

The Growing Years

Healthy Start... where good results begin

Months 21 and 22

Your Toddler Wants You to Know

How I Grow:

- I'm becoming a little less self-centered.
- I love to run, throw and climb.
- I can walk upstairs with both feet on each step holding a rail.
- I am probably using one hand more than the other.
- If you fold a paper, I can imitate you.
- I can obey about three directions.

How I Talk:

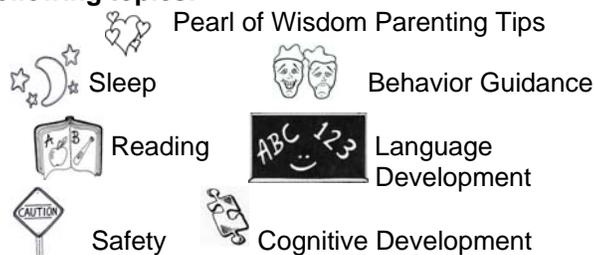
- I can say about 20 words.
- I like to have you sing me rhyming songs.
- I like to look at books, but if you don't watch me, I will tear them up.
- I try to follow directions.
- I like to hear stories.
- I can ask for things by name.
- I can point to five body parts on my doll or myself.
- I can help with simple tasks.

What I Have Learned

- I'm interested in very tiny things, especially bugs. Watch what I put in my mouth.
- I can recognize and name people I know from photographs.
- I can put together a simple picture puzzle, if it has only two or three large pieces.
- I love to build and knock down, empty, pull apart, feel, twist and squeeze everything I get my hands on.
- I am really curious about people, animals, birds, and everything that I see.
- I like listening to nursery rhymes and, if you help me, I can repeat them.
- I can recognize a picture in a book even when the book is upside down.
- I can build a tower of four or five blocks.

Continued on page 2.

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



Your Toddler Is Becoming More Sociable: But You Are Still Number One

You know by now that the very best plaything your toddler can have is a caring adult. In other words, she needs someone like you who will play with her and enjoy her explorations.

Your toddler will be watching other children playing and may even follow after them. At this age, though, your child is more interested in you, her own play, and her own toys than in other children. Poking, touching and pushing are her ways of showing interest in other children. She may develop an interest in a special friend her own age if that friend is with her a lot. You will notice your child will smile more and fight less with this friend than with a child who is a stranger.

From 2 to 3 years of age, your child will become more social and will enjoy playing with other children. Groups of children play best when they have the same toys or materials. They will fight less if there are two blue trucks the same size or two dolls instead of one doll and one truck.

Play is the main activity of childhood. It is the way children learn about themselves, their family and their world. Let your child play alone sometimes, but also make time



to play with her. You'll learn about her, she'll learn about you and you will be helping her to grow.

Toddler Talk: Help Me Play With Another Child

I may push or poke to say "hello." You can show me how to touch gently or use words such as "hello". Stay near me while I play with her so I can come back to you quickly. Don't force me to share my favorite toys. Help me look for toys that my friend can play with. I still may take the toys away. This isn't because I want to play with them, I'm just not sure I want the other child to have them. If we go to another house to visit, let me take a few of my own toys with me. I'll feel better if I know I can take them back home.

Your Toddler Wants You to Know (Continued)

How I Get Along With Others:

- I'm developing a mind of my own, so I don't respond so quickly to requests and often do the opposite of what I'm asked.
- I can understand what's mine and what's yours.
- I try to tell people what I have seen and done.
- I'm beginning to be sympathetic to other people and I can sometimes cooperate with others.
- I can show love to you and other favorite people.
- I'm becoming easier to get along with, but I still get demanding at times.

What I Can Do For Myself

- I can wash and dry my hands.
- I can hold a cup and drink from it.
- I may be able to put on my shoes, but I still can't lace them, and I may put them on the wrong feet.
- I may be able to put things where they belong.
- I can pick up and put away my toys if you will help me.
- I like to sweep, dust, mop, hammer, vacuum, shovel, scoop, or rake because I have seen you do these things.

