

your child @TM

highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

birth



Welcome to a whole new world! No parent is ever really ready for the changes that come with having a new baby. It's a wonderful time, but it's also a challenging time, full of new worries, new feelings and new experiences. Just remember, ask for help when you need it and don't expect everything to be perfect.

your child's health

take note...

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that you tell your doctor if you notice any of the following during your baby's second, third, and fourth weeks of life:

- Sucks poorly or feeds slowly.
- Doesn't blink in bright light.
- Doesn't focus and follow movement of a nearby object.
- Rarely moves arms and legs, seems stiff.
- Seems very loose in the limbs or floppy.
- Lower jaw trembles constantly, even when the baby is not crying or excited.
- Doesn't respond to loud sounds.

Well Visits

Before leaving the hospital, your baby should have a complete physical exam. Unless there are health problems, your baby should have her first well visit sometime during her first month, and another one at eight weeks. If you are concerned about your child's health in between visits, call her doctor.

Sleep

Your infant's sleep will be disorganized during her first six weeks, because she doesn't yet know the difference between day and night. At six weeks, her total sleep may be about 16 hours per day, including a stretch of four to six hours per night. You can help to soothe your newborn to sleep by:

- Swaddling her securely in a blanket or cloth.
- Letting her suck on a pacifier, bottle, hand or wrist.
- Rocking or swinging your baby gently.
- Giving her a soft massage.

Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- Hepatitis B

SIDS

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) was formerly known as crib death. To reduce the risk of SIDS:

- Always place your baby on his back to sleep during naptime and at nighttime, and remind other caregivers to do so as well.
- Keep toys and other small objects out of your baby's crib to prevent choking.
- Make sure the mattress and bedding are firm and flat and fit perfectly into the crib without gaps between the crib walls.
- Do not place your infant to sleep on soft surfaces such as waterbeds, sofas, soft mattresses, pillows, comforters or sheepskins. Also, keep toys and stuffed animals out of the crib. They can smother your baby.

- Dress your baby in as many layers of clothing as you would wear and keep the temperature in your baby's room comfortable for an adult.
- Do not smoke around your baby.

Nutrition

Breast milk is the ideal food for infants, however, formula is an acceptable and nutritious alternative. If you want to breastfeed and need support, talk with your doctor.

According to the AAP, breastfed babies generally eat more frequently than bottle-fed infants. Some breastfed newborns will need to nurse every two hours, others every three. Formula-fed infants will need to eat every three to four hours. Remember to burp him after each feeding.

Cleaning and Bathing

Sponge Baths

Your infant's umbilical stump will fall off 10 to 20 days after birth, leaving a small wound that will take a few days to heal. Until then, wipe your baby's body with a clean, warm, wet washcloth instead of using a bathtub. Be sure to regularly wipe her face and hands and carefully clean her genitals.

Tub Baths

After the umbilical stump heals, you can give your baby a traditional water bath in the kitchen sink or a plastic baby tub. To bathe a newborn:

- Fill the tub with two to three inches of warm water. (Double-check the water temperature before placing your baby in the tub.)
- Gradually slip the baby into the tub using your hand to support her head and neck.
- When using the sink, seat your baby on a washcloth and hold her under the arm to prevent slipping.
- Pour cups of bath water over her instead of water directly from the spout.
- Wash her with a gentle hair and body soap.
- Wrap your baby in a towel and pat her dry.

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Sources: *Your Baby's First Year* and *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shelov, MD, FAAP, editor in chief; *Understanding Children*, Civitas and Richard Saul Wurman; *KidBasics*, Civitas; *Healthy Sleep, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD.

Civitas thanks **Parents as Teachers**, an international early childhood parent education and family support program, for their ongoing support.

your child @TM birth

your child's health (continued)

Jaundice

Many newborns have a jaundiced or yellowish skin color, which may last the first week or two — until the newborn's liver begins to remove bilirubin from the blood. Your baby should be examined for jaundice at the hospital. If she has been diagnosed with jaundice at the hospital, it is important that she be examined again between three and five days of age. If you have any concerns, you should call your baby's doctor.

Skin Care: Sun Exposure

Do not expose your baby to direct sunlight. The risks or

benefits of sunscreen use are not yet known for babies younger than six months of age. If your baby needs to be outdoors, discuss sunscreen use and other options with your pediatrician.

Skin Care: Cradle Cap

What it is: A dry, flaky, harmless scalp condition that usually goes away on its own after several months.

Treatment: Washing with water or gentle baby shampoo and brushing the hair regularly can help. If the problem continues, talk to your doctor about special shampoo to treat the condition.

your child's growth and development

The AAP says that your infant should achieve these milestones by the end of his first month:

Movement:

- Makes jerky, quivering arm thrusts.
- Brings hands up to eyes and mouth.
- Moves head from side to side while lying on stomach.
- Has strong reflex movements.

Eyesight:

- Focuses 8 to 12 inches away.
- Eyes wander and occasionally cross.
- Prefers black and white or high contrast patterns.
- Prefers human faces to patterns.

Hearing:

- Has fully matured hearing.
- Recognizes some sounds.

Smell and Touch:

- Recognizes the scent of his mother's breast milk.

nurturing your child

Take Care of Yourself. Becoming a parent is overwhelming and exhausting. Make sure you get plenty of support from friends, family or community groups. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Call your doctor if your "baby blues" last more than two weeks.

Follow Your Baby's Cues. As you respond to your baby's needs, you will learn what her different cries mean and how to soothe her. If she likes what you're doing, you know you are getting it right! If she does not, experiment. After all, this is a learning process for both you and your baby.

Understand and Respond to Your Baby's Needs. You cannot spoil an infant, so be sure to go to him whenever he fusses or cries. When you answer him, he learns that you understand his signals and are going to take care of his needs.

Talk, Sing, Read and Play with Your Baby. Just as a baby's body depends on parents for food to grow, his brain depends on experiences to grow and develop. Talk, sing, read and play with your baby right from the start to help him learn.

your child's safety

take note...

Never place a baby in the front seat of a car with an activated air bag. The strength of the air bag could kill your baby.

General Safety

- Never leave your baby unattended on any surface above the floor.
- Don't attach pacifiers or other objects to your baby or the crib with a cord, string or necklace of any type.
- Always support the baby's head and neck when moving her body.
- Never shake your baby.
- Call **1-877-KIDS-NOW** to see if your baby qualifies for free or low-cost health insurance.

In the Car

The law requires that your baby ride in:

- A properly installed, federally approved car seat every time she is in the car.
- The rear facing position.
- The back seat.
- For more information, go to www.fitforakid.org.

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highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

2 months

Learning begins at birth and your child at two months has been learning a lot! He is already able to smile at you and tell you by crying if he's hungry, cold or scared. At this stage, the most important factors in his healthy development are loving relationships with warm, responsive and dependable adult caregivers. It's essential to make the most of this critical period in his growth by spending lots of time holding, cuddling, playing and reading with your child.

your child's health

Make sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date. Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough)
- Hib (protects against meningitis)
- IPV (polio injection)
- Hepatitis B
- Prevnar (pneumococcal)

The Well Visit

At two months, your baby should have another well visit.

