

# What's Up? Your Baby's Development



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

## 36-Month Visit

Three-year-olds have strong opinions and are becoming more independent every day.

### 36 MONTHS: What's Happening?

#### What Your Baby Can Do

**My body is even more active and able.**



- I can run forward.
- I have good balance and can stand on one foot for up to five seconds.
- I can draw some shapes or even a face.
- I can likely go upstairs and downstairs on my feet.

**I know a lot but am still unable to regulate my emotions every time.**

- I am sometimes cooperative and can follow directions, but often I want to do things my way.
- I may move very quickly from calm to upset.

#### What You Can Do

**Introduce new learning materials** like string and chunky beads or sensory experiences such as corn starch and water or shaving cream.



**Give your child chances to practice small and large motor skills.** They can try using a pencil and climbing a play structure.

**Encourage your child when they get frustrated.** They may want to be more competent at skills than they currently are.

**Help children cope with their big feelings by staying calm when they are emotional.** Say, "You are frustrated. You didn't want your tower to fall over. You worked so hard on it. I won't let you throw blocks, but I will stay right here and keep everyone safe."

*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 use language to express my thoughts and feelings.**

- I may use more than 1,000 words.
- Most people can understand my speech more than 80% of the time.
- I ask a lot of questions. Sometimes over and over.

### What You Can Do

**Play story games where each family member adds to the plot.** *The dog wanted to go exploring so he squeezed through a hole in the fence. And then....*

**Add new concepts to the ones your child already knows.** Say, "Yes, that is a blue circle. What color does it make when we add some red paint to the blue?"

## Other Things to Know and Try

The first three years of brain development are foundational. They set the stage for lifelong learning. Keep in mind that while your child's brain is very active and more sophisticated than ever before, there is still much to learn. Try to stay patient as your child learns new social skills like sharing and turn-taking. They will need plenty of reminders while learning these new skills. It can be tiring, but repetition really helps them learn. When you stay consistent and model managing emotions yourself, your child will also learn those critical skills.



*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!*