Play I Enjoy:

- I like to fit things together.
- I enjoy using a toy telephone.
- I like to pull things around in a wagon or cart.
- I like playing tag with you or an older child.
- I can put rings on a spindle toy.
- I like to pretend, like wrapping up my doll or stuffed animal and putting it to bed.
- My feelings are easily hurt by criticism.
- I am continually testing the limits you set and trying to get my own way.

Child Care for Children

Do children who are cared for in child care centers or child care homes develop more poorly than those who are cared for at home by a parent? This question concerns many parents. Dr. Joanne Curry O'Connell of Northern Arizona University studied this question. She concluded: "A review of research evidence leads to this conclusion: no consistent, adverse effect of out-of-home child care has been found by over a dozen child development investigators." (O'Connell 1983, p 68). In other words, as far as we can tell, children cared for outside their home generally do as well as those cared for at home by parents. Some children develop better in out-of-home child care, some do better with in-home parents.

What is best for your child? That depends on your child and the quality of out-of-home child care available to you. It is important that you choose child care carefully.

Choosing Child Care

If you want to stay home to raise your child and are able to do so, then you certainly should. You and your child will gain from your time together. However, if you want to (or have to) work outside the home, then staying home with your baby might be a mistake. This is an important decision. Another important decision is choosing a caregiver.

There are two important questions to ask yourself before you decide on a caregiver. First, is she or he very fond of your child? Toddlers need lots of loving and attention.



Second, will she or he be available during the hours you need in the months to come? Toddlers need to form close bonds with people, and can suffer if they have too many caregivers.

Children do best when their parents are happy and when they have a caring, sensitive caregiver at home and in child care.

You may worry about leaving your child in someone else's care. The more you trust your caregiver, the more secure you will feel. Here are some things to look for as you decide on a child care arrangement.

Does the caregiver:

- Have child-rearing attitudes similar to you?
- Understand what children can do and want to do at different stages of growth?
- Spend time holding, playing with and talking to your child?
- Have enough time to look after all the children in his or her care?
- Welcome visits from parents?

Does the home or center have:

- A clean and comfortable look?
- Equipment that is safe?
- Nutritious meals and snacks, if provided by the caregiver?

Are there opportunities for children:

- To be held, cuddled, rocked, smiled at, talked to?
- To relax and rest when they need to do so?
- To walk and explore safely?
- To play with things that develop their senses of touch, sight, and hearing?
- To learn language? Does the caregiver talk to the children, name things, describe what she or he is doing, respond to the children's actions?

For more information on choosing a child care provider please go to our website www.HealthyStartAnokaCounty.org.

Putting Words Into Actions

You can help your little one learn words by talking about what you and he are doing. If you're making cookies, and he's watching, tell



him about what you're doing. For example, you might say, "First we sift the flour and put it in the bowl. Now we add the eggs. Plop! Plop! Now we mix and mix and mix. Then we'll scoop cookies out, plop them in the pan, and pop them into the oven." Your child will hear the words "sift" which is very hard to say, "plop," "mix," "scoop," and "pop." These are fun words to hear and fun to say. Use words with your child just as you use toys. None of us grows and develops in only one area at a time. Your child uses his eyes to watch your actions, his mouth and tongue to put words to your action, and his small and large muscles to imitate your actions. Putting words and actions together can help him develop all these skills.

Your toddler's attention span is very, very short. A few minutes of the cooking lesson, and he'll be up and away to bigger, better things. Remember, too, that hot water, sharp kitchen utensils and heavy objects can hurt your child. Always watch him when he is in the kitchen.

Helping At Home

Help your child become a proud working partner in your family. Even young children can help with some household jobs. In helping, your child will begin to learn responsibility and will develop pride in being useful. Begin by helping your child with the task. Keep each task simple. Tell your child what a good job he's done. Here are some tasks a toddler can do:

- Pick up unused toys and put them in proper places.
- Put books and magazines on the shelf.
- Put napkins and silverware on the table.
- Clean up the floor after eating.
- Help wipe up after accidents.

