

# The Growing Years

Healthy Start...where good results begin

Months 13 and 14

## Your Baby Wants You to Know

### How I Grow:

- I can climb onto a low ledge or step.
- I don't like any kind of restraint; I want to explore everything.
- I bang, twist and turn things I can reach.
- I probably stand alone and walk pretty well.
- I can probably stoop and stand up again.
- I'm very interested in small things like crumbs, bugs, and pebbles.
- I spend a lot of time just staring at things; this is one way I learn.
- I may be afraid of the dark.

### How I Talk:

- I am learning simple words.
- I can look in the right directions when you ask, "Where's daddy?" "Where's the ball?" "Where's the kitty?"
- I will respond to my name.
- I will wave bye-bye if you ask.
- I have begun to understand the names of some people, animals, and things that are important to me.
- I can let you know when I want something like a glass of milk.
- I like putting sounds together.
- I really try hard to make you understand me.
- I like to repeat words you say.
- Sometimes I like you to tell me the names of things pictured in a book, but I don't like stories yet.

Continued on page 2.

## Congratulations!

You've made it through the first year. Now you can look back over the last year with pride. You have many memories of the times you have shared with your baby. Remember when you thought her crying would never stop?

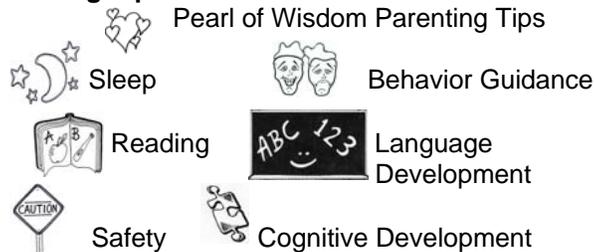
Remember the time she giggled with glee, and you felt good just enjoying her happiness.

Now you and your baby are ready to move into the exciting second year. She will be growing fast and learning a tremendous amount this next year. This year is a very important time for your child. It is:

- A time when your child moves from babyhood into childhood;
- A time for her to learn new skills such as feeding herself;
- A time when curiosity will delight as well as frustrate and tire you.

Guiding and caring for your child this next year will be a challenging and exciting experience. She will need a lot of attention and encouragement from you. You will need a sense of humor, some time for yourself and lots of common sense. Knowing that your child's dramatic and changeable behavior is both normal and temporary can help you during this time. Enjoy and celebrate your child's second year. Remember, this booklet describes a typical child at each age. Each child is special and each child develops at his or her own pace. Perfectly normal children may do things earlier or later than those described in this booklet. If you are concerned about your child's development, see your medical provider.

Watch for these symbols to find articles on the following topics:



## Your Baby Wants You to Know

### Continued

#### What I Have Learned:

- I have learned what "no" means; but may not always respond to it.
- I will empty anything I can get to: dresser drawers, kitchen cabinets, trashcans, and laundry baskets.
- I like to imitate your actions.
- I have learned how to get you and other adults to help me do things.
- I have not yet learned what is dangerous for me to do.
- I sometimes scream just to show you how powerful I am.
- I have learned pat-a-cake and like to show it off to appropriate audiences.
- I can follow simple directions.

#### How I Get Along with Others:

- I love to have people watch me, and I like to hear them clap for me; I'm beginning to do cute things just to get attention.
- Sometimes I show affection with hugs and kisses.
- I still like to keep my mother and father in sight when I'm exploring.
- I'm beginning to adjust to babysitters, but I'm still shy with children my own age.
- I like to have you play with me, but I don't play well with children my own age.
- Sometimes I drop things just to get you to pick them up for me.
- I may have tantrums and throw things when I'm angry.

#### What I Can Do For Myself:

- If you help me, I can hold a cup and drink from it.
- I like taking off my hat, shoes, socks, and pants, but I can't put them back on.
- I can hold a spoon, but I probably can't eat with it yet.
- I like to feed myself with my hands and smear food on my face and everything I can reach.
- I can open and close doors.

#### Play I Enjoy:

- I like rolling toys, stacking and nesting objects.

