

## Toddler Visit #13

- 18 Month Growth & Development
- Responding to Challenging Behavior



## Topics for Next Visit:

- PIPE: Learning Language

## Month 18: What's New?

### So Big!

weight:

height:

clothing sizes:

This month, I am becoming more curious about:

### Learning about me...

*I am learning more about how I feel.*

When I feel happy, I: \_\_\_\_\_

When I am upset, I: \_\_\_\_\_

When I am sad, I: \_\_\_\_\_

### REMEMBER!

**I'm due for my 18 month checkup. The doctor will also give me a developmental screening.**

**You can see how big I'm getting. You can see how much I've learned in the last three months.**

### Learning about you...

Sometime you are angry or sad. When this happens, how do you calm down?

sit down          cry          leave the room

take a walk          yell

tell someone how you feel          sing

eat a favorite food

write in a journal          take a bath

**Please don't ever shake me!**

## Month 18: What's Next?

### At 18 months I might:

- Try to talk to you about what I'm doing. But you might not understand me very well.
- Play near other children my age. But I'm not ready to play with other children yet.
- Climb up on the furniture.
- Hand you a toy when you ask. Sometimes.
- Make a face to show you how I feel.
- Bend over to pick up a toy.
- Use "my" or "mine."

### You can help me learn!

- Use a puppet, doll, or stuffed animal. Talk to me about feelings. Like being sad, mad, or happy.
- Use just one word at a time to help me learn new words.
- Help me learn to go up and down the stairs. Hold my hands while I am learning.

### SAFETY CHECK

**Keep emergency numbers handy. Like the doctor. And Poison Control. Just in case I get into something I shouldn't.**



# Your child at 18 months\*



Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Age \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Milestones matter! How your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about his or her development. Check the milestones your child has reached by 18 months. Take this with you and talk with your child's doctor at every well-child visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next.

## What most children do by this age:

### Social/Emotional Milestones

- ☐ Moves away from you, but looks to make sure you are close by
- ☐ Points to show you something interesting
- ☐ Puts hands out for you to wash them
- ☐ Looks at a few pages in a book with you
- ☐ Helps you dress him by pushing arm through sleeve or lifting up foot

### Language/Communication Milestones

- ☐ Tries to say three or more words besides "mama" or "dada"
- ☐ Follows one-step directions without any gestures, like giving you the toy when you say, "Give it to me."

### Cognitive Milestones (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- ☐ Copies you doing chores, like sweeping with a broom
- ☐ Plays with toys in a simple way, like pushing a toy car

### Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- ☐ Walks without holding on to anyone or anything
- ☐ Scribbles
- ☐ Drinks from a cup without a lid and may spill sometimes
- ☐ Feeds herself with her fingers
- ☐ Tries to use a spoon
- ☐ Climbs on and off a couch or chair without help

### \* It's time for developmental screening!

At 18 months, your child is due for general developmental screening and an autism screening, as recommended for all children by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Ask the doctor about your child's developmental screening.

## Other important things to share with the doctor...

- What are some things you and your child do together?
- What are some things your child likes to do?
- Is there anything your child does or does not do that concerns you?
- Has your child lost any skills he/she once had?
- Does your child have any special healthcare needs or was he/she born prematurely?

**You know your child best.** Don't wait. If your child is not meeting one or more milestones, has lost skills he or she once had, or you have other concerns, act early. Talk with your child's doctor, share your concerns, and ask about developmental screening. If you or the doctor are still concerned:

1. Ask for a referral to a specialist who can evaluate your child more; and
2. Call your state or territory's early intervention program to find out if your child can get services to help. Learn more and find the number at [cdc.gov/FindEI](https://www.cdc.gov/FindEI).

For more on how to help your child, visit [cdc.gov/Concerned](https://www.cdc.gov/Concerned).

**Don't wait.  
Acting early can make  
a real difference!**



Download CDC's  
free Milestone  
Tracker app



American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



# Help your child learn and grow

As your child's first teacher, you can help his or her learning and brain development. Try these simple tips and activities in a safe way. Talk with your child's doctor and teachers if you have questions or for more ideas on how to help your child's development.



