

## Toddler Visit #4

- PIPE: Love & Limits (9-30 Months)
  - Painless Parenting



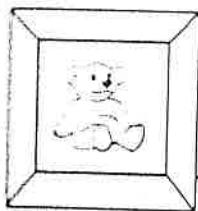
### Topics for Next Visit:

- 14 Month Growth & Development
  - Toddler Safety



# Love and Limits





## Conceptual Overview

1. Setting limits is another layer of love. Limits are guidelines or rules. Most rules in life are created out of respect for other people or environments. When we say "thank you," we are saying, "I respect your action, and I appreciate you." When we don't litter, we are saying, "I respect our beautiful world and those who will come by here again." When we set limits with another person, we are saying, "I need your respect." When we honor another's limits or rules, we are showing our respect.
2. Guidelines begin at birth. When we help a baby establish a schedule or regulate an emotion, we are setting guidelines. The first step in discipline is regulation. Very gently, we begin to set a pattern. We say, "It is time for you to go to sleep now." We mean, "I have done all I can for your comfort. Now it's my time." You can ask for your separateness because you are worthy of respect from those you love. We are gently guiding the baby in acceptable, respectful behavior. We are setting limits.
3. Parents are a model. As babies begin to grow, parents show them how to "fit in" and behave. Babies begin to learn the rules by watching. They copy behavior of other people. If parents join into a task and model what they want, e.g., putting away the toys, the baby will often follow their lead without a fuss. Showing young babies what we "do" want them to do is the most effective form of guidance. It is a positive way to teach rules and limits.
4. Guidelines must be set clearly and repeated often. They should be limited in number and within the baby's ability to understand and follow. The expectations should be the same every time. Loving guidelines are firm, but not cross; they are sure and confident, but not shameful or harmful. Guidelines are tools for learning respect, not made for punishment or teasing. Using them with babies does not require using strong emotions. Guidelines should be expressed calmly and factually and then followed. This is a loving way to discipline.
5. Having rules makes babies feel safe and protected. As babies start to understand more and be able to do more, they need to learn some rules of behavior. Helping babies learn rules is as important as helping them learn to read. Learning rules is not a development milestone. It takes communication and guidance from parents to help babies regulate their behavior. Most babies feel security and competence by knowing and following the rules. Being raised with patterns for behavior teaches babies about how we live together. Patterns should also teach respect. Knowing the rules will bring babies a sense of being liked and accepted by others, and it will be easier for them to build strong relationships in the future.

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6. Guidelines for toddlers sometimes mean setting limits. A limit is an end point, a finish line, a closed gate. A limit is when one person says "stop" or "no." At about one year, babies begin to feel confident in their skills; they take initiative. They are strong-willed and independent. They test patterns and rules that have been set. They cross boundaries they have previously heeded. Developmentally, their lives have changed; they are now walking, beginning to talk, and remembering more. Their drive to explore is strong. Setting limits is an act of safety. Parents need to define clear limits. Show the baby what is wanted and plan calm, consistent consequences.
7. Babies and toddlers can only understand one or two limits at a time. Choose only a few rules and help your child learn them slowly. Because we are motivated to explore, we like to test boundaries. This is how children learn; they experiment with all possibilities. Limits are for learning, not for punishment or submission. They are firm and clear, not angry. Limits should be like a fence — always there, bringing a sense of structure. By knowing the rules and being able to follow them, toddlers feel a sense of mastery and connectedness. Because toddlers want to please us, they also enjoy learning the rules.



# Love and Limits Protect Children





# Tips for Behavioral Regulation

## ♥ Regulate, don't react!

Stop! Chill Out! Take a "Big Breath."

## ♥ Mentally, ask "WHY?"

Think: "Why are you acting this way, my darling baby?"

## ♥ Define the problem.

Is it physical - hungry, tired, wet, cold, overstimulated?  
Is it emotional - scared, angry, excited, sad, or lonely?  
Is it mental - not understood, too hard, too involved, too easy?  
Is it developmental; is baby practicing a new skill?  
Is it a test - is the baby testing the limits?

## ♥ What's the solution?

If the baby is hungry, feed him.  
If the baby is scared, lonely, or bored, pick her up. Be together.  
If the baby is too excited, sit down and read a book.  
If the baby is bored, find a new task.  
If the baby is refusing to try a new task, think of a simpler one.  
If the baby is repeatedly practicing a new skill, find suitable ways to support.  
If the baby is throwing toys, find a more challenging task or a simpler task.