- I can play alone, but mostly I like to play with you, especially chase-me, catch-me, find-me games, and gentle roughhousing.
- I like putting little things in big things.
- I like to listen to music and dance to it.
- I'm beginning pretend play, like driving a pretend car.

Each child is special and develops at his or her own pace. Perfectly normal children may do things earlier or later than those described in this developmental mailing. If you are concerned about your child's development, see your medical provider.

## The First Three Years Are Crucial To Development

Your child's first three years of life are probably his most important. Dr. Burton White, director of the Center for Parent Education in Newton, Massachusetts writes, "After 17 years of research on how human beings acquire their abilities, I have become convinced that it is to the first three years of life that we should now turn most of our attention. My own studies, as well as the work of many others have clearly indicated that the experiences of these first three are far more important than we had previously thought. In their simple, everyday activities, infants and toddlers form the foundation of all later development." (White 1985; preface to the first edition)

The way your child develops during these important three years depends to a large extent on how you care for him and encourage his development. Parents are children's first and most important teachers.

## Surviving the 12-18 Month Old

There's a lot of talk about the 2-year-old and the 3-year-old, but sometimes we forget what happens between 12 and 18 months. This period will truly test your flexibility, patience, understanding, and sense of humor. Why? Because there is no simple way to make a baby this age explore safely or obey your requests.

Your child loves to explore, and needs to explore in order to learn, but he can easily get into trouble. You will need to watch him



constantly and protect him and your belongings from harm. This is not easy.

Baby-proof your home by removing anything he can hurt himself with and anything he can damage. This may mean storing the coffee table and removing the plants for a while.

With a child this age, it's impossible to keep a home neat and clean.

When accidents do happen, understand that your baby is not trying to be mean. He may be a little over-enthusiastic, but he is not deliberately naughty. Consider the sacrifices you make in your lifestyle today as an investment in your child's growth and happiness. Believe it or not, he will learn to be responsible.



Welcome this adventuresome little human being into your life. When you need some peace of mind and quiet, ask someone to watch your child, put your little one in a playpen for a short time, or take him for a walk or a ride. Take advantage of your child's naptime to get some rest and relaxation for yourself.

## Nutrition: Giving Up the Bottle and Breast

Weaning your child from bottle or breast should be done slowly. Most babies aren't ready to give up the bottle or breast one day and begin drinking from a cup the next.

By now, your child has probably been drinking from a cup for a while. If you've also been giving her milk in a bottle or from the breast, now is the time to give her milk in a cup at mealtimes. Your child will be drinking less milk because she will be eating more solid food. As your child eats more and more solid food, there will be less need for the bottle or breast.



Some children may still want the bottle or breast when they wake up or when they go to sleep. This is OK as long as your baby doesn't go to sleep sucking on a bottle. Sucking on a bottle all night can cause tooth decay.

After a while, your child will forget about the bottle or breast. Don't offer either. If your child

asks, give her the bottle or breast only if she really seems to need it. See if your baby will settle for something to drink instead. Limit the time the child has the bottle or breast. If you let your little one carry a bottle around during the day, it will be harder for her to give it up.

Don't put fruit drinks, soft drinks, fruit punches, or beverages other than milk in a bottle for your child. These drinks are not nutritious. They are mostly sugar and water. When your child is thirsty offer tap water, milk or real fruit juice in a cup. Some toddlers drink from a bottle longer than others. Be patient. Don't force your child to give up the bottle or breast before she seems ready.

## Be Good to Yourself: When You Feel Like Screaming

Raising a Toddler can sometimes make you feel really uptight. Every month, your child is becoming more and more of a challenge. It's hard to be the one who is always responsible. Your body may get tense and you may feel like screaming or hitting something. When you think you just can't stand it one more second, stop. Take "time out." Here are a few "time out" relaxers to try:

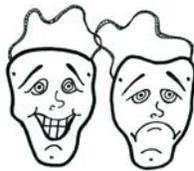
- Close your eyes and take long, deep breaths.
- Make sure your child is in a safe place, then close yourself in a room for just a few minutes until you calm down.
- Tell those around you that you've reached your limit and you need to end the argument right now.
- Ask a friend or relative to watch your child for a short time.
- Look in the front of your telephone book and see if there is a parental stress hotline. Call the number. Keep it posted near your telephone with other emergency numbers.  
*In Anoka County call Children's Home Society and Families Services' Parent Support Program at 763-785-9222.*

When you take time out to handle your stress, you're doing yourself and your baby a big, big favor. Besides saving your child from painful words and actions, you'll be showing your child a good way to handle stress.