- Use positive words and give more attention to behaviors you want to see ("wanted behaviors"). For example, "Look how nicely you put the toy away." Give less attention to those you don't want to see.
- Encourage "pretend" play. Give your child a spoon so she can pretend to feed her stuffed animal. Take turns pretending.
- Help your child learn about others' feelings and about positive ways to react. For example, when he sees a child who is sad, say "He looks sad. Let's bring him a teddy."
- Ask simple questions to help your child think about what's around her. For example, ask her, "What is that?"
- Let your child use a cup without a lid for drinking and practice eating with a spoon. Learning to eat and drink is messy but fun!
- Give simple choices. Let your child choose between two things. For example, when dressing, ask him if he wants to wear the red or blue shirt.
- Have steady routines for sleeping and eating. For example, sit at the table with your child when she's eating meals and snacks. This helps set mealtime routines for your family.
- Limit screen time (TV, tablets, phones, etc.) to video calling with loved ones. Screen time is not recommended for children younger than 2 years of age. Children learn by talking, playing, and interacting with others. Limit your own screen time when you are with your child so you are able to respond to her words and actions.
- Ask your child's doctor and/or teachers if your child is ready for toilet training. Most children are not successful at toilet training until 2 to 3 years old. If he is not ready, it can cause stress and setbacks, which can cause training to take longer.
- Expect tantrums. They are normal at this age and should become shorter and happen less often as your child gets older. You can try distractions, but it's ok to ignore the tantrum. Give him some time to calm down and move on.
- Talk with your child by facing her and getting down to her eye level when possible. This helps your child "see" what you're saying through your eyes and face, not just your words.
- Start to teach your child the names for body parts by pointing them out and saying things like "Here's your nose, here's my nose," while pointing to her nose and your own.

**To see more tips and activities download CDC's Milestone Tracker app.**

This milestone checklist is not a substitute for a standardized, validated developmental screening tool. These developmental milestones show what most children (75% or more) can do by each age. Subject matter experts selected these milestones based on available data and expert consensus.

[www.cdc.gov/ActEarly](http://www.cdc.gov/ActEarly) | 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)



Download CDC's  
free Milestone  
Tracker app



**Learn the Signs. Act Early.**



# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 18-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

### ☐ Find the Toy

Get two containers (coffee cups or cereal bowls) that look the same and a small toy. Hide the toy under one container while your toddler watches. Ask your toddler, "Where did it go?" Eventually, you can play the old shell game, moving the containers after you hide the toy.

**Developmental Areas:** Problem Solving

**Materials Needed:** Containers or cups; small toy

### ☐ What Are We Wearing?

Lay out your toddler's clothes on the bed before dressing. Ask your toddler to give you a shirt, pants, shoes, and socks. This is an easy way for them to learn the names of common items of clothing.

**Developmental Areas:** Personal-Social

**Materials Needed:** Clothes



**NOTES:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Activities



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### ☐ Bubble Blower

Toddlers are excited about bubbles. Let your toddler try to blow bubbles, or watch you blow bubbles through a straw. Bubbles are fun to chase and pop, too.

**Developmental Areas:** Fine Motor

**Materials Needed:** Bubbles; straws or bubble wands

### ☐ Sorting Game

Help your toddler sort objects into piles. Your toddler can help you sort laundry (put socks into one pile and shirts in another). Play “clean up” games, too. Have your toddler put toys on specified shelves or boxes.

**Developmental Areas:** Personal-Social

**Materials Needed:** Clothes; toys; other objects to sort



Want to learn about developmental milestones for your 18-month-old?

Visit <https://t.pub.fyi/CDC18month>





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 18-month-old—a great way to have fun together and support your child's social-emotional development.

### ☐ Tons of Love

Your toddler loves to have a lot of hugs and kisses. Give big hugs, little hugs, loud kisses, and soft kisses. Tell them you love them so much!

**Materials Needed:** None

### ☐ Eating Practice

Your toddler is getting big and wants to do things by themselves! Let them practice eating with a spoon and drinking with a sippy cup during mealtimes. Be ready for some spilling!

**Materials Needed:** Child-safe eating utensils, sippy cups

### ☐ Back and Forth

Your toddler will enjoy gentle tickling games. Make sure they can let you know when they have had enough. They will like quiet snuggle times, too.

**Materials Needed:** Tickles and Snuggles



**NOTES:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# ASQ<sup>®</sup> SE-2 Activities

AGE 18  
MONTHS

## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 18-month-old—a great way to have fun together and support your child's social-emotional development.

### ☐ A New Playhouse

Make playhouse furniture for your child out of boxes. For a stove, turn a box upside down and draw “burners”. Use simple containers for pots and use wooden spoons or sticks to stir the “soup.”

**Materials Needed:** Old boxes, containers, pots, child-safe kitchen utensils

### ☐ Mealtime Helper

Let your toddler help during mealtimes by bringing some things to the table or by setting a place at the table.

**Materials Needed:** None

### ☐ Simple Games

Play simple games such as Hide and Seek and Chase with your toddler. Have fun and laugh together.

