Your Toddler’s Development: 15–18 Months

Your toddler is using all his new physical, thinking, and language skills to be a good problem-solver. He might push a stool to the counter and try to climb up as he points to the cookie jar and says something like Mine! How do you see your toddler figuring things out?

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<th>What Your Toddler Can Do</th>
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| **I’m using my body to explore and learn.**  
• I am walking and may be running and climbing.  
• I can scribble with a crayon and build a block tower.  
• I can feed myself. | **Encourage your child to use his fingers and hands to explore.**  
Let him scribble, tap a toy piano, or hold a bubble wand.  
• Play “baby olympics.” Create some safe challenges—like climbing over a stack of pillows—for your child to master. |
| **I’m using language to understand the world around me.**  
• I can understand simple questions and directions like Kick the ball to me.  
• I communicate by combining sounds and actions—pointing to a cup and saying wawa for water.  
• By 18 months, I may say as many as 20 words. | **Ask your child questions: Would you like yogurt or a banana for snack?**  
• Put her gestures into words: You’re pointing at the bird flying in the sky.  
• Read, sing together, and make up rhymes and stories. This builds a love of language and words. |
| **I am beginning to understand my feelings and others’ feelings too.**  
• I may try to comfort someone who seems sad.  
• I repeat sounds and actions that make someone laugh.  
• My feelings can be hard for me to handle.  
• I may start having tantrums and will need your help to calm down. | **Read books that talk about feelings.**  
• Connect what you are reading to your child’s experiences:  
• That little boy in the book felt sad saying good-bye to his daddy, just like you do sometimes.  
• Stay calm during tantrums. Take deep breaths, count to 10, or whatever helps you to not react. Staying calm helps your child recover more quickly. |
| **I’m becoming a good problem-solver.**  
• I may do something over and over to figure out how it works.  
• I use objects the way they are supposed to be used—like talking on a toy telephone.  
• I imitate what I see others do—like trying to wipe the table with a sponge. | **Let your child repeat the same activity, if he wants to. It may be boring to you but is important practice for him.**  
• Once your child has learned a new skill, like throwing the ball, add a twist: Set up a laundry basket for him to toss the ball into. |

For more information on parenting and child development, go to: www.zerotothree.org.