## ♥ Act, don't talk.

Don't correct or try to comfort from across the room.

- Fix the problem.
- Ignore the problem.
- Divert the baby.
- Remove the baby.
- Use a "quiet time."

## ♥ End with a positive.

Bring the baby with you to share a task.  
Model or demonstrate with excitement  
Hold the baby close. Stay quiet and rock.



# Rules and Limits, With Love

- ♥ Effective rules are clear, calm, and consistent.
- ♥ Rules give a baby a sense of safety and structure.
- ♥ Knowing the rules gives a baby a sense of mastery and accomplishment.
- ♥ Babies want to please their parents.
- ♥ Babies and toddlers are challenging because they become too absorbed, too excited, too tired, or too confused.
- ♥ Parents regulate emotions to help their baby or toddler regain balance and focus.

## Parenting Tools for the 9- to 16-month-old child

At about 1 year of age, toddlers become very self-directed. They take initiative to select their toys, to have their possessions close, and to be persistent in their tasks. They don't want to be interrupted or to stop an activity. They want to try lots of new things, touch everything, see into everything, and learn about their environment. They will move around quickly ... learning ... learning.

Toddlers need just a few rules and lots of safe places to explore. They need parents close for regulation and modeling. Learning rules means testing rules. To learn a pattern of behavior, babies and toddlers must try it over and over. Have clear, consistent limits to guide babies and toddlers.

**Set rules that are appropriate and valid.** Establish clear expectations early. You have been modeling good behavior and have set some rules; now you will be establishing a few consistent limits for these rules. When a toddler touches a light plug, say "No, no" and limit his ability to return. Take clear, effective action with no argument or emotion.

**Make guidance positive.** Remember, an inquisitive, active baby or toddler can be into something new every five minutes all day long. The more controlling parents are, the more oppositional the child may become. This is the age of tantrums and long crying periods, along with wild excitement and jubilation. Keeping a balance is the parent's challenge. Praise your toddler when rules are followed. Regulate emotions that are out of control. Focus on learning - not compliance.

**Give clear choices.** At one year, a toddler feels powerful, likes choices, and likes learning words for choices. Parents should give alternatives, by saying things like, "Do you want to put your coat on to go out, or stay inside?" or "Do you want a pear or an apple?"

**Share positive emotions.** Regulation often works best when you ignore the problem or go for some fun. It's better than fighting. Make up little songs about a task, e.g., "I put on a glove, you put on a glove, Honey, Ho, Ho." Make rhymes when doing an essential activity; play games to brush teeth, wash hair, or put on pj's.

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## Rules and Limits, With Love, cont.

**Play within your child's interest area or share yours.** This age is full of initiative. They want to set the focus. Parents can direct, redirect, and regulate behavior from within the toddler's area of interest. If the lamp is interesting, go together and touch it. Then, together, find another toy. At this age, babies and toddlers prefer doing things with you, not alone. When you are on the phone, take your child onto your lap to play in the desk drawer. When you do the dishes, let the toddler help.

**Follow the rules you set.** Stick to your own rules. You are the model. If you ask your toddler to brush teeth, he or she needs to see you do it. Toddlers need to see you take a bath, wear a coat, and use a seat belt. Your example will always be the one that your child follows.

**Do what was promised and what is expected.** Be consistent. One-year-olds will test every rule again and again, but they can't remember them. You must keep repeating them. Keep limits easy and simple. Do not promise things that you cannot deliver or give false threats. Do what you say you will do.

**Be clear and firm, not angry or emotional.** Remember it does not take anger or argument to have your rule followed. Calmly, confidently see that the rule is followed, or that the behavior is changed. Babies and toddlers understand your emotions not your words. Your anger triggers their defenses and emotions take over; learning is lost. Fun and laughter can change behaviors better than seriousness or anger.

**Ignore argument or protest.** "Let's go home now." Your toddler runs away screaming, "No-o-o-o." You ignore him and put on your own coat and talk to your friend. Your toddler comes back to you, puts on his coat, and you leave. You have ignored your toddler's fuss and avoided the battle.

**Divert as much as possible.** Your toddler takes candy from the grocery shelf. You say, "Look, here is a doggy. See the doggy on the box?" You hand her the animal crackers, take the candy, and move on.