**Materials Needed:** None



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## Helping My Child Act In Positive Ways

Toddlers are eager to please their parents and learn the “rules”. At the same time they are curious and want to be able to do things on their own. Here are some things you can do to help your child learn how to interact with others in positive ways.

### ***Notice good behavior.***

Notice and praise good behavior. If you do, the good behavior will occur more often!

*“You shared your snack with your sister.”*

*“Thank you for putting your toys away.”*

*“You got dressed all by yourself.”*

### ***Make eye contact.***

Making eye contact when you talk to your child helps him to listen.



### ***Give your child your time.***

Your child needs time with you each day. You could talk, play, sing, read, or just cuddle.

### ***Tell your child what you want.***

Telling your child what to do works better than telling them what NOT to do.

Instead of: *“Don’t hit the kitty.”*

Say: *“Touch the kitty gently.”*

Instead of: *“Stop kicking the table.”*

Say: *“Keep your feet on the floor.”*

### ***Do as I do.***

Your actions tell your child how they should act. Your child is likely to copy your manners, tone of voice, language, and actions. This means that your child will copy both good and not-so-good behavior!

### ***Give your child choices.***

Offer choices when you can. Choices give your child some power over her own life. Choices teach your child decision-making skills. Only offer choices YOU can be happy with as well!

*“It’s bedtime. Do you want one story or two?”*

*“It’s time to go to the car. Do you want to walk with giant steps or baby steps?”*

### ***Make some rules and be consistent.***

Rules or limits help your child feel safe and that you are helping them to learn.

Set a few rules that you can help your child follow all the time.

Rules should protect the health, safety, and property of your child and others.

## Keys for Responding to Challenging Behavior

At times your child may act in ways that are challenging to you. Having a set of keys you can use to help your toddler avoid challenging behavior or to help you manage your toddler's behavior can be very helpful.

REMAIN CALM.	<p>Try not to get angry. Even though it can be hard!</p> <p>If you can't stay calm – WALK AWAY!</p>	
GIVE PRAISE AND ATTENTION.	<p>If you want to see a behavior again – give it your attention!</p>	
BE CONSISTENT.	<p>Being consistent lets your toddler know he can trust you.</p> <p>Consistency helps your toddler learn limits and rules.</p>	
THINK ABOUT YOUR TODDLER.	<p>Is your toddler hungry? Frustrated? Tired? Bored? Ready to do something new? Learning something new? Testing a rule?</p>	
USE CLEAR, SIMPLE MESSAGES.	<p>Be clear about what you're asking. Use simple language. Ask one thing at a time.</p>	

## Keys for Responding to Challenging Behavior

OFFER OPTIONS WISELY.	Only offer choices you can be happy with. Don't offer options unless you're willing to let your child make the choice.	
GIVE CLEAR, SIMPLE CHOICES.	Toddlers love to make choices. Let them make small choices.	
OFFER CONSEQUENCES RIGHT AWAY.	Toddlers have short memories. They need consequences right away. This helps them connect the behavior with the consequence.	
IGNORE MISBEHAVIOR.	Ignore the misbehavior.  Stay in the room or area.  Give your child attention as soon as the misbehavior stops!	
USE DISTRACTION.	If you know your toddler is headed for trouble – distract her!	



## Temper Tantrums

Most young children have temper tantrums. Tantrums often occur when children don't know how to handle their feelings. Temper tantrums may decrease as your child's language and coping skills increase.

### Tantrums may happen when a child is:

- Physically upset.  
*Tired, hungry, not feeling well, too warm, etc.*
- Wanting independence  
*"I can do it myself!"*
- Frustrated.  
*Doesn't want to share. Can't do a task.*
- Not given structure.  
*Changing rules, out of routine, etc.*
- Asked to stop what he/she is doing.  
*Stop playing and get dressed.*

*When is your child likely to have a tantrum?*

### Helping your child avoid tantrums:

- Watch your child's signals. You know when your child is tired, hungry, or needs a break.
  - If your child is tired, put her down for a nap.
  - If your child is hungry, give him a meal or snack.
- Give your child choices when possible. Allow your child to do things for themselves when appropriate.
- Don't expect your child to act older than he is. Expect your toddler to get frustrated at times. He is still learning how to do so many things (including how to react when he is frustrated).
- Keep your child's routine when you can.
- Help your child prepare for changes. Tell your child when it is about time to change activities. This allows your child to get ready for something new.

*What can you do to help your child avoid a tantrum?*

## Temper Tantrums

### When a tantrum occurs:

- Try to remain calm. (Even though it's hard!) – Children learn to manage their feelings by watching how adults manage their feelings.
- Talk to your child about his feelings. *"It is upsetting when your toy doesn't work."* This helps your child understand what he is feeling. It may help him learn to express his feelings.
- Distract your child. Offer something else to do.
- Give your child some space. Let your child calm down. Let yourself calm down too!
- Once your child begins to calm down, comfort her. Being out of control can be very scary for a child.
- Sometimes tantrums occur in a public place. Find a quiet place for your child to take a break.