- Bring notes with you about your baby's habits, such as sleeping and feeding, and ask any questions you may have at your visit.
- Until your baby is three months old, always call the doctor if he develops a rectal temperature of 100.4° F or higher.
- Your baby's next well visit will probably take place at four months. Contact the doctor if issues arise between visits about your child's health and development or illnesses.

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, at two months, let your doctor know if your baby:

- Doesn't notice his hands.
- Doesn't smile at the sound of your voice.
- Doesn't follow moving objects with his eyes.
- Doesn't respond to loud noises.

Sleep

Your baby needs about 16 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period to maintain healthy development. Your baby should be starting to have one long stretch of nighttime sleep (between four to six hours). However, she is still too young to have a set daytime nap schedule.

- Encourage nighttime sleep by putting your baby to sleep between 6 and 10 pm, turning off lights and keeping the area quiet.
- Always put your baby to sleep on her back to reduce the risk of SIDS.

Nutrition

At this age, your baby is not ready for cereal or any solid foods. Until your baby is six months, provide only breast milk or formula. Your baby will generally take four to five ounces per feeding, or 20 to 25 ounces per day.

safety tip...

Never shake or spank your baby. Shaking can cause brain damage.

Colic

Colic usually sets in between two weeks and three to four months of age. An infant with colic is an otherwise healthy baby who cries for more than three consecutive hours at a time, three days a week, for three weeks or more.

To console a colicky baby, try the following:

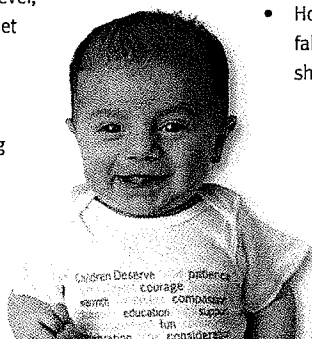
- Let your baby suck on a pacifier, bottle, hand or wrist.
- Rock or swing your baby.
- Take her for a drive or stroll.
- Swaddle your baby by wrapping her securely in a blanket.
- Try to stay calm, since your baby can sense when you are stressed.
- Create shushing sounds or white noise by running a hair dryer, a fan, a vacuum cleaner, the shower/water faucet, or a recording of wind or surf.
- Hold your baby on her left side or stomach until she falls asleep. Be sure to roll her onto her back once she is asleep.

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your child @TM

2 months

your child's growth and development

safety tip...

Keep small objects that present a choking hazard away from your baby. (Anything that fits in a toilet paper tube is too small!)

Read to Your Child from Day One. When you read together, you help your child learn to love books — and you!

- Introduce cloth or board books to explore.
- Choose books with bright colored pictures, familiar objects or photos of babies.

Play Together Right from the Start. Play allows your baby to explore and express herself, connect with other people and make sense of her surroundings.

- Make silly faces, tickle her body. You are your baby's first toy.
- Slowly move objects in front of your baby and watch as he tracks them with his eyes.

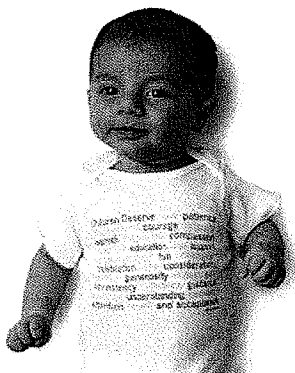
Sing Songs. Your voice will soothe your baby and the sounds and rhythms will teach her about words and language.

- Repeat your favorite songs and nursery rhymes again and again.
- Play fun music at play time, or relaxing rhythms to calm your baby at bedtime.

Talk to Your Baby. Babies learn by listening to you talk, so the more you talk to your baby, the better.

- Talk about what you see and what you are doing during everyday activities.
- Watch as he communicates through his coos, smiles, laughs and cries.
- Respond to your baby's sounds and give him time to respond to yours.

nurturing your child



Take Care of Yourself, So You Can Take Care of Your Baby. Your moods and lack of energy can affect your baby as well.

- Let your doctor or a friend know if you have signs of post-partum depression, including feelings of sadness, anxiety or restlessness.
- Take breaks from your baby to rest and re-fuel.

Create a Predictable World for Your Baby. Providing routines lets your baby know that he can depend on you, allowing him to spend less energy fussing over his needs and more time learning.

- Create routines for your child to follow every day — children thrive on consistency.
- Build routines that suit your style. Before bedtime you can: read a book, give a bath, talk to stuffed animals, hug and kiss, say "I love you."

Provide a Warm and Loving Environment. A baby's ability to learn depends upon her emotional well-being; a baby who is content and comfortable has an easier time learning about the world.

- Tune in and respond to your baby. An infant cries only to let you know that she needs your help. Since you cannot spoil an infant, pick up your baby whenever she cries.
- Show her you care about her by making eye contact (at about 8 to 12 inches away), holding her close or rocking her in your arms.

remember...

Discipline is never appropriate for infants. They have no control over their actions and therefore should not be held accountable.

your child's safety

Call 1-877-Kids-Now to see if your baby qualifies for free or low-cost health insurance.

In the Car

Your baby must ride in a car seat that is:

- Rear-facing.
- In the backseat (ideally, in the middle of the backseat).
- Properly attached or secured.

remember...

Never leave your baby unattended anywhere near water. Babies can drown in less than one inch of water.

In the Crib

- Empty the crib of blankets, pillows, and stuffed animals — any of these can smother the baby.
- Avoid devices that maintain sleep positions, since many of these have not been tested for safety and none have been proven to decrease the risk of SIDS.
- Keep your baby's room at a temperature that's comfortable for adults — don't make it too warm.

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highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

4 to 6 months



By about four to six months, your baby will be cooing and gurgling, wiggling and kicking, rolling over and trying to sit up by herself. Remember to talk, sing and read to your baby every day, and let her use soft and colorful books as toys. Your loving relationship with her will make all the difference in her learning.

your child's health

The Well Visit

At four months, your baby may have another well visit. Prepare for the visit by observing your baby's habits and making notes about questions you may have. Bring supplies with you such as books or toys to entertain him, a blanket to keep him warm, and diapers and wipes to change him.

- When your baby becomes used to spoon feedings, add single ingredient smooth or pureed foods, like carrots, peas or apples, or "stage one" baby foods in the jar. To make sure your baby is not allergic to a specific food, be sure to wait for at least two to three days before starting another new food.

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, at four months let your doctor know if your baby:

- Doesn't seem to respond to loud noises.
- Doesn't reach for and grasp toys.
- Doesn't babble or try to imitate any of your sounds.
- Doesn't push down with her legs when her feet are placed on a firm surface.
- Has trouble moving her eyes in all directions.
- Doesn't pay attention to new faces, or seems very frightened by new faces or surroundings.

