

Your Toddler's Development: 18–24 Months

This is a time of great fun for parents as they watch their babies become eager explorers who are thrilled to discover that they can make things happen. A 7-month-old knows, When I smile, mommy smiles back! A 9-month-old lifts her arms to tell her dad, I want you to pick me up.
How is your baby making things happen?

What Your Toddler Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>This is a delightful stage as children begin to talk and talk and then talk some more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toddlers are also starting to pretend. This is a big step in their development and makes life really fun and often very funny. • How do you see your child starting to use her imagination? 	<p>Turn your child's words and phrases into sentences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When he says, More milk, you can say: You want more milk in your cup. • Talk as you read. Ask your child questions about the pictures and stories you read together.
<p>I need help to begin learning self-control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand no but I still can't control my feelings and actions. • I may get frustrated when I can't do something by myself. Please be patient! 	<p>Put your child's feelings into words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know you're really mad that I turned the TV off. It's okay to feel mad. Instead of TV, would you like to read or play with blocks now?
<p>I am beginning to use my imagination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may feed my doll pretend food. • I might make brrrummm noises when I play with cars. 	<p>Play pretend with your toddler.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can be a puppy, barking and running after a ball. • Jump-start your child's imagination with dress-up clothes, animal figures, blocks, and plastic food and dishes.
<p>I am a little scientist, always testing things out!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I love to fill and dump and open and close things to see how they work. • I may start to sort objects. I might put all my trains in one place and all my cars in another. 	<p>Help your child practice sorting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your child to help you sort the laundry by putting socks in one pile and shirts in another. • Encourage lots of exploration. Fill and dump with water or sand. Make an indoor "sandbox" of dry oatmeal or fall leaves.
<p>I am becoming an even better problem-solver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may blow on my food when you tell me dinner is hot or try to get my own jacket on. 	<p>Help your child solve a problem but don't do it all for him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more he does, the more he learns. • Play games that use problem-solving skills. • Try three- or four-piece puzzles or building with blocks.

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