Remember, don't expect more than is reasonable from your toddler. Do expect him to help, and do praise his accomplishments.

Happy Routines

If you can do the same things in the same order every day, your child is likely to feel more safe, comfortable and secure. He'll know what's coming next. He'll know what he should do.



Here are some simple routines that are not too difficult to stick to.

Have quiet time and bedtime at the same time everyday. You can help your toddler get used to routines by telling him that when he has finished lunch, it will be time to rest, or that after you read one more book, it will be time for bed. Other routines that you can set up are:

- Getting your toddler dressed as soon as he gets up in the morning.
- Brushing his teeth after breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Washing his hands before he eats.
- Picking up his toys before dinner (or at some other convenient time).
- Saying good night to every member of the family, including dogs, cats and assorted toys before going to bed.

You can help your child learn about routines and time by letting him know that the mail comes at 10 a.m. or we go to the grocery store on Saturday or mommy or daddy comes home at 6 p.m.

Injury Prevention

Your toddler is becoming a real explorer. She climbs, runs, walks and rarely sits. You need to protect her in special ways.

There are three major dangers you can help your child avoid.



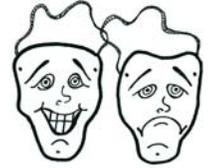
Poison: Your toddler explores with her mouth. Everything goes in her mouth. Keep all medicines and household products away from your child. All medicines should have safety caps. Keep the poison control center telephone number (1-800-222-1222) and your clinic's telephone number near your telephone.

Automobiles: Always put your child in a child safety seat and buckle both the seat and your toddler. When a car stops suddenly, children and adults continue moving until something stops them. Do not hold your child on your lap. When you are taking your child to and from the car, make sure you are holding her hand. Toddlers are unpredictable and may quickly run in front of a car.

Water: Many children love to play in water. Never leave your toddler alone in the bathroom or tub. Your child can drown in a tub or a toilet bowl. Never leave your child alone near water for even a moment. Even if your child is learning to swim, he is not water safe. Water wings, or other swimming aids do not make him safe alone in water. If you have a pool, there should be a four-foot fence around it with a self-closing latch door.

Guiding Behavior In Public

Have you ever noticed that your toddler seems to be her naughtiest when you really want her to behave well? You're not alone.



Although there are no perfect solutions to this very common dilemma, the suggestions below may help:

- Be reasonable. Don't expect too much. Try to avoid situations that toddlers are too young to handle. The "What's it Like" section in each developmental mailing may give you clues about what is reasonable to expect at each age level. If your toddler fits the descriptions for months 21 and 22, you know, for example, that she likes to do things her own way, doesn't want to share toys and may tear books. This may mean that play with age mates should be brief and visits to the library well supervised.
- Prepare. Toddlers this age can be disobedient and defiant, so be sure you have explained to your toddler before you go out what you will be doing together, how you want her to behave and what will happen if she misbehaves. You could tell her how you will reward her good behavior. The reward could be a hug or a promise to tell her a story on your way home. If you expect her to be bored, hungry, or restless, take food or toys to keep her entertained.
- Follow through. If your toddler is behaving well, compliment her on her good behavior. If she is misbehaving, try to keep calm (not easy to do) and follow through on the consequences you had discussed with her. Try not to embarrass her or yourself in front of others. If possible, take her aside and tell her in simple words how you want her to behave. Don't give in to unreasonable



demands. If you do, you are rewarding undesirable behavior, and she will be more likely to repeat it.

- Redirect. When your toddler misbehaves, suggest a new activity. Telling her "no" or "don't" is seldom enough. In the supermarket, for example, if she whines or fusses, ask her to help you find her favorite cereal or the apples, or talk to her about what you are doing.
- Have patience. No one said parenting was easy. Remember, your good guidance practices now will pay off later in making life easier and more enjoyable for both you and your child.