Contact your doctor if issues about your child's health and development or illnesses arise between visits and always call your doctor if your baby is older than three months and has a temperature of 101° F or higher. Your baby's next visit may be at six months.

Nutrition

At this age, breast milk or iron-fortified formula are still the primary forms of nutrition. Although the AAP's Committee on Breastfeeding recommends waiting to introduce solids until six months, you may begin to introduce single ingredient cereals at around four to six months. Basic strategies for starting solids are:

- Mix single ingredient solids like rice cereal with equal amounts of breast milk or formula.
- Start with one feeding of solids a day (such as single ingredient cereals). Add a second when your baby can eat two to three tablespoons per feeding.

Your Child's Teeth

Clean your baby's new teeth daily by brushing with a soft child's toothbrush and water.

Sleep

At this age, your baby should be sleeping about 15 hours per day. He may be taking either two or three daytime naps and may be waking twice per night for feedings. Although your baby is too young to have a regular sleep schedule, there are steps you can take to help him learn healthy sleep habits:

- Put him to bed between 6 and 8 pm every night.
- Start a bedtime routine that you can follow consistently, no matter where you are. Activities might include giving your baby a bath, singing a song, reading a book, and hugging good night.

safety tip...

Although your baby can roll over on his own, you should still place your baby to sleep on his back (don't worry if he rolls over on his own). Also, lower the mattress to its lowest level if your baby can sit up; don't put toys, pillows and large blankets in the crib with your baby; and keep the temperature in your baby's room comfortable for an adult.

Make sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date. Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- DTaP or DTP
- Polio
- Hepatitis B
- Hib
- Prevnar (pneumococcal)

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your child @TM

4 to 6 months

your child's growth and development

safety tip...

Keep small objects that present a choking hazard away from your baby. (Anything that fits in a toilet paper tube is too small.)

Between four and six months, you will be able to observe amazing changes in your baby. Your child may:

Physically

- Try to grab things with her hands.
- Wiggle and kick with her arms and legs.
- Sit with support.
- Begin teething.
- Roll over from stomach to back and back to stomach.

Socially and Emotionally

- Respond to a shaking rattle and peek-a-boo games.
- Express herself by laughing when happy, or crying or turning away to show signs of fear, anger or dislike.

Intellectually

- Use eyes and hands together.
- Explore objects with her mouth.
- Use verbal and non-verbal cues to signal her needs.
- Understand that she can reach to touch objects.
- Try to talk to image of self in mirror.

nurturing your child

safety tip...

Never shake or spank your baby. Shaking can cause brain damage.

Discipline

Discipline is never appropriate for babies. Since they cannot control their actions, they should not be held accountable for them. At this age, babies simply need your attention and affection. Therefore, you should always pick up your baby when she cries, and try to read and respond to all of her needs. You cannot spoil your baby at this age.

Play

Play with your baby! Early exposure to simple toys will activate your baby's imagination and help him grow. Also, your playful loving care will help you form a strong, secure relationship with your baby. Try activities like these:

- Help your baby hug stuffed animals. Use them to touch and tickle your baby.
- Stack plastic rings and knock them down.
- Place your baby on his tummy to help strengthen his neck, torso and upper body.

Literacy

Your baby has already begun to learn language by listening to you talk, tell stories and sing songs. When she moves her mouth and makes sounds, she is trying to imitate you. Also, the first steps towards writing begin when she learns to grasp at objects. So, even at this young age, there is a lot you can do to help her skills along:

- Let her listen to songs and music with different rhythms.
- Surround your child with books by incorporating reading into your daily routines.
- Give your baby cloth or board books that have pictures with bright contrasting colors, and textures and objects to touch and feel.

your child's safety

remember...

Never leave your baby unattended anywhere near water. Babies can drown in less than one inch of water.

In the Bath

- To prevent burns, always check the temperature of the water before setting your baby in the water. Also, never put a baby in a tub with running water since the temperature can quickly change and burn the baby.
- Fill the bath with only two to three inches of water.

In the Car

Your baby must always ride in a car seat that is:

- Properly attached or secured, and rear-facing.
- In the backseat (ideally, in the middle of the backseat).
- For more information go to www.fitforakid.org.

Around the House

- Do not give your child toys with small parts to play with or chew. They present a choking hazard.
- Never leave your baby on a bed, couch or chair where she can roll off and fall. A baby may move faster than you would expect and get seriously hurt.
- Do not drink or carry hot liquids when holding your child or when children are nearby.
- Contact Poison Control immediately if you think your child has eaten or drunk something poisonous:

1-800-222-1222.

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6 to 12 months

By the end of your baby's first year of life, she might already be crawling and trying to take her first steps. Remember that a warm, responsive and dependable adult caregiver is the most essential ingredient to her healthy development.

your child's health

Make sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date. Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough)
- Hib (protects your child against meningitis)
- Prevnar (pneumococcal)

Other than the flu vaccine, vaccines do not usually occur at the nine month visit, unless your child has missed earlier vaccinations.

The Well Visit

Your baby will probably have well visits at six months and again at nine months.

Sleep

At this stage, your baby still needs two or possibly three naps a day — a morning, afternoon, and late day nap. Put your baby down to sleep for the night between 6 and 8 pm, and expect her to sleep 11 to 13 hours. However, even as late as eight or nine months, she may still wake for a night feeding — especially if she's being breastfed.

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, you should let your doctor know if your baby:

...at 6 months:

- Seems very stiff, with tight muscles.
- Seems very floppy, like a rag doll.
- Refuses to cuddle.
- Doesn't seem to enjoy being around people.
- Cannot sit with help.
- Does not laugh or squeal.
- Does not actively reach for objects.

...at 9 months:

- Drags one side of body while crawling (for over a month).
- Does not point to objects or pictures.
- Does not search for objects that are hidden while he watches.

keep in mind...

- If your baby doesn't like a new food, don't give up — re-introduce it in a few days. Often a baby needs to try a food several times before he will eat it.
- Avoid foods that could cause choking such as whole grapes, popcorn, uncooked carrots, hot dogs, nuts or hard candy.

Nutrition

Although you might have introduced cereals to your baby over the past few months, she should still be drinking about 24 ounces of breast milk or formula per day.

Once your baby adjusts to cereal, move on to new, single-ingredient foods — fruits and vegetables first; then introduce protein. Experiment with mashed or pureed foods, but remember to introduce only one food type at a time for at least two to three days to detect allergies and sensitivities.

At around nine months, your baby should eat three meals a day while still receiving breast milk or formula. Serve soft, easily gummed and digestible finger foods cut into safe, bite-sized pieces. He'll love small pieces of cheese, steamed vegetables and fruit or Cheerios.[®] Avoid foods that need to be chewed. He should also begin drinking from a sippy cup, and by his first birthday (or soon after), he should be weaned from the bottle.

your child's growth and development

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Physically

At 6–9 months, your baby will probably:

- Sit alone without support.
- Reach for a cup or spoon when being fed.
- Transfer objects from one hand to the other.