## Guidance and Discipline: Foundation and Cooperation

Do you know that by the time your baby is a year old, you have done many things already to help him behave well? Babies who are loved, protected and comforted during their first year feel safe and trusting. They have a close, loving bond with their parents. During the 2nd year, they will want to follow their parents' simple requests. They will also come to imitate their parents' caring behavior. As a result, they will be more likely to accept limits, guidance and discipline during the sometimes-rocky months ahead.



Remember that discipline means helping children grow into responsible adults. Discipline may be the most difficult and the most important part of parenting. It is one way to show love.

Until his 1st birthday, you limited your baby's activities by distracting him, holding him and putting harmful and breakable things out of his reach. Within the next couple months, he will probably begin to understand "no", but don't expect him to respond to it very often yet.

- You can begin now using words to guide and limit him.
- Set a few reasonable rules and stick to them.
- If he disobeys, stop him, tell him the rules again, and why you have them, in simple words.
- Do not punish him. He will learn more quickly and easily with teaching and guidance than he will with criticism and punishment.
- Be patient with him now; it will pay off later.

## Safety: Watch Out for Poisoning

Poisoning most often happens when children have learned to crawl. They get into things and are curious about the world around them, but they have not yet learned what kinds of



things are dangerous. Many things can poison children, including:

- Garden and house plants;
- Colognes, perfumes, hair products and cosmetics;
- Tobacco, food flavorings, and spices;
- Gasoline, insecticides, roach sprays, and powders.

Many kinds of garden and houseplants are poisonous if eaten. Oleander and castor bean are especially dangerous and can be fatal. Some plants cause vomiting; others cause changes in children's heart rate, body temperature, or bowel movements. Know the plants in and around your house. Be careful of plants that have hairy leaves, milky juice or sap or thorny leaves, fruit, or seed pods.

Ordinary items can be extremely dangerous. If a child eats one cigarette, it can kill him. To young children, all colored liquid looks like juice and all white powder looks like sugar. Your curious explorer needs to be protected from these things.

Give your house regular safety checks. Make sure everything dangerous is locked up or out of reach. As toddlers learn to climb, they can open cabinets that they could not reach before. Cover electrical outlets. Keep the telephone number of the nearest poison control center, your doctor's number and other emergency numbers posted close to your telephone. If your child eats any part of a plant or other poisonous substance, call the emergency number. **Contact information for our local Poison Control Center is 1-800-222-1222.** If your child must have emergency treatment, bring a piece of the substance your child has swallowed or the container to the doctor or hospital with you.

## Playing Together

Play is the way children learn. They love to play with their parents and other caring adults. Play with them in ways that don't take away their pleasure of their opportunities to learn. Here are some simple rules of play:

- Watch your child without interrupting, observing his interests and his skill levels. You are learning about how he plays.
- Join in and play at the child's level, letting the child lead. If you try to teach



complicated ideas too quickly, your child might be confused and disappointed.

- After playing for a while at your child's pace, you might introduce a slightly more difficult stage of play. For example, if your child can put together a two-piece puzzle, try one with three pieces. If your child likes building with blocks, you might show him how to combine block play with toy animals.
- Every now and then, stop playing yourself and just watch your child play. Watch how he explores his new activity. After your child learns to do something new himself, you can join in and suggest another new activity.

Remember, your child's attention span is very short. When he decides to stop playing, let him do so.

### **Copy Play: An All-Time Favorite**

You may have seen how your little one likes to copy what you do. She may try to feed you pieces of food the way you feed her. If you accept the food and show you enjoy it, she will laugh gleefully. This makes her feel important.