Nutrition: Chewing Isn't Easy When You Don't Have All Your Teeth



By now, your toddler has some but not all of her baby teeth. She probably will not have all 20 baby teeth until she is about 2 to 2 ½ years old.

Your child doesn't have enough teeth to chew well, so she might swallow large pieces of food that could cause her to choke. Choking on food is a real danger for toddlers. For this reason, grind meat and cut all food into small, bite-size pieces. The food toddlers choke on most often are; hot dogs, candy, nuts, and grapes. Hot dogs aren't a very nutritious food. If you do give them to your child, cut them in quarter circles. Never cut them in to full circles as they can get stuck in your child's throat. Cut grapes in quarter sections, and break nuts into small bits. Don't give your toddler candy very often. When you do, be sure it is in small pieces that can't possibly get stuck in your child's throat.

Other foods that sometimes cause choking are popcorn, chewing gum, and lollipops. Since these foods are not very nutritious, don't give them to your toddler.

Be Good To Yourself: Give Yourself A Pat on the Back

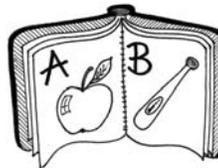
Sometimes when life gets tough, we forget to look at the good things about ourselves. But we need to give ourselves credit, even if no one else does.

- Praise yourself often, not just for moving mountains, but for climbing molehills, too. Say, "Good for me! I got through the day without yelling at anybody!"
- Talk to yourself when you know a tough situation is coming. Say, "I know I can get through this job interview. After all, I did call and make the appointment, and I've written a good application letter."
- Look at the good side. Say, "I didn't finish cleaning the whole house, but I got the downstairs done, and that's the hardest part."

Remember, no one is a perfect parent, daughter, husband or wife. Give yourself credit for all the good parts about you, and work on improving the other parts.

Toddler Steps Toward Reading

Toddlers love activity and the chance to practice their growing language skills. Involve toddlers in the reading experiences by asking questions and having them expand on the stories you read together. Toddlers who talk about the illustrations, characters, actions and other aspects of books step up the development of their language and reading skills.



Read to your toddler twenty minutes everyday. Don't save reading for a time when you have twenty minutes uninterrupted; anyone raising a toddler knows that time will not ever come! Instead find a few moments throughout the day to read together.

Read alphabet books. Use alphabet books to increase your child's awareness of the letters in the alphabet. Most children use the letters in their name as the foundation for letter recognition and writing; focus on the letters that make up their name while reading the alphabet books and expand to include the names of other favorite people or things.

Read books with rhythm, rhyme, and repetition. These books are easy for your child to memorize, and your toddler will be able to pretend to read them to you. Toddlers love the predictability that comes from hearing the same



story, song, or refrain again and again. Read nursery rhymes to enhance their phonemic awareness. Many nursery rhymes can be set to music, using different notes for each syllable.

Books you and your toddler may enjoy include:

Time for Bed by Mem Fox

Hi, Pizza Man! By Virginia Walter

Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? by Eric Carle

We all Went On Safari by Laurie Krebs

Dogs Don't Wear Sneakers by Laura Numeroff

Feathers for Lunch by Lois Ehlert

Play and Playthings

We talk a lot about play and toys in this series. We do this for many reasons, but probably the most important reason is that parents and children enjoy play so much. Playing times are special. They help you and your child share love and happiness. But play is not just a way to have fun. It is also one of the best ways we know to help children learn and grow.

When they play, toddlers learn how to use their bodies. They learn about the way things look, feel, stack, fall and fit together. Playing games helps them to figure things out and later helps them to share and cooperate. All this will help your child to become the friendly, intelligent and successful person you want him to be.



Set things up to encourage play. Keep a drawer of safe things for your child to play with in rooms you use a lot so he can play and be near you. Keep a box of tub toys in the bathroom for bath-time play. Change the things you let your toddler play with from time to time to give him variety. Remember, the best toys can be things you already have around the house, like plastic containers, wooden spoons, pans, empty cardboard cartons, pillows, and old magazines.