At 9–12 months, your baby will probably:

- Crawl well.
- Pull herself to a standing position.

Intellectually

At 6–9 months, your baby will probably:

- Make noises to show displeasure or satisfaction.
- Look for a ball rolled out of sight.

At 9–12 months, your baby will probably:

- Play Pat-a-Cake.
- Dance or bounce to music.
- Say her first word.
- Clap hands, wave goodbye.

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your child @™

6 to 12 months

your child's growth and development (continued)

Socially and Emotionally

At 6–9 months, your baby will probably:

- Try to talk to image of self in mirror.
- Become distressed if a toy is taken away.
- Respond to own name and recognize family members' names.
- Show mild to severe anxiety at separation from parent.

At 9–12 months, your baby will probably:

- Offer toys or objects to others but want them to be returned.
- Push away toys or foods when she doesn't want them.
- Become attached to a favorite toy or blanket.

nurturing your child



Attachment

Over the next months, your child will show her strong attachment to her primary caregiver by acting upset when she leaves and happy when she returns. To ease the anxiety caused by separating:

- Say goodbye, so she learns that you will come back.
- Explain that you are going to leave, but that you'll return.
- Provide a comfort object that will make her feel close to you.

Play

At this age, a baby will use play as a chance to develop new cognitive, physical and social skills. Watch your child — you can learn so much about your child's interests by simply observing. In addition:

- Provide tummy time to help strengthen the neck, torso, and upper body as well as time to practice walking, pushing, pulling, climbing and jumping.
- Play hide-and-seek with different objects. Your child will enjoy seeing the objects appear and disappear.

Discipline

At this age, a baby still doesn't understand discipline. Instead, as your child gains mobility, your focus should turn to safety and exploration:

- Distract or redirect your baby from unsafe objects or activities.
- Never use physical punishment.

Literacy

Between 6 and 12 months, your baby will begin to communicate with you — first by mimicking your sounds, and then by speaking his first words. To encourage his ability to talk as well as his love of reading:

- Talk and interact face-to-face so he begins to understand the connection between sounds and words.
- Point to familiar objects and people everywhere and ask him to identify them.
- Sing songs with repetitive verses and hand motions that will interest your baby, such as *The Wheels on the Bus*.
- Provide books that are made of cardboard or cloth to withstand a little chewing and make page turning easier.

your child's safety

As your baby begins to crawl, he will want to touch everything he can — this is how he learns about his world. Therefore, make his environment safe.

- Install safety latches on cabinets, drawers, and toilets.
- Cover unused electrical outlets with outlet covers and use cleats to secure dangling cords on drapes and blinds.

keep in mind...

Always be aware of your baby's safety. Never leave her unattended near water, open windows, fireplaces or any electrical appliances. Watch her carefully when she is in the kitchen or bathroom where potential dangers are everywhere.

- Gate staircases and steps, cover sharp edges of furniture and ledges on fireplaces.
- Keep older children's toys out of your baby's reach. These may have small parts that can be a choking hazard for your little one.
- Keep all detergents, medicines, sharp objects out of your child's reach.
- Contact Poison Control immediately if you think your child has eaten or drunk something poisonous:

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highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

12 to 18 months

Your child at 12 to 18 months is developing a real personality. She is still growing rapidly, but not as dramatically as in the first year. As she begins to walk, run and climb, she gains confidence and a greater sense of independence. At this stage, your child needs encouragement and freedom to explore, as well as clear boundaries and limits to feel safe.

your child's health

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, at 12 months, let your doctor know if your baby:

- Does not crawl.
- Drags one side of body while crawling for over one month.
- Cannot stand while supported.
- Doesn't search for objects that are hidden while he watches.
- Says no single words.
- Does not point to objects or pictures.
- Does not use gestures such as waving or shaking head.

The Well Visit

At your child's one-year check-up, you should expect your doctor to:

- Give certain vaccinations, listed below, which will keep your child healthy and growing strong.

Your next visit may be at 15 or 18 months.

Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- Polio • Hepatitis B • MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- Chicken Pox • Hib • Prevnar (pneumococcal)
- DTaP or DTP

Sleep

At around 12 to 18 months, your child needs about 14 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. At this time, most children start giving up their morning nap and instead take one longer afternoon nap per day. As your child begins to lose the second nap, you may notice he is ready for bed a little earlier while he adjusts to the change — anytime between 6 and 8 pm.

Nutrition

Eating. At 12 months, a baby should eat a balanced diet of healthy foods, such as: squash (vegetable), bananas (fruit), cheese (dairy), or chicken (meat).

All foods should be cut into small pieces so that the child can feed independently without the risk of choking. Foods you should AVOID include:

- Raw carrots
- Popcorn
- Nuts
- Hot dogs
- Hard candy
- Whole grapes

Because your baby is still exploring most foods, she probably won't eat a lot at a single sitting. So, try to provide five or six small meals a day instead of three larger ones.

Drinking. By 12 months, your baby is ready to stop drinking formula and begin drinking up to 24 ounces of whole milk a day. He should be drinking from a cup rather than a bottle. Don't forget to offer water throughout the day.

keep in mind...

Now that your child has teeth, you should brush them daily with a baby toothbrush and water.

your child's growth and development

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Between 12 and 18 months, your child might be able to:

Physically

- Walk without help.
- Enjoy holding objects while walking — often one in each hand.
- Hold a crayon and scribble (but with little control).
- Gesture or point to indicate what she wants.
- Turn pages in a book.
- Like to push, pull and dump things.

Intellectually

- Understand and follow simple, one step directions.
- Say about 8 to 20 understandable words, including "hi" and "bye" if reminded.
- Identify objects in a book, if prompted.
- Pay attention to conversations.

Socially and Emotionally

- Enjoy being held and read to.
- Imitate others with sounds and facial expressions.
- Play alone with toys.

Sources: *Your Baby's First Year* and *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shelov, MD, FAAP, editor in chief; *Understanding Children*, Civitas and Richard Saul Wurman; *KidBasics*, Civitas; *Healthy Sleep, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD.

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your child @™

12 to 18 months

nurturing your child



Literacy

As your child's vocabulary grows, his interest in books and songs will grow, too. Take advantage of his interests by reading, singing and talking all the time.

- Make reading interactive by asking questions while looking at pictures and reading stories. Even though your child cannot yet answer fully, pay attention to his verbal and non-verbal responses.
- Provide your child with books that can easily be carried by little hands and which offer flaps and textures he can explore.
- Teach new songs and incorporate hand movements such as "Pat-a-Cake" and "Itsy-Bitsy Spider."