**Restore balance; use "Quiet Time."** At this age, fussiness and tantrums are common because toddlers may be hungry, tired, driven to explore, or wanting attention. Allowing your child a few minutes alone is a wonderful way to regulate or rebalance him. Have a safe area for "quiet time." Your toddler can have a favorite toy, a blanket, or special animal. Some toddlers like "quiet time." They play happily and recover their own emotional stability. "Quiet Time" allows a toddler to regain balance and then return to you. When you engage your toddler after "quiet time," don't talk about the tantrum. Just go on to something new and fun.

**Always end with positive sharing, expressing love.** After any angry confrontation is resolved, always hold your toddler close and express your love. A toddler with fewer rules and more love is often better behaved than one that is feeling controlled and devalued. You cannot expect total compliance from a year-old. You are hoping for some understanding of your expectations.

Night waking, which seem like bad dreams, often come from unresolved scolding or being misunderstood. The toddler feels a desperate need to feel accepted by an attachment person. Your love will stabilize your toddler's sleep. Feeling safe and loved is what brings good behavior.



## Structure and Repair

- ♥ Structure gives confidence and competence.
- ♥ Children feel worthy when they know what to do.
- ♥ They feel proud to know the rules and the limits of their parents.
- ♥ Their self-confidence lets them explore and learn in other places.
- ♥ When shared emotions become angry, relationships are damaged.
- ♥ They need to be repaired for children to feel valued.

### Parenting Tools for the 16- to 30-month-old child

From 1 to 3 years, babies' and toddlers' minds are expanding very quickly. They are learning language as well as rules and skills. They are going new places, eating new foods, and playing with new toys. It is a wonderful but confusing time. These babies and toddlers will become very confident of their new skills and are strong willed and demanding. But if a rule or pattern is changed, or they are in a strange place, they will switch to being insecure. Either way, parents may find them challenging. Discipline must be focused on a behavior or danger and not devalue the child. Repairing anger and teaching or showing what you do want maintains the child's feelings of self-worth. Discipline means working together to learn how to problem solve, self-regulate, and be successful in a social world.

**Let toddlers know you are pleased with their good decisions.** Praise your toddler for recovering from a tantrum or choosing a good behavior. Share this with your toddler by having some fun together. Even five minutes of shared positive emotions will pay off.

**Praise toddlers for what they do well.** Often we forget to thank a child for playing quietly while we are busy. "You have been reading your books for a long time. I'm so proud of you."

**Ease up on your demands when toddlers are practicing new skills.** Let them problem solve and make some mistakes. Give them lots of choices. Help them make good choices. Let them struggle with poor choices when it is safe to do so. Give your toddler only those choices that you can approve of.

**Give toddlers second chances.** "It's cold outside. Put on your coat." Your toddler has a tantrum. You walk away, say nothing, do something else. After a few minutes, say: "Here is your coat." Your toddler runs to you, and you both go outside.

**If you are mad, don't punish your toddler!** Isolate yourself until you calm down. You don't want to model tantrums for your toddler. Toddlers know when you are out of control. This often frightens them. Put your baby or toddler in a safe place and go to your room. Later, repair your relationship by apologizing for your angry behavior.

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## Structure and Repair, cont.

**Correct a child's action, rather than judge the child.** Make sure your toddler knows that it is his or her *action* that you are addressing - *not him or her*. "We don't throw food." Reinforce your toddler's worth. Every night before bed, be sure to let your child know how much you value him or her. Toddlers will be processing the day's experiences in their dreams. They will be learning while they sleep. Send toddlers to bed with your strength and your love.

**Don't expect compliance from a 2-year-old.** Although toddlers seem to be learning a lot and understanding a lot, they will forget very easily. This age group also likes to test the rules or try something they have been told not to do. Be watchful and patient; there will be mistakes.

**Join your child for tough tasks.** Pick up toys together, clear dishes together. Sometimes a game of "you eat a bite and I'll eat a bite" works wonders. To get what you really want done, join in and do it together.

**Let your toddler help you.** Toddlers want to try independence. "So, you won't let me put on your shoes? OK, you do it! Now, shall I help a bit with the laces? OK, they're done!" or "Baby, I've got to do the dishes; want to help? OK, here's a chair and an apron. Here's a long-handled brush. Stand in front of me, and let's do this together!" Mastery motivates performance.