You will enjoy seeing your child try to copy the things you do: eating, washing, cooking, cleaning and so forth. Your little one will especially enjoy having you play games in which you copy her. When you do, you are being responsive. She likes that because it shows her that what she does is important to you. This helps build her self-confidence. Try copying her hand movements, her play activities, her body movements or her language. She'll giggle happily, and she'll be learning how her own movements look to you.

Mirror play is fun for your little one at this age. She likes to watch you in the mirror while you copy her. She'll enjoy just watching herself in the mirror. She'll laugh at her smiling reflection and may pat or kiss it.

You can use imitation to help your little one learn. When she is learning to drink from a cup, you can drink to show her how. When you want her to pick up toys, you can set an example.

## **Other Imitation Games**

You can have your child build with cans, boxes, or other similar objects. You can have him build designs by imitating what you do. You can build pyramids, trains or towers together.

## **Games for Growing**

### **Building a Tower**

**Purpose of the Game:** To help your child build a tower by himself so that he can understand that things can be combined to make other things.

#### **How to Play:**

- Sit on the floor or at a table by your child.
- Place blocks in a pile in front of you and your child.
- Build a tower with two or three of the blocks.
- Don't knock down the tower. Take it down, one block at a time.
- Ask your child to make another tower.
- If your child doesn't start to make another tower, hand the child a block and see "See, we can put one on top of the other."
- When your child puts one block on top of another say, "You can do it."



(Note: If the tower falls, don't make a big thing out of it.)

Some children cannot do this until they are older. Don't worry if your child needs more time or practice. Be patient and encouraging. Stop the game before your child is bored or frustrated.

### **Pop Goes the Weasel**

**Purpose of the Game:** To help your child listen for a special signal and act on it. Your child will learn to listen for the "POP" and jump up without help when she hears it.

#### **How to Play:**

- Sit facing your child on the floor or on low chairs.
- Sing to your child:  
"All around the carpenter's bench  
The monkey chased the weasel,  
The monkey thought 'twas all in fun!  
POP, goes the weasel."



- As you sing POP, take your child's hands and pull the child up. Then sit your child back down as you complete "goes the weasel".
- Soon your child will listen for the word POP and have fun jumping up without your help.

## Getting In Tune With Your Child Through Music

The first three years of a child's life are a very special time during which parents and children can make beautiful music together and can use this music to build powerful connections with each other. The mutual joy experienced by parents and children as they share musical moments strengthens their bond. Connecting in a musical way just comes naturally.



- Young children love to share music with others. They use sounds, movements and facial expressions to interact.
- A familiar song will help the child feel safe and secure in an unfamiliar setting. In a sense songs become every bit as important and powerful as a beloved teddy bear or blanket.
- Music plays an important role in establishing routines. The same song sung each night at bedtime becomes part of the transition from waking to sleeping.



Throughout the world when parents speak to their young children, they adjust their voices to make them more lyrical, more rhythmic... in short, more musical. When your child responds, a kind of duet happens, reinforcing the love and trust you share.

## Television and Toddlers

Television is not a good babysitter. Most young children would rather be doing other things at this age. Watching television does not give your child the muscle exercise he needs. It does not give him a chance to explore or to be an active learner. Unless you're watching television too, it's also lonely.



Some parents try to have their children watch television to keep them quiet, but these children might become hooked on television. They might sit and watch for hours, even when

they're older. The television makes it hard for your little one to talk to you and to hear you. This can delay the very important development of language skills. Do your toddler a favor and turn off the television except for very special, occasional programs. When he does watch television, watch it with him and talk about what he is seeing. This talking may be the best part of the program for him.



## Pearl of Wisdom

### How Do I Keep Meal Time From Becoming a Battle?

When Bob and I started our family, having quality meal time experiences was something we knew we wanted for our children. But we didn't know the first thing about providing it. I've learned a lot since then, flexibility, perspective, and what's really important. It's a parent's job to provide the food that supports healthy choices for your child's growth and development. And that just might mean that some of your favorite choices will not be in the main stream of your kitchen!

