Your Toddler’s Development: 30–36 Months

Older toddlers are full of personality and energy. They want to know the reason for everything, which is why you may hear your child ask Why a lot! What kinds of questions is your child asking? What is she curious about?

### What Your Toddler Can Do

#### My body helps me do “big kid” stuff now!
- I can pedal a tricycle.
- I can dress myself with your help.
- I can draw a line.
- I can turn a knob or unscrew a cap.

#### I use language to express my thoughts and feelings.
- By age 3, I may use as many as 900 words.
- I understand sentences with two or more ideas (You can have a snack when we get home).
- I ask questions.
- I know my first and last name.

#### I am using my new thinking skills to solve problems.
- I can remember what happened yesterday. I act out my own stories.
- I’m becoming a “logical thinker.” When I am pretending that it is bedtime for Teddy, I put a blanket on him and sing him a lullaby.

#### My friends are very important to me.
- I like playing with other children. I may have one or two close friends.
- I notice how people are the same.

### What You Can Do

#### Let your child scribble with markers and crayons. This builds early writing skills.
- Give your child chances to practice more advanced physical skills like pedaling and climbing.
- Child-proof again so that your child’s new ability to open caps and doorknobs doesn’t lead to danger.

#### Introduce new words to build your child’s vocabulary: Is your snack scrumptious?
- Ask questions that require more than a yes-or-no answer: Where do you think the squirrel is taking that nut?
- Be patient with your child’s Why questions.
- Ask him what he thinks before you answer.

#### At dinnertime or before bed, talk with your child about her day. This builds memory and language skills.
- Encourage your child to use logic in everyday situations: It’s raining. What do we need in order to stay dry?

#### Help children deal with conflicts around sharing and turn-taking: There is only one train.
- I will put the timer on and you will each have 5 minutes to play with it. While you wait for your turn, you can choose to play with cars or another toy.
- Help your child be sensitive to differences among people. Yes, people do come in all different sizes.

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