**Never shame a toddler for mistakes.** Remember, your toddler is trying so hard to get it right. When a toddler can't or won't do a task, the actions may be developmentally too advanced or the explanation not clear. Toddlers love to show off their skill or try a new challenge within their learning level. It is praise that brings good behavior, not shame. It is learning you want, not punishment.

**Forget about what others think!** Does your toddler embarrass you? Forget it! Most people in the world have had toddlers. They have lived through this stage. It may amuse them to see your toddler having a tantrum in the grocery store, because they remember "those days"! They will admire you for not using anger or abuse. This stage won't last long and you'll be glad you didn't give in.

**Plan ahead.** As your toddler learns more words, you can explain what you are going to do and what you expect. "We're going out to dinner. We need to sit quietly at the table. Let's pack some quiet things to play with. Which books do you want to take? Should we take a coloring book?"

**Problem solve.** Parents can help toddlers learn about how to help themselves. Use "IF-THEN" statements. "If you drop your food to the dog, it will be all gone and you won't have any." Let the child discover what that means by trying it. Be sure you let the consequences happen. "If you want to feed the puppy, ask me to help you get a doggy-bone. Then you can keep your food."

**Keep the long-term picture in mind.** As parents you are guiding a beautiful child. Perfect behavior is not your best goal. The confident, well-balanced, problem-solving, happy child is what parents should work for. It is the proud parent whose child can say: "I am loved. I am worthy of being loved. I can return that love."



## Quiet Time

"Quiet Time" is a way to teach a child to find emotional balance. Use this technique when a child is out of control. Whenever possible, do this where there are no distractions.

1. Stop the behavior. Pick up the child.
2. Tell the child what was wrong. Calmly and firmly say, "The TV is not a toy."
3. Give a reason. "That's not for you," or "That will hurt you."
4. Find a safe place for the child to be alone to regain emotional balance.
5. Join the child after you have both enjoyed some "quiet time."
6. Reaffirm the child's worth: "Mommy loves you."
7. Go together to something new and fun.

### EXAMPLE OF "QUIET TIME"

Characters: Mom and her toddler, Katie.

Katie walks over and turns on the TV.

**Mom:** "Katie, no; the TV is not a toy."

Mom moves Katie away from the TV and gives her a toy.

Katie runs to the TV again, turns it on, looks at Mom and smiles.

**Mom:** "Katie, No. The TV is not a toy."

Mom picks up Katie. Katie screams, kicks, squirms out of Mom's arms and runs to TV.

Mom takes Katie to the "Quiet Time" spot.

**Mom:** "Time for 'Quiet Time,' Katie. The TV is not a toy. Here is your doll."

Mom is busy nearby, within Katie's sight.

Katie cries and kicks, screeches, sounds furious, throws doll. Mom says nothing.

Katie quiets, reaches for doll, sucks thumb, and begins to talk to her doll.

Mom engages Katie after Katie has calmed down.

**Mom:** "Come help me make the salad."

Katie laughs.

**Mom:** "Katie, I love you."

# Dear Parents,

## Did you know that –

- Spanking **shrinks brains.**

Harvard Medical School found that kids who are spanked just once a month had **14-19% smaller brains in the decision-making area.**<sup>1</sup> These were children who remembered being spanked at least 12 times a year and once with a belt, paddle or brush, but were not injured or spanked in anger.



- 1,574 studies found that **spanking is harmful.**

- Even ‘everyday spanking’ is **consistently associated with:**

- |                                      |                                      |                                   |  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| – <b>More aggression</b>             | – <b>More negative relationships</b> | – <b>Lower cognitive ability</b>  | – <b>Substance abuse</b>                 |
| – <b>More fighting</b>               | with parents                         | – <b>Weaker moral values</b>      | – <b>Delinquent behavior</b>             |
| – <b>More mental health problems</b> | – <b>Lower self-esteem</b>           | – <b>More antisocial behavior</b> | – <b>Lower self-control</b> <sup>2</sup> |

- Spanking **lowers IQ.**

The University of New Hampshire found that American children who are spanked at ages 2-4 have **5 less IQ points** than non-spanked children, even years later. Children spanked at ages 5-9 have **2.8 less IQ points.**<sup>3</sup>

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Does this mean that everyone who was spanked as a child has problems?** No, it means that spanking doesn't help children learn what we want them to learn. Every time we spank a child, we raise the risk that the child will develop problems.
- **Why is this so?** Spanking focuses on the behavior and misses the underlying need. It might stop a child from doing something in the moment, but the child hasn't learned how to do things differently. And it can lead to built-up resentment and hostility, and prevent some children from telling about sexual abuse for fear of further punishment.
- **But I was spanked and turned out okay?** Today, we have a tremendous amount of knowledge about how children learn and develop. We know other ways of teaching children that don't have these risks and harms.

