

Healthy Kids

2 YEARS

WHAT YOUR TODDLER CAN DO

At this age your child can probably:
say two to four word phrases...
follow two part commands like: pick up the book and bring it to daddy...
respond to questions with action or behavior that demonstrate
his beginning understanding of language...
understand what you say to him...
have a wide range of emotions...
demonstrate more independence...
show defiant behavior, they are testing limits...
imitate adult and older children behavior...
start to play make believe games...

WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR TODDLER

Take him to parks and playgrounds. Let him run and climb in a safe environment.

Let your child practice dressing and undressing. Start with clothes that pull on and off (like pants with an elastic waist).

Read, play music and sing to and with him. Have fun with rhymes, puns, jokes, funny words, funny sounds and nonsense phrases. The public library has an almost endless supply of children's books and records.

Talk to your child about what you are doing and where you are going. Ask him to name objects for you. Be very descriptive when you talk to him by saying, "See the round, red ball"?

If your child is not yet toilet trained do not force him. He will let you know when he is ready.

Watch television with your child and monitor the type of shows that he sees. Limit TV watching to 2 hours. Per day maximum, including movies and video games. Do not use TV as a reward or punishment.

Don't forget to brush his teeth, at least once a day. Toothpaste is unnecessary. Water is just fine.

NAPS

At this age, many children are beginning to take on 2-3 hour nap around lunchtime instead of two shorter ones.

Each child is different and some may be ready to give up napping entirely around this age.

Unless he's irritable and overtired from lack of sleep don't force your child to take naps every day.

Quiet time should be one to two hours that your child spends reading or playing quietly in his room every afternoon.

This also give you some time to rest which is just as important!

DISCONTINUING THE BOTTLE

Most pediatricians recommend weaning from the bottle by 18 months at the least. Children who remain on the bottle after age 2 often have problems with early dental decay.

POISON CONTROL CENTER

1-800-222-1222

SAFETY

Every month nearly 400 children die of accidents! Most of these can be prevented.

Your child is learning new things every day and you must be aware of what he can do.

He's forever exploring the world around him which means he's opening doors and drawers. All cleaning fluids should be kept in locked cabinets or above his reach. He can unscrew lids on all kinds of containers so you must use safety caps on all medicines and keep all medicines in safe places.

Your child will put everything in his mouth even if it doesn't taste good. If your child does put something poisonous into his mouth, call your doctor or the Poison Control Center immediately.

Do not place a child on the countertop or allow him to play by an open dishwasher containing knives and breakables.

The kitchen can be a dangerous place for your child while you are preparing a meal. If he is "under foot", hot liquids, grease and hot foods spilled on him can cause serious burns! Find something safe for him to do during these times of the day. If your child does get burned put cold water on the burned area immediately. Cover the burn loosely with a bandage or clean cloth. Call your doctor for all burns.

Plastic bags, wraps and balloons should never be left around, as they are common causes of life threatening choking in children. The child should not play with objects that fit through a toilet paper cardboard.

Danger food list: popcorn, peanuts, carrot sticks or other hard uncooked vegetables, meat chunks (meat should be shredded), hotdogs, whole grapes, hard chunky fruit, hard candy or gum.

THUMB SUCKING

Thumb sucking is normal, natural way for a young child to comfort himself. He will gradually give up all the sucking as he matures and finds other ways to deal with stress. Please do not replace thumb sucking with a pacifier.

Over half of children who suck their thumb stop by age 7 months, but the rest can continue to suck their

thumbs anywhere up to age 3 or 4. Dental problems may occur if your child is still sucking his thumb beyond age 4, but are usually corrected with braces at a later age.

You may see changes in the roof of his mouth or in the way the teeth are lining up. Discuss this with your dentist when you take your child for his first visit around age 3.

You may try taking your child's pacifier away at this age, or limit the times he uses it (for instance, at bedtime). If he seems particularly resistant, it is probably advisable to give it back, as the pacifier will cause less problems in the long run than thumb sucking.

TOILET TRAINING

If your child is not toilet trained, do not force him to be. He decides, he should want to do it: (read as poem)

You see, less confusion the child will have
If you let him watch mom or dad
Do not punish or yell to remain dry
He or she, by themselves they should try
He may still not be dry at night
But that is not a bad sight
The same goes for number two
You, dad or mom went through this too

MANAGING BEHAVIOR WITH "TIME OUT"

It is natural for a 2-year-old to explore their environment and test limits. However, she needs to learn that certain behaviors, such as hitting, kicking and biting are unacceptable.

Time out is an excellent way of helping your child learn to control her temper and follow rules established in the family.

To implement time out, you must be consistent, concise and patient. It is recommended that the duration of time out be 1 minute for each year of life—i.e., 2 minutes for a 2-year-old.

You may wish to have a specific place set aside for time out, such as a separate room, a playpen in a neutral area, or a chair in a corner. Be sure the spot you choose has no distractions, such as radio or TV. If your child is

hitting another child because he wants that child's toy, give him an opportunity to stop. Call her attention to the other child and describe how upset that child is feeling. If you're firm as well as gentle, your child may listen and stop hitting. If the hitting continues, pick her up and walk away from the scene. Hold your child firmly on your lap and talk about what just happened.

Remain seated this way until you feel your child is ready to return to her previous activity. If your child is so angry or upset that she can't settle down, or if she refuses to stay on your lap for even a short time, be sure to establish eye contact with her to indicate your seriousness. In a gentle but firm voice say, "You may not get up yet because you are still upset and you are not ready to play with the other children; you need to remain on my lap."

Make your home environment safe so as to limit the number of no's and rules, however once rules are set, stick to them. Do not try to reason with a crying or upset child. Wait until he calms down and is ready to listen. Use simple explanations when talking to him about what just happened.

THINGS YOU MAY BE WORRIED ABOUT

Temper Tantrums

The first order of business in coping with your child's temper tantrum is recognizing that it is his way of manipulating YOUR behavior. If HIS action is successful in getting your attention, he will repeat it. Therefore, "benign neglect" is the most successful response to his tantrum. This may mean putting him in place where he cannot hurt himself or others and walking away.

When the tantrum is over, resume your normal activities. Do not lecture or punish him, as this sends a message that his tantrum did get your attention and may encourage him to become "parent deaf". Try to use distraction when the tantrum takes place in a location where you cannot walk away (i.e., the care or a store).

Do not threaten to take the child home without being prepared to do it! If your child is having too many tantrums, re-examine your reaction to them. Be sure to reinforce good behavior with praise.

HELPING YOUR CHILD LEARN

Many toys can be made at home which are great for your toddler and inexpensive for you.

Two year olds like to stack objects and then knock them down.

Use household items like margarine tubs, empty toilet paper rolls, and tin cans. Decorating them with wrapping paper or markers can make them more interesting for your child.

Once he learns how to stack, add books or other flat objects to build towers and bridges.

Two year olds like to fill an empty container of any kind. Use plastic lids and cut different shapes into them. Let your child have fun filling each container with different objects.

Children this age love music and singing. Teach your child the words to a few nursery rhymes and spend time singing them together.

Emphasize speech and social interaction with reading games and easy table games, including those that involve matching, like Candyland. Encourage make believe games like tea parties or spaceships.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Before her next checkup, your child may:

Say 5-6 word sentences...

Strangers can understand most of the words...

Can say name, age and gender...

Understands locations like in, out, on, under, plays make believe...

Separates easier from parents...

Can take turns in games...

Recognize many objects and pictures...

Take time to be with your child. This can be a frustrating period for both of you. Hold him and tell him you love him!

We encourage you to visit our website at:

www.westside-pediatrics.com