

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

For more information on parenting and child development, go to: [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org).