Discipline

Your child's growing sense of independence will push her to test her behavior with you. This is the right time to set a few limits. Your child's first rules should help protect her safety and be enforced clearly and consistently. You can also try these age-appropriate discipline techniques:

- Stay one step ahead. Distract or redirect your child from unsafe objects or activities.
- Save "no" primarily for safety issues. If your child hears "no" too often, she will start to tune it out.
- Use non-verbal communication. Give a stern or firm look for minor incidents.

Play

Your child's desire and ability to do things on her own will extend to her play. So, allow your child to use toys in any way she wants. When your child is able to explore freely, she learns to imagine, invent and problem solve. Other considerations:

- Plan play dates. Consider your child's nap time so she won't be too tired to spend time with her new friend. Remember, children at this age are too young to be expected to share.
- Allow time for your child to play alone. Independent play allows him to choose and direct the activity, and helps build confidence.
- Try new ways to play games like peek-a-boo and introduce new toys she can push and pull, or items she can stack such as boxes or cups.

take note...

Never use spanking or other physical punishment. Spanking is never an effective form of discipline.

your child's safety

As your child becomes increasingly mobile and curious, you must make "child-proofing" your home a priority.

In the Car

- When your child is at least 12 months old and weighs at least 20 pounds, she can ride in a forward facing car seat (although the AAP recommends that babies remain rear-facing as long as possible) in the backseat of the car.
- For more information, go to www.fitforakid.org.

take note...

Now is the time make sure the mattress on the crib is lowered all the way. It is also important to keep the side rail up when your child is in bed.

Around Your House

- Block staircases and the kitchen with gates, install safety latches on toilets, drawers, and cabinets or anyplace where cleaning materials are kept.
- Cover sharp edges, electric outlets and fireplaces.
- Keep hot liquids out of reach.
- Make sure window treatments are not strangling hazards and install window guards to prevent your child from falling out.
- Call Poison Control immediately if you think your child has eaten or drunk something poisonous:

1-800-222-1222.

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your child @TM

highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

18 to 24 months

Your child at 18 to 24 months is becoming his own person. His sense of independence is growing as he starts to walk, run and climb with greater ease. This is a wonderful time to help your child's rapidly growing vocabulary by talking to him about everything, and reading together every day.

your child's health

Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- DTaP or DTP
- Hepatitis B
- Polio
- Chickenpox

The Well Visit

At your child's 18-month check-up, you should expect your doctor to give certain vaccinations. Also, use this visit to catch up on any missed immunizations. Usually shots are completed by the 18th month and therefore no shots will be needed at 24 months. Most doctors have you bring your child in for a well visit again at 24 months. Contact your doctor if issues about your child's health and development or illnesses arise between visits.

Nutrition

By 18 months, toddlers should eat most table foods cut up into small pieces, drink from a sippy cup and be fully weaned from a bottle. Because toddlers may not be interested in sitting still for meals, you can make sure your toddler gets enough food by:

- Giving him five to six small meals per day.
- Offering finger foods so she can feed herself.
- Making meals fun by serving foods with a variety of colors, textures and tastes.

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, at 18 months, let your doctor know if your child:

- Cannot walk.
- Fails to develop a mature heel-toe walking pattern after several months of walking, or walks exclusively on his toes.
- Does not speak at least 15 words.
- Does not seem to know the function of common household objects (brush, telephone, fork, spoon).

Sleep

Most toddlers sleep about 14 hours a day. They often take one nap a day, usually from about 1 to 3 pm, and go to bed between 6 and 8 pm. It is still important for her to sleep during the day. If she is well rested, she can fall asleep easier and sleep longer during the night.

your child's growth and development

Between 18 and 24 months, you will see your toddler make great strides in all areas of development. By the time your child reaches 24 months, he will probably do most of the following:

Intellectually

- Refer to self by name and use the words "me" and "mine."
- Copy single words spoken by someone else and use the words "please" and "thank you" if prompted.
- Choose between two objects.
- Enjoy humming or trying to sing familiar songs.
- Use two to three word sentences.

take note...

At this age, your child needs the freedom to explore and make choices, as well as clear limits to follow.

Physically

- Walk well and run, even though he may not always stop and turn well.
- Toss or roll balls.
- Enjoy moving on small-wheeled riding toys.
- Feed himself with a spoon.
- Begin to gain some control of bowels and bladder.

Socially and Emotionally

- Imitate actions.
- Get angry and even may have temper tantrums.
- Act shy around strangers.
- Have trouble sharing.
- Show signs of independence, like saying "no" and trying to do many things independently.

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your child @™

18 to 24 months

nurturing your child

remember...

To encourage good behavior from your child, you should try to be patient as well as clear and consistent with your rules and consequences.



Discipline

Because your child is starting to understand expectations and consequences, you can begin to teach your child proper behavior. You should try to:

- Praise good behavior — teach through positive reinforcement.
- Ignore small incidents and accidents, such as spilled milk.
- Give your child the opportunity to correct misbehavior by giving her a second chance.
- Never use spanking or other physical punishment and limit your use of the word “no.”
- Model good behavior.

Literacy

This is a period of huge growth for language skills and you can help your toddler along by talking and reading with her as much as you can.

- Teach new words all the time. The more you speak to your toddler about what you are doing and what is around you, the more you build his vocabulary.
- Expand your child's language by adding to what he says. If he says “kitty” you can say, “Yes, the kitty is little and soft.”
- Pick books that address your child's interests like animals, trains or a new sibling.
- Even if your child can't speak yet, ask “Where's?” and “What's?” whenever you can while looking at pictures and reading a story.
- Add songs and rhymes into all of your routines, sing “Rock-a-Bye Baby” at bedtime or “Rub-a-Dub-Dub” at bath time.
- Give your child the tools to learn by scribbling, drawing or pretending to write.

Attachment

Your toddler is, at the same time, excited about his new-found independence, but hesitant to stray too far from you. Chances are, he struggles with goodbyes and returns often to your side. To help your child transition away from you:

- Say goodbye when you leave. At first he might cry, but soon he'll learn that you always come back. If you leave without saying goodbye, he may begin to fear that you may slip out at any time, and so he may cling to you even more.
- See that your child is involved in an activity when you're ready to leave. If he's busy, he will have an easier time getting over your departure and getting re-involved after you leave.

take note...

When you leave, give your child an object that will soothe him and make him feel close to you.

Play

You may notice that as your child approaches two, she does less imitative play and more fantasy or pretend play, plays with toys for longer periods of time, and enjoys doing things for herself. Use these strategies to enhance your child's play:

- Play simple recognition games. Place three familiar objects in front of your child and say, “Please give me the...”
- Encourage your child to play by himself, but be available to help out if an activity seems too difficult.
- Arrange play dates. They can be rocky but it is good for toddlers to learn about interaction with other children. Remember, toddlers are just learning how to play with someone else and should not always be expected to share.

your child's safety

As a parent, safety always should be your first concern.

- Limit access to rooms, drawers and dangerous objects: block staircases, install safety latches on cabinets, toilets and drawers and cover sharp edges.
- Avoid climbing accidents by using “L” brackets to secure large objects and furniture and installing window guards to prevent your child from falling out.