*What will you do when your child has a tantrum?*

### **Each child is different.**

Some like to be held.

Some want to talk.

Some can be  
distracted. Others need  
quiet time. Find what  
works best for your child.

## Teaching Toddlers About Limits

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Children are not born knowing what is allowed and what is not allowed. They learn these rules from you. Setting limits helps your child learn how to act. Limits help keep your child safe and consistent limits build trust. To teach your toddler about limits:

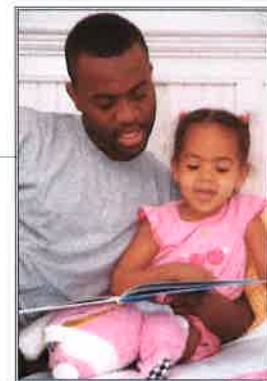
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**Set a few rules.** Most adults set too many rules. It's better to follow 5 rules all of the time than 10 rules half of the time. Rules should:

- Protect the health and safety of your child.
  - Fit your child's development.
  - Make sense to your child.
- 

**Be clear.** Avoid saying things like "be nice" or "be good." Instead, tell your child what you want them to do.

- "Get in your car seat. Then we can go."
  - "Brush your teeth. Then we'll read a story."
  - "Put your toys on this shelf."
- 



### Talk to your child.

- Make eye contact with your child. Move close and get on your child's eye level.
  - Use a firm but kind voice.
  - Say things in a positive way. "Your feet go on the floor, not on the chair."
  - Be trustworthy. Say what you mean. Then do what you said you would do.
  - Be brief. Remind once. Then calmly move on.
- 



### Let your child talk.

- Let your child express his or her feelings. This includes negative feelings.
- Listen when your child talks. Children are more willing to listen when you listen to and value their feelings.

## Why Toddlers Act the Way They Do

	IT HAPPENS WHEN TODDLERS...	WHAT YOUR TODDLER MIGHT BE THINKING...
THROWING TANTRUMS	Can't communicate	<i>"You don't understand what I'm saying. I don't know what to do?"</i>
	Are tired, bored, hungry, frustrated	<i>"I'm so tired. I just can't stop crying."</i>
	Desires are not met/seeking independence	<i>"I really wanted that ball. And no one is giving it to me."</i> <i>"I want to finish what I am doing."</i> <i>"I love this playground. I don't want to leave."</i>
AGGRESSIVE	Want to explore	<i>"I wonder how this would feel if I bit it?"</i>
	Can't communicate	<i>"You aren't listening to me."</i>
	Are frustrated	<i>"I can't get this toy to move the way I want."</i> <i>"You are in my way."</i>
NOT LISTENING OR OBEYING	Want to be independent	<i>"I can do this myself. I want to do it!"</i>
	Want to make his/her own choices	<i>"I want this one, not that one."</i>
	Can't understand what to do	<i>"You said so many things. I don't know what to do."</i> <i>"You said to be good. I thought I was being good."</i>





## Stop! Think. Go.

Being a parent can be hard. Sometimes you react to your child in a way that is not helpful. Try to remember these three steps.



### **Stop!**

Take a deep breath. Take a moment before you react.



### **Think.**

Look at your child. Ask yourself, “Why is he acting like this?” (Is he hungry or sleepy?)

Think about yourself. “Why am I upset right now?” (Am I stressed or feeling bad?)



### **Go.**

Respond to your child. Be loving. Be consistent.

## Stop! Think. Go.

Read this story. Can you find the three steps?

Tonya is a 19-year-old mom. She has a 6-week-old son named Shawn. Shawn was more fussy than usual during his bath. Tonya was struggling to finish the bath. She became very frustrated with Shawn.

Tonya took a deep breath. She realized that she was feeling stressed more than usual. Her family was coming to visit. She wanted to have her apartment clean. There were still dishes in the sink. The trash needed to go out.

Tonya wondered about Shawn being fussy. Then she realized it had been over 4 hours since he ate. Shawn must be hungry.

Tonya decided to worry about cleaning her apartment later. She stopped bath time. She wrapped Shawn in a warm towel. Tonya talked to him gently and sat down to feed him.

How did Tonya **Stop**? Place a checkmark by that part of the story.

How did Tonya **Think**? Circle the words in that part of the story.

How did Tonya **Go**? Underline the words in that part of the story.

*How I will **Stop! Think. Go.** with my child:*