

24-Month Visit



This is an exciting time as older toddlers are using their growing language skills to tell you what they are thinking and feeling. They are also building friendships with other children. And their growing physical skills—walking, running, and climbing—help them explore the world in more adventurous ways. *What do you find most amazing about your child's development at this stage?*

What Your Baby Can Do

I use my body to get me places!

- I can walk up stairs one foot at a time.
- I can walk backward.
- I can balance on one foot, which helps me climb.

I am using language to tell you what I'm feeling and thinking.

- I can make longer sentences: "Mama play truck?"
- My favorite words might be *no*, *me*, and *mine*.
- I may get overwhelmed by my strong feelings and need your help to calm down.

I am getting really good at playing pretend.

- I can use one object to stand in for another. A shoebox may become a bed for my stuffed hippo.
- I laugh at silly things, like the idea that my toy car might go *moo* instead of *beep beep*.
- Sometimes I get scared. I am getting so good at using my imagination but am not always sure what's real and what's pretend.

I want to make friends, but still need help with sharing.

- I like watching other children and might copy what I see them do.
- I may have one or two good friends, but we still mostly play side-by-side, not together.

What You Can Do

Go on a neighborhood walk. Let your child stop to check out what's interesting to her.

Play "island hop." Line up circles of paper on the floor and help your child jump or step from one to the next.

Ask about your child's ideas: "What part of the book did you like?"

Acknowledge feelings and teach social skills at the same time: "I know the doll stroller is your favorite toy, but Thomas would like a turn pushing it."

Help your child recover from a tantrum. Some children respond to being comforted. Others do better with some breathing room in a safe space.

Use pretend play to help your child handle challenging situations. You might act out a story together about meeting a new babysitter.

Let your child lead the play. Ask, "Who should I be? What should I do next?"

Respond sensitively to your child's fears. This builds trust and security.

Give your child regular chances to play with children his age. This builds social skills.

Help your child with conflicts around sharing and turn-taking. Let him know you understand that sharing is hard. Help him find another toy to play with until it's his turn. Use a kitchen timer to help him wait.

As you use the HealthySteps handouts, remember that your child may develop skills faster or slower than indicated and still be growing just fine. Every child develops at his own pace—and your HealthySteps Specialist will be available to answer any questions you may have. Your family's cultural beliefs and values are also important factors that shape your child's development.



24–30 Months: What's on Your Mind

My 26-month-old screams until I give in to her tantrums. What can I do?

Tantrums are common among toddlers. They happen when children have lost their ability to handle a difficult situation such as having something they want denied. Help your child manage frustration by:

- **Acknowledging her feelings.** “I know you are mad that you can't have more ice cream. It's okay to feel mad. When you get calm, we can figure out what to do next.”
- **Giving her an acceptable way to be angry:** “Would you like to curl up on the beanbag with your teddy bear until you feel better? Or, would you like to scream, ‘I'm MAD!’?”
- **When the child has calmed down, offer a choice:** “I know you're hungry for snack. Would you like an apple or a banana?”
- **Using humor.** “Mr. Apple wants you to eat him. Oh no, now Miss Banana is pushing Mr. Apple out of the way so you will choose her instead!” Humor cuts the tension and helps children calm down.

How does your child handle frustration? What calms her down?

What It Means for You:

Toddlers are not confused by learning two languages at once. At first they may say fewer words in each language, but this doesn't mean they have a language delay! Research shows that when you add together the words bilingual toddlers know in both languages, their vocabulary is within the same range as children who speak only one language. Some parents may also worry that children will lose their home language if they hear a different language in their child care setting. Research shows that as long as parents continue to speak their home language regularly, children's home language skills continue to grow.¹

Did you know...

That toddlers who are learning more than one language reach their speech milestones at about the same time as children who speak only one language.²

Spotlight on Learning to Use the Toilet

When and how to help your child learn to use the potty depends on how ready your child is. Your culture—your family's beliefs and values about toilet training—also matters. There is not one “right” way to toilet train your child.

- Most children develop control over their bowels and bladder by 18 months old. This is necessary for children to physically be able to use the toilet. How emotionally ready a child is to use the potty depends on the individual child.³
- Starting to train your child earlier does not mean he will learn to use the potty sooner. Wait until you see signs of readiness (see *Toileting Readiness* handout).
- Finding a toilet training method that works for your family is the key. No matter how you do it, remember that potty training takes time, with many accidents along the way.
- Children with special needs may take longer to learn to use the toilet. They may also need special equipment and a lot of help and patience from you. For questions about toilet learning, talk with your health care provider or early intervention specialist.

- Parents and children each have their own “jobs” to do when it comes to potty training. Parents are responsible for creating a supportive learning environment.

PARENTS:

- Respect that your child is in control of her body.
- Ask your child whether he wants to use the potty or wear a diaper/pull-up each day.
- Teach your child words for body parts, urine, and bowel movements.
- Offer your child the tools—a small potty, potty seat, stool—necessary to succeed at toileting.
- Handle potty accidents without anger.
- Avoid punishment as well as too much praise around toilet use.

YOUR CHILD:

- Decides whether to use the toilet or a diaper/pull-up.
- Learns her body's signals for urine and bowel movements
- Uses the toilet at his own speed.

At this visit the pediatric team will measure your baby's length, weight, and head. They'll listen to your baby's heart and look at her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Your baby will receive any needed immunizations. We will talk about your baby's development and routines like sleeping and eating. We'll also review safety guidelines. And, of course, we'll make time to discuss any questions or concerns you might have!

1. Pearson, B. Z., Fernandez, S. C., Lewedey, V., & Oller, D. K. (1997). The relation of impact factors to lexical learning by bilingual infants (ages 10–30 months) *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 18, 41–58.

2. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/toddler/toilet-training>

3. www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_child_dev/BSRC_When_Families_Speak_fnl.pdf