

What's Up? Your Baby's Development



PEDIATRIC CARE • SUPPORTING • PARENTING
A Program of ZERO TO THREE

18-Month Visit

Toddlers love to pretend, which makes life fun and often very funny.

18–24 MONTHS: What's Happening?

What Your Baby Can Do

I am learning new words every day.

- I may say as many as 50–100 words by my second birthday.
- I may even put two words together to make my first sentences!



I need help to begin learning self-control.

- I understand *no* 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!

What You Can Do

Turn your child's words and phrases into sentences.

When they say, "More milk," you can say, "May I have more milk? Yes, of course!" This teaches more language.



Talk as you read. Ask your child questions about the pictures and stories you read together.

Put your child's feelings into words. "I know you're really mad that I turned the video off. It's OK to feel mad. Instead of video, would you like to read or play blocks now?"

Read stories about feelings. Helping your child to learn the words to describe their feelings helps them learn to manage them.

As you use the HealthySteps handouts, remember that your child may develop skills faster or slower than noted and still be growing just fine. Every child develops at their own pace. Your HealthySteps Specialist will be available to answer any questions. Your family's cultural beliefs and values are also important factors that shape your child's development.

What's Happening?

What Your Baby Can Do

I am beginning to use my imagination.

- I may feed my doll pretend food.
- I might make *vrroom* noises when I play cars.

I am a little scientist, always testing things out!

- 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 pile and all my cars in another.

I am becoming an even better problem solver.

- I might blow on my food when you tell me dinner is hot or try to get my own jacket on.

What You Can Do

Play pretend with your child. You might be a puppy, barking and running after a ball.

Jumpstart your child's imagination with dress-up clothes, animal figures, blocks, and plastic food and dishes.

Help your child practice sorting. Ask your child to help you sort the laundry by putting socks in one pile and shirts in another.

Use lots of math words such as big/small, tall/short, and fast/slow as you go about your day. Count steps or food items to teach the number sequence.

Help your child solve a problem but do not do it all for them. The more they do, the more they learn.

Other Things to Know and Try

Testing is part of a toddler's healthy development. How you respond makes a big difference in what your child learns and how they behave. When you set limits:

- Be clear about rules. Toddlers need reminders because their memory is still developing. Say, "Please put the blocks in the box," instead of, "Clean up your toys."
- Be consistent. Use the same consequences to help your toddler learn cause-and-effect. For example, every time your child throws a block in the house, put it away for a few minutes.
- Stay calm. All children test the rules. The more calmly you respond, the more effective you will be at teaching your child self-control.

At this visit the pediatric team will measure your child's length, weight, and head. They will listen to your child's heart and look at their eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Your child will get any needed vaccines. We will talk about your child's development and routines such as sleeping and eating. We will also review safety tips. And, of course, we will make time to discuss any questions or concerns you might have!