.</p>
<p>I want to make friends but still need help with sharing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like watching other children and may copy what I see them do. • I may have one or two good friends. 	<p>Give your child regular chances to play with children her age. This builds social skills.</p> <p>Help your child with conflicts around sharing and turn-taking. Let her know you understand that sharing is hard. Help her find another toy to play with until it's her turn. Use a kitchen timer to help her learn to wait.</p>



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Spotlight on Learning to Use the Toilet

What's on Your Mind

My 28-month-old son screams until I give in to his tantrums. What can I do?

Tantrums are common among toddlers. They happen when children have lost their ability to handle a difficult situation, such as having something they want denied. Help your child manage frustration by:

- Acknowledging his feelings: *I know you are mad that you can't have more ice cream. It's okay to feel mad. When you calm down, we can figure out what snack you can have.*
- Offering choices: *Would you like an apple or a banana?*
- Using humor: *Mr. Apple wants you to eat him. Oh no, now Miss Banana is pushing apple out of the way so you will choose her instead!* Humor cuts the tension and helps children calm down.

How does your child handle frustration? What calms him down?

Did You Know...

That toddlers who are learning more than one language reach their speech milestones at about the same time as children who speak only one language.³

What It Means for You:

Toddlers can learn two languages at once. At first, they may say fewer words in each language, but this doesn't mean they have a language delay! Research shows that when you add together the words toddlers know in both languages, their vocabulary is about the

same as children who speak only one language. Some parents may also worry that children will lose their home language if they hear a different language in their child care setting. Research shows that as long as parents use their home language regularly, children's home language skills continue to grow.⁴

When and how you help your child learn to use the potty depends on how ready your child is. Your culture—your family's beliefs and values about toilet training—also matters. There is not one "right" way to toilet train your child.

- Most children develop control over their bowels and bladder by 18 months. This is necessary for children to physically be able to use the toilet. How emotionally ready a child is to use the potty depends on the individual child.¹
 - Starting to train your child earlier does not necessarily mean she will learn to use the potty sooner. One study showed that children whose parents started training them before 27 months took longer to learn to use the potty compared to children whose parents started after 27 months.²
 - Finding a toilet training method that works for your family is the key. No matter how you do it, remember that potty training takes time, with many accidents along the way.
 - Children with special needs may take longer to learn to use the potty. They may also need special equipment and a lot of help and patience from you. For questions about toilet training, talk with your health care provider or early intervention specialist.
- Parents and children each have their own "jobs" to do when it comes to potty training. Parents are responsible for creating a supportive learning environment.
Parents:
 - ✓ Respect that your child is in control of her body.
 - ✓ Ask your child whether she wants to use the potty or wear a diaper/pull-up each day.
 - ✓ Teach your child words for body parts, urine, and bowel movements.
 - ✓ Offer your child the tools—a small potty, potty seat, stool—necessary to succeed at toileting.
 - ✓ Handle potty accidents without anger.
 - ✓ Avoid punishment as well as too much praise around toilet use.
 - **Your child:**
 - ✓ Decides whether to use the toilet or a diaper/pull-up.
 - ✓ Learns her body's signals for urine and bowel movements.
 - ✓ Uses the toilet at his own speed.



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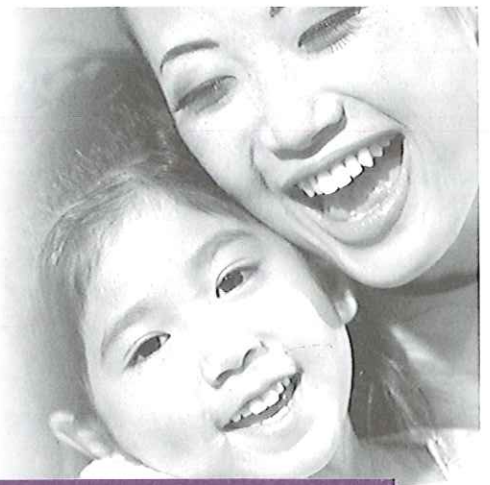
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Your Child's Development

Older toddlers are full of personality and energy. They want to know the reason for everything, which is why you may hear your child ask *Why* a lot! *What kinds of questions is your child asking? What is she curious about?*



