

# your child @<sup>™</sup>

## 18 to 24 months

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

Your child is becoming his own person. Watch him as he starts to walk, run, and climb with ease.



### Your child's health

**The Well Visit** Your child will get vaccinations at 18 months and will have a well visit again at 24 months.

Let your doctor know if your baby:

- Cannot walk on his own.
- Walks only on his toes.
- Does not speak at least 15 words.
- Does not know how to use common objects like a brush, telephone, fork, or spoon.

**Nutrition** By 18 months, your child should:

- Eat most foods cut up into small pieces.
- Be drinking from a cup rather than a bottle.

**Sleep** Your child should sleep about 14 hours a day. She may now take only one nap a day, usually from about 1 to 3 pm. She should go to bed between 6 and 8 pm.

### Nurturing your child

**Behavior** Your child is starting to understand rules and consequences. So, it is time to teach your child the right way to behave.

- Praise good behavior. If you point out the good things your child does, he will want to do more of them.
- Ignore small things.
- Never spank. If you are angry, count to 10 before reacting.
- Limit your use of the word "no."
- Be consistent with your rules.

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### Nurturing your child, continued

- Attachment** Your child is excited about being independent. But he will not go too far from you. To help your child move away from you:
- Say goodbye when you leave. If you do not say goodbye, he will fear that you may slip out at any time.
  - Make sure your child is busy with an activity when you are about to leave.

- Language** Help your toddler learn. Talk and read with her throughout the day.
- Add to what your child says. If she says “kitty,” you can say, “Yes, the kitty is little and soft.”
  - Ask questions about “where,” “what” and “when.” It doesn’t matter if your child can’t speak yet.
  - Sing lots of songs and rhymes, such as *Rock-a-Bye Baby*, at bedtime.
  - Help your child scribble, draw, or pretend to write.



- Play** Your child now likes pretend play and doing things for himself. You can help him play along.
- Practice naming objects. Place three familiar objects in front of your child and say, “Please give me the ...”
  - Set up play dates. It is time to learn to play with other children. But do not expect your child to share well.

### Your child’s safety

- Around the House** Always put your child’s safety first.
- Block off dangerous rooms and objects. Put gates on stairs. Put latches on cabinets, toilets, and drawers. Cover sharp edges.
  - Keep hot liquids out of reach.
  - Call poison control right away if you think your child has swallowed poison: 1-800-222-1222.

- In the Car** All infants and toddlers should ride in a Rear-Facing Car Seat until they are at least 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car seat’s manufacturer. Any child who has outgrown the rear-facing weight or height limit for his convertible car seat should use a Forward-Facing Car Seat with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by the car seat manufacturer.