- Keep hot liquids out of reach.
- Make sure window treatments are not strangling hazards.
- Call Poison Control immediately if you think your child has eaten or drunk something poisonous:

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your child @TM

highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

24 to 36 months

By the time your child reaches 36 months, she will probably have a vocabulary of around 900 words and use three to five word sentences. Your child at this stage is bursting with curiosity. Your praise, encouragement and support as she works to perfect her motor skills and increase her knowledge of the world around her will help her grow up strong, happy and confident.

your child's health

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, at 24 months, let your doctor know if your child:

- Cannot push a wheeled toy.
- Does not follow simple directions.
- Does not imitate actions or words.
- Cannot walk (by 18 months).
- Fails to develop a heel-toe walking pattern after several months of walking or walks exclusively on toes.
- Does not speak at least 15 words by 18 months.
- Does not use two word sentences.

The Well Visit

Most doctors have you bring your child in for a two-year check-up. By age two, your child has received most of her immunizations, including: Hep B, Hib, Polio, DTaP or DTP, MMR, and Chickenpox. Use this visit to catch up on any missed vaccinations. Your doctor may also do a lead test at this time and should check cholesterol if you have a family history of heart disease and/or high blood pressure.

Nutrition

At this age, children often become picky eaters and lose interest in food. You may find that some days, your child might not be interested in food at all, and other days, he might only want to eat a certain type of food. Be assured, when your child is hungry, he will want to eat — it is your job to ensure you are providing healthy options by offering a variety of nutrient-rich foods.

Sleep

Moving out of the crib. For many, it's time to leave the crib and move on to a bed.

- Make the transition exciting by talking about the big bed and the items that might go in it such as new bedding or favorite stuffed animals.
- Stick to the same bedtime (between 6 and 8 pm) and make sure your child understands that she can't get out of bed once she's been kissed good night and tucked in. If your child gets out of bed, you should quietly and calmly take her back to bed until she learns to stay there. It might be necessary to return her to the crib and try making the transition in a month or so.
- Continue with your normal routines like reading, singing and bathing even after you've moved your child to a big bed.

Toilet Training

Around this time, your child will begin to show signs that he is ready for toilet training. If you have any questions talk to your health care provider. In general, your child is ready if he does any or some of the following:

- Pulls his pants up and down.
- Is interested in the toilet and imitates others' bathroom habits.
- Can and will follow simple instructions.
- Dislikes the feeling of being in a dirty diaper.
- Understands the physical signs that indicate he has to "go" before "going."
- Has long "dry" periods.

Starting the process

- Buy a child-sized potty seat or attachment for the toilet. Let him get comfortable with it and practice sitting on it.
- Teach him to sit and wipe. Teach him to sit first, then stand.
- Take it slow. Some children take a couple of weeks to learn, for others it takes months.

Remember

- Wait to begin until you are both ready.
- Be encouraging and patient.
- Try not to worry about what others say and think.
- Accidents are natural — don't punish your child.

safety tip...

Make sure that the area around your child's bed is safe, in case she falls or gets out of her bed by herself at night.

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your child @™

24 to 36 months

your child's growth and development

You can expect your toddler to do most of the following by the time she reaches three years old:

Physically

- Throw and kick a ball.
- Zip and unzip.
- Help to put things away.
- Drink from a cup without spilling.
- Pull off and begin to put on her own clothes.
- Jump in place and walk on tiptoes.

Intellectually

- Call herself by her own name.
- Have a vocabulary of 900 or more words.
- Point and name her own body parts when asked.
- Use phrases and three to five word sentences.

Socially and Emotionally

- Initiate her own play activities.
- Want routines to always be the same.
- Observe other children at play and join in.
- Have a hard time sharing things.

nurturing your child

remember...

Although a temper tantrum is a natural and healthy expression of your child's emotions and frustrations, he must be taught that it is not an acceptable behavior.



The Terrible Twos

Between two and three, your child is beginning to realize that he is a person independent from you. He will want to exercise his free will, largely by opposing much of what you want or expect from him. His protests will probably include temper tantrums and heavy use of the word "no."

Tips for taming tantrums

- Try to keep your cool. He will lose control even more if you really lose your temper.
- Rather than using physical punishment, create consequences that relate to the behavior. For example, remove a child from the store if he misbehaves.
- Stay in control by not giving in to unreasonable demands.
- Discuss the issue. When your child is calm, validate his feelings while letting him know that his behavior is not acceptable.
- Avoid problem-causing situations. If you know your child throws a fit when he's hungry, remember to carry snacks with you.

Play

Your child is now learning to incorporate her real-life experiences into pretend play. This is her way of figuring out the world around her. For example, you'll see her "talking" on the phone, driving a car, talking to a friend when she's by herself. You can encourage this type of play by:

- Helping her create imaginative games and new ways to use toys. Blocks can be flying cars or even zoo animals.
- Giving her time to play by herself. Playing alone gives her a chance to process and understand what she has been doing and learning all day.

Literacy

Expand your child's language by reading together every day and by:

- Asking questions about the book you're reading to include her in the story and to make sure she understands.
- Offering materials to scribble, draw or pretend to write.
- Encouraging her to identify letters and their sounds.
- Pointing to words when you read. This will help your child understand how the reading process works.

your child's safety

safety tip...

Two-year-olds still must ride in the backseat of a car in a car seat with a harness — preferably in the middle of the backseat. Check with your state laws to see when your child will be ready to switch to a booster (usually around age four).

- Choose toys that do not have small parts.
- Although your child has probably mastered the stairs and corners, you should still block staircases, latch cabinets, toilets and drawers, secure large objects and furniture with "L" brackets, and install window guards to prevent your child from falling out.
- Call Poison Control immediately if you think your child has eaten or drunk something poisonous:

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highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

3 years

Your "little baby" is off to preschool, where her world will broaden seemingly overnight. And she'll need your hand to guide her. As she makes friends, you can teach her to share. As she potty trains, you can help her practice. With encouragement and patience, you can help set up your child for success.

your child's health

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, you should let your doctor know if, by the time your child is four, she cannot or does not:

- Jump in place.
- Grasp a crayon between thumb and fingers.
- Scribble.
- Use sentences of more than three words.
- Use "me" and "you" appropriately.

The Well Visit

Expect to take your child to the doctor for checkups when she turns three and again, when she is four. Exams might include tests to check for lead poisoning, tuberculosis, and kidney and metabolic diseases. Also, well visits are a good chance to check with your pediatrician about any booster shots that your child may need before starting school and be sure to catch up on any missed immunizations.

The Dentist

By the time your child turns three, she should have almost all of her 20 baby teeth. This means it's time to visit the dentist if you haven't already.

Before the visit. Prepare your child by talking about what will happen at the dentist's office and reading books about going to the dentist.

