

Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Child Development

Toddlers (1-2 years of age)

Developmental Milestones

Skills such as taking a first step, smiling for the first time, and waving "bye-bye" are called developmental milestones. Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age. Children reach milestones in how they play, learn, speak, behave, and move (like crawling, walking, or jumping).

During the second year, toddlers are moving around more, and are aware of themselves and their surroundings. Their desire to explore new objects and people also is increasing. During this stage, toddlers will show greater independence; begin to show defiant behavior; recognize themselves in pictures or a mirror; and imitate the behavior of others, especially adults and older children. Toddlers also should be able to recognize the names of familiar people and objects, form simple phrases and sentences, and follow simple instructions and directions.

For more details on developmental milestones, warning signs of possible developmental delays, and information on how to help your child's development, visit the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign website.

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>

Positive Parenting Tips

Following are some things you, as a parent, can do to help your toddler during this time:

- Read to your toddler daily.
- Ask her to find objects for you or name body parts and objects.
- Play matching games with your toddler, like shape sorting and simple puzzles.
- Encourage him to explore and try new things.
- Help to develop your toddler's language by talking with her and adding to words she starts. For example, if your toddler says "baba", you can respond, "Yes, you are right—that is a *bottle*."
- Encourage your child's growing independence by letting him help with dressing himself and feeding himself.
- Respond to wanted behaviors more than you punish unwanted behaviors (use only very brief time outs). Always tell or show your child what she should do instead.
- Encourage your toddler's curiosity and ability to recognize common objects by taking field trips together to the park or going on a bus ride.



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