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Prepared, designed, and disseminated by:



Endorsed by:



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2. Geishoff, E. T., & Grogan-Kaylor, A. (2016). Spanking and child outcomes: Old controversies and new meta-analyses. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 30(4), 453-469. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/fam0000191>

3. Straus, M. & Paschall, M.J. Corporal punishment by mothers and development of children's cognitive ability: A longitudinal study of two nationally representative age cohorts. (2009). *Journal of Aggression Maltreatment & Trauma*, 18(5): 459. doi:10.1080/10926770903035168



# Tips for Parents of Young Toddlers (12-24 months)

## DANGER – (TOUCHING STOVE/ELECTRICITY/ RUNNING INTO STREET/LEAVING WITHOUT AN ADULT)

Toddlers are very curious and learn by touching and exploring. Toddlers are too young to understand danger. Baby-proof home by keeping valuables and dangers such as cords, toys with small parts, medicines, cleaning supplies away from the toddler. Identify a safe location in your house where toddler can safely explore.

## WHINING

Toddlers whine for a variety of reasons. Whining is an attempt to self soothe. A toddler may be bored, hungry or tired or may just want to connect with you.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING ...

### TRY ...

"I can't understand you when you talk like this"

- "I would like to hear you. Come, sit next to me."
- Try distraction: "Look at this, we have [object, snack]!" OR
- "You would like for me to listen, and you sound very frustrated."

"Don't make me give you something to cry about."

## SAYING "NO" WHEN YOU ASK THEM TO DO SOMETHING

It is normal for toddlers to say "no" a lot, even if child means "yes". It is still important to have rules and set limits.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING ...

### TRY ...

"Clean up this mess right now!"

- "Let's see how fast you can put all the [toys] away!" OR Let's clean this mess up together!

"Don't disobey me!"

- "Let's put all the [toys] away so we can [watch a movie]. I can tell you are feeling impatient. We've been waiting a long time.

## TEMPER TANTRUMS

Toddlers often have temper tantrums when they are hungry or tired. Sometimes they have tantrums out of frustration when they cannot use words to say what they want. Your child needs your help to calm down and to feel heard.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING ...

### TRY ...

"Stop crying right now!"

- "I know it's hard to leave [the playground] when you're having fun." Or, I know you really want that [toy]. Let play with it later" OR Let's try again. Take a deep breath.

"You are so bad!"

- "I see that you are really mad because [...]." OR I hear how really angry you are.

"I really hate when you act like this."

- "Let's go over here where it's quieter." OR
- "Those words and actions don't help us find a solution. Would you be willing to..."

Sometimes the best option is to just quietly and calmly stay with your child as your child is not hurting herself or anyone else.

## BEING AGGRESSIVE

Toddlers commonly bite, hit and grab things from others. Praise good behavior.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING ...

### TRY ...

"You are so mean, don't hit!"

- "When you [hit, bite] your [brother], it hurts him and he feels sad." Saying, "It's OK to be angry, but I won't let you hit. We need to keep everyone safe." OR

"You are a bad boy/girl!"

- "You had something important you wanted to say."
- "Let's find something else to play with."
- "It's your [sister]'s turn with the [train]. Or, "I will help you wait until it's your turn."

## GETS INTO THINGS

A toddler learns by exploring and touching. Prevention is best. Place temptations out of sight and reach. Child-proof using cabinet latches or use distractions.

# CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If children live with criticism, **they learn to condemn.**

If children live with hostility, **they learn to fight.**

If children live with ridicule, **they learn to be shy.**

If children live with shame, **they learn to feel guilty.**

If children live with tolerance, **they learn to be patient.**

If children live with encouragement, **they learn confidence.**

If children live with praise, **they learn to appreciate.**

If children live with fairness, **they learn justice.**

If children live with security, **they learn to have faith.**

If children live with approval, **they learn to like themselves.**

If children live with acceptance and friendship, **they learn to find love in the world.**