At the dentist. The dentist will count and examine your child's teeth, and give a lesson about how to brush her teeth.

- Brush teeth at least once per day (especially at night).
- Use a child-size toothbrush with a pea-sized bit of fluoride toothpaste.
- Let your child brush her teeth herself and then help her to make sure her teeth get cleaned. Is brushing a battle? Give her your toothbrush so that she can "clean" your teeth while you clean hers.

Nutrition

Part of the family. At this age, your child's eating habits should be similar to yours. She should eat the same foods at the same times, and use child-size utensils.

Beware. Choking is still a hazard because your child has not yet mastered chewing and swallowing. So, make portion sizes small, especially when serving:

- Grapes (cut them in half).
- Hot dogs (slice in half across and lengthwise).
- Raw vegetables, such as carrots and celery.
- Peanut butter (avoid spoonfuls).

- Avoid entirely foods such as hard candies and cherries with pits.

Sleep

Goodbye naptime. Between the ages of three and four, children commonly give up their afternoon naps. Your child should sleep anywhere from nine to thirteen hours per day.

Hello bedtime battles. As a way of gaining control of her world, your child may try to resist bedtime. You can ease the process if you:

- Stick with the bedtime routine.
- Allow your child to make choices — pick out pajamas or books to read.
- Provide a sense of security with night lights, security blankets or stuffed animals.

Toilet Training

At this age, children's toilet skills are all over the board. Some kids may have mastered it. Others may be just starting. Don't get down on your child (or yourself) if your child is still learning. No matter where your child is in the process, you will probably deal with:

Accidents. They happen. Don't get mad or make a big deal about it. This will only discourage your child from trying on her own again.

Preschool. First, your child's preschool may require her to be trained in order to attend. So, set her up for success:

- Let her use toilets outside of your home.
- Dress her in clothes that are easy for her to pull up and down.
- Have boys practice from a standing position.

Staying dry at night. Help her along by:

- Using the potty right before bed.
- Limiting liquids after 5 pm.
- Putting her to bed in underwear instead of pull-ups.
- Making the potty accessible to her in the night.

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your child @TM

3 years

your child's growth and development

Your child should be able to do most or all of the following by the time he turns four years old:

Physically

- Throw and kick a ball.
- Draw circles and squares.
- Begin to copy capital letters.
- Dress and undress.

Intellectually

- Identify "same" and "different" objects.
- Talk in short sentences so that others can understand.
- Tell and remember parts of stories.

Socially and Emotionally

- Cooperate with other children.
- Engage in fantasy play.
- Understand that there are ways to solve problems.

nurturing your child

Sharing

To have a friend means to be a friend. Whether at school or at a playgroup, you'll notice that your child is beginning to make friends. For the first time, he faces difficult new issues like sharing and taking turns.

To help your child understand these concepts, you can:

- *Show him how to share.* Offer your child a pen from your desk in exchange for one of his markers. Also, let him see you sharing with others. Use the word "share" during these interactions, so he can begin to connect the word to the action.
- *Use "share-friendly" toys.* When your child has a friend over to play, put out toys that lend themselves to sharing and cooperating. Try blocks, dress up clothes, art supplies and climbing toys. Also, before guests arrive, put away toys that your child does not want to share.

- *Practice with your child.* Play games that involve taking turns such as board games, the memory game and hide-and-seek are good.
- *Encourage and explain.* Praise your child when he shares, but don't punish him if he does not. Instead, wait until you are alone with your child and talk about sharing. Explain that just because he lets his friend use his toy doesn't mean that the friend will get to go home with it.

Television/Computer time

Limit media watching (including TV, computer, video games, etc.). One to two hours per day is more than enough. Also, monitor the shows he watches. Tune into shows that have nice messages. Tune out violence.

your child's safety

In the Car

Booster time? If your child has reached the top weight or height allowed for her car seat, her shoulders are above the top harness slots, or her ears have reached the top of the seat, she is ready for a booster seat. Always use a lap/shoulder belt with a booster seat.

Note: Stick with the booster until the adult seat belt fits properly, usually between 8 and 12 years old and about 4'9" tall.

take note...

Now that your child is interacting more with other children, she is more likely to be exposed to new germs. Remind her to wash her hands well when she comes in from outside, after using the toilet and before she eats.

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highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

4 years

This year, your child will finish preschool and get ready for kindergarten. It's a big jump and with it comes growing pains. Your child will challenge himself to learn new things — like staying dry through the night or tying his shoes. As he does, he will face frustration. Your encouragement and support can ease aggravation and help him accomplish his goals.

your child's health

take note:

According to the Academy of Pediatrics, you should let your doctor know if, by the time your child is five, she exhibits any of the following:

- Very fearful, timid or extremely aggressive behavior.
- Unable to concentrate on one activity for more than five minutes.
- Little interest in playing with other children.
- General unhappiness or sadness much of the time.
- Trouble eating, sleeping or using the toilet.
- Can't tell the difference between fantasy and reality.

The Well Visit

At your child's yearly check-up, her doctor may test her hearing and vision. Also, don't forget to check with the pediatrician about required booster doses for school entry and be sure to catch up on any missed immunizations.

Sleep

Your child probably sleeps between 10 to 12 hours per night and no longer takes an afternoon nap.

Those things which most often cause children to wake in the middle of the night include:

- *Bad/vivid dreams.* If your child wakes in the night from a bad dream, comfort her until she is able to go back to sleep. You also may want to talk to her about the dream.
- *Night terrors.* These are episodes in which a child may suddenly bolt upright in bed, cry, scream, moan, mumble, and thrash about with her eyes wide open, even though she is not truly awake. Do not wake your child. Rather, stay with her until the terror ends and she calms down.
- *Bedwetting.* Reward your child for dry nights, but do not punish her for wet nights. Give her lots of support. Seek professional help if the problem persists.

Nutrition

Encourage healthy eating by offering:

- Three meals per day, plus two small snacks.
- Small portions.
- Nutritious food.
- Explanation about why eating healthy is important for your body. Talk about how eating fruits, vegetables, low-fat meats and whole grains helps your body stay healthy.
- Chances for your child to plan meals and prepare foods. Take your child grocery shopping and let her pick out a new fruit to try. Cook healthy meals together — smoothies with fresh fruit, pizza with cheese, blueberry muffins. Visit an apple orchard or farm, to help your child understand about natural foods.
- A good example. If you choose healthy foods for yourself, your child will likely follow.

notes about toilet training...

The AAP says to see your doctor if your child:

- Stays dry at night for a while, but then begins to wet at night again and must go back to wearing training pants.
- Is five and still consistently wets the bed.
- Is completely toilet trained for at least six months but suddenly begins to have many accidents during the day and night.

your child's growth and development

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Your child should be able to do most or all of the following by the time he turns five years old:

Intellectually

- Use future tense. For example, "Tomorrow I am going to school," or "On my next birthday I will be five."
- Tell her full name and address.
- Count ten or more objects.