What Your Toddler Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>My body helps me do “big kid” stuff now!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can pedal a tricycle. • I can dress myself with your help. • I can draw a line. • I can turn a knob or unscrew a cap. 	<p>Let your child scribble with markers and crayons. This builds early writing skills.</p> <p>Give your child chances to practice more advanced physical skills like pedaling and climbing.</p> <p>Child-proof again so that your child's new ability to open caps and doorknobs doesn't lead to danger.</p>
<p>I use language to express my thoughts and feelings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By age 3, I may use as many as 900 words. • I understand sentences with two or more ideas (<i>You can have a snack when we get home</i>). • I ask questions. • I know my first and last name. 	<p>Introduce new words to build your child's vocabulary: <i>Is your snack scrumptious?</i></p> <p>Ask questions that require more than a yes-or-no answer: <i>Where do you think the squirrel is taking that nut?</i></p> <p>Be patient with your child's Why questions. Ask him what he thinks before you answer.</p>
<p>I am using my new thinking skills to solve problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can remember what happened yesterday. • I act out my own stories. • I'm becoming a “logical thinker.” When I am pretending that it is bedtime for Teddy, I put a blanket on him and sing him a lullaby. 	<p>At dinnertime or before bed, talk with your child about her day. This builds memory and language skills.</p> <p>Encourage your child to use logic in everyday situations: <i>It's raining. What do we need in order to stay dry?</i></p>
<p>My friends are very important to me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like playing with other children. I may have one or two close friends. • I notice how people are the same and different—like their skin color and size. 	<p>Help children deal with conflicts around sharing and turn-taking: <i>There is only one train. I will put the timer on and you will each have 5 minutes to play with it. While you wait for your turn, you can choose to play with cars or another toy.</i></p> <p>Help your child be sensitive to differences among people: <i>Yes, people do come in all different sizes.</i></p>



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What's on Your Mind

My 33-month-old son has such an imagination. He wants me to call him "King Diego" and he spends all his time building castles with his blocks. Should I be worried?

Playing pretend is very common for older toddlers and preschoolers, which is a really good thing. Why? Because using their imaginations helps young children develop their thinking, language, and social skills as they talk about and think through how their story should unfold. By taking on different roles, your son is also learning to see the world from another person's point of view. By acting out stories, he is learning how to solve problems like how to build the block castle so it won't fall down. Long story short, there is no need to worry and actually many reasons to celebrate King Diego. So take a moment to ask what part you can act out—Queen? Soldier? Horse? You'll be having fun together and helping your son learn at the same time.

Spotlight on Making Friends

Between 30 and 36 months, toddlers really enjoy playing with friends—doing things like acting out stories, building together with blocks, or exploring the playground.

Friendships are great fun. They also help children develop important social skills like taking turns, sharing, and helping others.¹ Through friendships, children learn to communicate with others, resolve disagreements, and understand others' thoughts and feelings.² Children who are friendly, confident, and who can cooperate with others are most likely to succeed in a classroom setting.

Keep in mind that brothers and sisters are often a child's first friends, even though it may not seem like it some days! Sibling relationships provide daily practice with sharing and cooperating. They also offer children opportunities to show compassion and loving support.

What You Can Do

Make time for play. Encourage brothers, sisters, and cousins to play together. Organize playdates with friends. Join a parenting group or attend community events like library story hours.

Give nonverbal feedback. Give your child an encouraging smile when he is unsure about sharing.

Notice positive behavior. *You two figured out how to share the trains. Nice job!*

Help children understand others' feelings. *Janelle is covering her face. She doesn't like it when you*

throw the ball so hard. Let's roll it gently instead.

Encourage children to problem-solve. *You both want the tricycle. What can we do about this?*

Suggest problem-solving strategies. *How about while Marco has a turn on the tricycle, you pretend to be the traffic light and say "stop" and "go?" Then you two can switch.*

What can you do to help your child learn to be a good friend?

Did You Know...

The more television 3-year-olds watch each week, the more they ask for the foods they have seen advertised.³

What It Means for You:

Young children are influenced by what they see on television. So limit your child's TV time and try to avoid shows with advertisements. Make sure that what she *does* watch is right for

her age. And begin teaching your toddler good eating habits by offering healthy meals and snacks. You can also be a role model by eating healthy yourself. Most importantly, keep the whole family active by making time for active play every day.



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