Meal time can have many traditions and definitions. However, common similarities exist. For instance, it's a time to gather around the food representing your family cultural experiences and build bonds and connections that last a lifetime. As adults we go into the early years of parenting remembering the teen/adult table expectations of our family of origin. We don't remember or have a conscious model for how it is with babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and young school children. So, let's do a reality check based on growth and development.

Is it any wonder that as our child becomes a toddler and their growth rate slows, so does their food intake? It's just tablespoons per meal each day. So what goes in is very important, and they want to be just like you. Toddlers want to eat what you eat (with some exceptions like peas!). If you don't want your child to eat junk food, do not have it in the house. If you NEED it, get it while you are out... remember your kids will learn to eat like you do. Now is the time for you to model good nutritional choices.



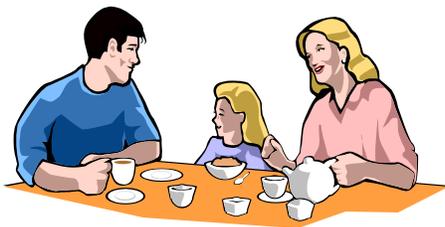
Toddlers are also grazers, so they like to graze through the time that leads up to meal time...let them graze on fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads and crackers. Toddlers do not wait for meal times. They create them. Because these foods are part of a balanced diet, they can be complemented with proteins and other dishes at the table. Toddlers can then come up to the table with their blood sugar balanced, their energy up and a delightful attitude. You can expect your toddler to remain in their seat 5 to 10 minutes exploring their meal and engaging you.

Meal time is not about YOU gathering the family. It is about the common need for the family to eat. It is the meal that gathers the family. It is important to have items at every meal that you know each child likes. Your job is to provide the food, and theirs is to eat it.

Happy Parenting  
*Vicki Thrasher Cronin*

For the complete article, visit our website at [www.HealthyStartAnokaCounty.org](http://www.HealthyStartAnokaCounty.org)

Vicki Thrasher Cronin is a Parent Educator and Early Childhood Educator. This article was reprinted with permission from Ready 4 K.



## Questions and Answers

**Q. I am new to this country, and I don't speak English well. Should I talk to my son in my own language or in the little bit of English I know?**

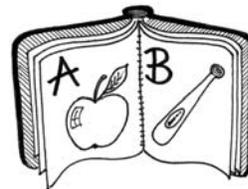
**A.** Children learn language best from someone who speaks it well. Since you can speak your native language well, I suggest you speak to your son in your native language. Help him learn it as well as he can. Later he can learn English from someone who speaks English more easily after he has become skilled in your language.

## Books to Enjoy with Your Toddler

- Who's That Scratching At My Door? By Amanda Leslie
- Duckie's Rainbow by Frances Barry
- Ten Rubber Ducks by Eric Carle
- Jump, Frog, Jump! by Robert Kalan
- Swimmy by Leo Lionni

Research shows that children get ready to read years before they enter school. You can help your child learn important skills now so they can become good readers.

- Begin reading books early.
- Make book-sharing time special time-just you and your child.
- Let your child see you reading.
- Visit your public library.
- Children who enjoy being read to will want to learn how to read.



## Sources

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### Suggested Reading

For more information on development and care of toddlers, we suggest the source books as well as:

*Baby Learning Through Baby Play: A Parent's Guide for the First Two Years* by Ira J. Gordon (1970). St. Martin: Griffin (paperback).

*Child of Mine: Feeding With Love and Good Sense* by Ellyn Satter (1983). Menlo Park, California: Bell Publishers.

*Your Baby & Child (from Birth to Age Five)* by Penelope Leach (1994). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

*Toddlers and Parents* by T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. (1989). New York: Dell Publishing.

Zero To Three Press, 2000 M St, NW, Ste 200, Washington D. C., [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

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This mailing gives equal time and space to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." When we use he or she, we include all children. Fathers, partners, and other significant adults all play an important role during pregnancy and in childrearing. When we specifically refer to "fathers," the information may also apply to partners and/or other significant adults involved in childrearing.

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