Socially and Emotionally

- Want to be like her friends.
- Exhibit greater independence, such as a willingness to visit a friend's house alone.
- Easily agree to rules.
- Enjoy singing, dancing and acting.

Physically

- Hop on one leg.
- Do somersaults.
- Copy triangles and other geometric patterns.

Sources: *Your Baby's First Year* and *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shelov, MD, FAAP, editor in chief; *Understanding Children*, Civitas and Richard Saul Wurman; *KidBasics*, Civitas; *Healthy Sleep, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD.

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your child @ 4 years

nurturing your child

Discipline

Rules for all ages. Your child will act out periodically. Whatever the reason, you should handle discipline with the same set of rules:

- Don't say "no." If you constantly tell your child "no," he will stop listening. Use positive wording instead. Say, "Let's jump off the pillows instead of the bed," and only say "no" when necessary. Give your child as much freedom to explore as possible.
- Give choices. Choices allow your child to feel in control of his world. But make the choices limited so they are not overwhelming, "Would you like to do a puzzle or read a book after dinner?"
- Make your expectations clear. Set up rules that are easy to understand and enforce them time and again. For example, tell your child that he can play outside after he cleans up his toys.

Facing frustrations. Children this age may fall apart when they can't do certain activities on their own — color in the lines, do a puzzle, put on their shoes. To help prevent these meltdowns, you should:

- Understand your child's limits — be aware of what situations might frustrate your child, and suggest your child take time away from difficult tasks.
- Offer options that might calm your child. Make yourself aware of activities or behaviors that help your child relax (taking a walk around, breathing deep) and direct him towards them when you see his frustration rising.

Do not, however, do the task for your child. This will prevent your child from learning how to cope with frustration as well as master the skill he is developing.

your child's safety

In the Car

Your child should ride in his booster seat until the adult seat belt fits properly, usually between 8 and 12 years old and about 4'9" tall.

Around the House

Because your child is more independent at home, safety precautions must be taken to assure he doesn't get hurt while on his own.

- Never leave your child unattended near water, even if he knows how to swim.
- Remove cleaning substances, medicines, vitamins, and toxic houseplants out of the child's reach.
- Keep hot food and drink away from your child's reach.
- Keep pots on back burners of the stove.

Home Fire Drills

Plan and practice. In addition to a working fire extinguisher and smoke detectors, your family should have a plan for members to follow in the event of a fire.

Street Safety

- Be sure your child wears a bike helmet while riding a scooter or bicycle.



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SUCCESS BY 6



your child @TM

highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

5 years

This is a big year for your child! It brings with it the start of kindergarten as well as a new sense of independence (that may test your patience), developmental achievements and social relationships. At this time, what your child needs most is your attention, respect and patience.

your child's health

The Well Visit

Your child might have her hearing and eyesight checked at this year's check-up. Her vision should be 20/30 or better. Check with your child's doctor and school to ensure she has had the required vaccinations.

Nutrition

A taste of independence. The start of kindergarten may mean that your child will eat at least one meal per day outside of your home. Make sure she's prepared. Talk to her about healthy eating habits and the importance of a balanced diet. Also, make sure she knows about any food allergies or other dietary restrictions that she has.

Sleep

Fighting sleep? Sleep defiance issues are typical. To find a solution:

- Determine the cause of the behavior (attention-seeking, fear of something, exerting independence) and make proper adjustments. (Change the bedtime, put in a night light.)
- Set aside time each day to talk to your child about school and other things going on in her world.
- Stick to your usual bedtime routine, but include choices which will help your child feel in control.
- Stay consistent and firm. Every night, adhere to the same bedtime rules. And, no matter how tired you are, don't give in to her requests or demands.

your child's growth and development

Your child should be able to do most or all of the following by the time he turns six years old:

Physically

- Assist in making his bed.
- Color within lines.
- Tie his shoes.
- Jump rope independently.

Intellectually

- Use past, present and future tenses accurately.
- Group similar objects together.
- Understand the idea of today, tomorrow and yesterday.
- Identify most letters and numbers.
- Retell a story from a picture book with reasonable accuracy.

Socially and Emotionally

- Comfort friends who are sad or hurt.
- Understand that there are rules when playing games.
- Express feelings.

Because each child develops differently, you should use these developmental milestones as only a general guideline of what to expect from your child.



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your child @TM

5 years

nurturing your child

Handling Defiance, Back Talk and Lies

Keeping authority. Here are some strategies to help you manage your child's new independence.

- Praise good behavior. This is the best way to encourage more of the same.
- Be respectful. Don't yell. And, before you ask him to do something, make sure he knows how to do it.
- Pick your battles. Respect his needs to feel independent and explore. Also, where you can, avoid situations that trigger your child's defiant streak.

Stopping the sass. Talking back is often a sign of anger, frustration, fear or disappointment. When you respond:

- Stay cool. Be a good role model for your child. Speak quietly and calmly.
- Offer support. Let your child know that you understand that something is bothering him, but that he cannot behave badly.
- Make rules. Teach him that when he yells, you will either ignore him or leave the room. Tell him that if he speaks nicely, you will listen.



Uncovering the truth. A kindergartner may make up stories for lots of reasons. Before you confront your child, try to understand why he lied. Was it to protect himself from punishment, act out a fantasy or simply to get your attention? You also may want to read books with your child about telling the truth, to help him understand the importance of honesty.

Preparing for Kindergarten

Great beginnings... The start of kindergarten is a time of excitement, anxiety and change for a child. To get your child off on the best foot, you should help him understand what to expect before classes begin.

- Talk about school. Discuss what he will do during the day, how many kids will be in his class, his teacher's name, what he will carry in his backpack.
- Take your child through his new routine. Drive or walk to school and back. Take a tour of the school. Show him his classroom.
- Be supportive. Appreciate that going to kindergarten is a big deal for your child. Listen to his concerns, answer questions and read books about starting school. Be patient if his transition is rough.
- Keep it calm at home. With all the adjustments to school, it is important that home remain a safe haven. Try to stick to the same routines. Don't schedule your child for many other activities. Provide for plenty of down time. Make yourself available to play with and talk to your child.

your child's safety

take note...

Simply telling your child to not talk to strangers is not good advice. Sometimes, such as when you introduce her to a friend of yours, it's okay to talk to a stranger. Or, if your child is lost, she should know to ask someone for help.

Dealing with Strangers

Tell your child that she should walk away and find an adult she knows if approached by anyone who:

- Asks her for help.
- Shows her a picture of a pet.
- Asks to take her picture.
- Tells her that there is a family emergency.
- Calls her by name even though she doesn't know him.

On the Playground

Check places your child plays for:

- Sharp points, corners or edges, splintered wood or hot metal (such as slides).
- Openings that might trap a child's hands or feet, and loose cables, wires and ropes that may trip a child.
- Equipment that is not securely anchored to the ground, including handrails, ladders and steps.

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