Homemade Toys That Teach A Simple Puzzle

Purpose: This toy will help your child learn about shapes and sizes. It will also help him learn how to solve problems and to fit things together.

Materials:

- Stiff paper

- Colorful, simple pictures from magazines or a calendar
- Child-safe glue (check the bottle to be sure it says nontoxic or child-safe)

Making the Toy: Glue the picture to the stiff paper and cut it into two or three pieces.

Playing: Help your child learn to fit the pieces together to make the picture. To make this more challenging, cut the picture into more pieces.

Games for Growing

Hard and Soft

Purpose of the Game: To teach your child to group objects by touch and learn words to describe the way things feel.

How to Play:

- Sit on the floor or at a table by your child.
- Place hard and soft things together in a pile. For example, you may use blocks, bottles, or rocks as hard objects, and soft toys, cotton balls or pieces of cloth as soft objects. Show her how to tell which things are soft and which are hard.
- Ask your child to place the hard things in one pile and the soft things in another.
- If your child cannot do this, take the hard things and say, "These are hard. Put them in one pile."
- Put the objects all together in one pile and repeat the game.

Other Grouping Games

You can ask your child to group fuzzy and smooth objects separately, or sticky and clean objects, or wet and dry, hot and cool, heavy and light things. Change the game to keep it fun for your child and you.

Paper Folding

Purpose of the Game: To teach your child to imitate and to use his small muscles.

How to Play:

- Sit in any relaxed position.
- Fold a piece of paper a few times in front of your child.
- Give your child a new sheet of



paper. Ask your child to fold it. If your child doesn't fold it, fold your sheet again step by step. Ask your child to fold as you do.

- When this is done, get new sheets of paper and do the same thing again.



Pearl of Wisdom Which One is You?

"Two A's are good," the small boy cried
His voice is filled with glee.
His father very bluntly asked.
"Why didn't you get three?"

"Mom, I've got the dishes done,"
The girl called from the door.
Her mother very calmly said,
"And did you sweep the floor?"

"I've mowed the grass", the tall boy said.
"And put the mower away."
His father asked him with a shrug,
"Did you clean off the clay?"

The children in the house next door
Seem happy and content.
The same things happened over there
But this is how they went.

"Two A's are good," the small boy cried
His voice was filled with glee.
His father proudly said, "That's great!
I'm glad you live with me."

"Mom, I've got the dishes done,"
The girl called from the door.
Her mother smiled and softly said,
"Each day I love you more."

"I've mowed the grass," the tall boy said,
"and put the mower away."
His father answered with much joy,
"You've made my happy day."

Children deserve encouragement
For tasks they're asked to do.
If they're to lead a happy life,
So much depends on you.

-Anonymous

Questions and Answers

Q. Soft teeth run in my family. Is there anything I can do to protect my child's teeth?

A. Babies aren't born with soft teeth. Most dental problems in children under 3 years are caused by baby bottle tooth decay. Many parents don't realize that formula, juice, and even milk contain sugar. Cavities can begin when a baby carries a bottle around all day, nurses constantly or is allowed to sleep with a bottle. To protect your child's teeth:

- Feed only formula, milk or water from a bottle.
- Limit bottle use to feeding time. Sleeping times are not feeding times. Do not put your child to bed with a bottle. If your child needs comforting at bedtime, put him to sleep with a favorite blanket or stuffed animal, or rub his back until he is calm and can drop off to sleep.



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Suggested Reading

For more information on development and care of toddlers we suggest the source books. For information about books to read with toddlers, we recommend:

A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading by Nancy Larrick (1982), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Westminster Press.

The New Read Aloud Handbook by James Trelease (1989), New York: Penguin Books, (paperback).

Choosing Books for Children by Betsy Hearne (1981), New York: Delacorte.

For Reading Out Loud: A Guide to Sharing Books with Children by Margaret Kimmel and Elizabeth Segel (1983), New York: Delacorte.

Remember, this developmental mailing 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 mailing. If you are concerned about your child's development, see your medical provider.

This developmental 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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