

Ages & Stages for Caregivers

2 years

Two-year-olds have discovered the ability to express themselves. They are very emotional and can change from laughter to sadness in a few moments. *This Ages and Stages for Caregivers* will help you understand what to expect of children this age and how you can best nurture them to meet their needs at this exciting time of growth.

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SIGNS OF DEVELOPMENT —2 years

(individual development varies)

Developing Body

- Weighs 22-38 pounds
- Measures 32-40 inches tall
- Has almost a full set of teeth
- Turns pages while “reading”
- Walks backwards
- Likes to push, pull, fill, and dump

Developing Mind

- Enjoys stories, songs, and rhymes
- Wants to learn how to use things
- Likes to look at books

Developing Communication

- Uses 2-3 word sentences
- Repeats words others say
- Says names of items when asked

Developing Self

- Plays alongside others
- Imitates parents and providers
- Frustrates easily
- Offers toys to others, but really wants to keep toys for self
- Begins dressing self

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Encourage toddler’s physical development.

Allow room for exploring by providing boxes, small steps, push and pull toys, and ride-on or ride-in toys.

This will also:

- Provide a safe, comfortable area for physical development for the growing toddler.

Build on toddler’s curiosity and drive to understand his world.

Provide ways for the children to fill and dump, collect and gather, hide and seek.

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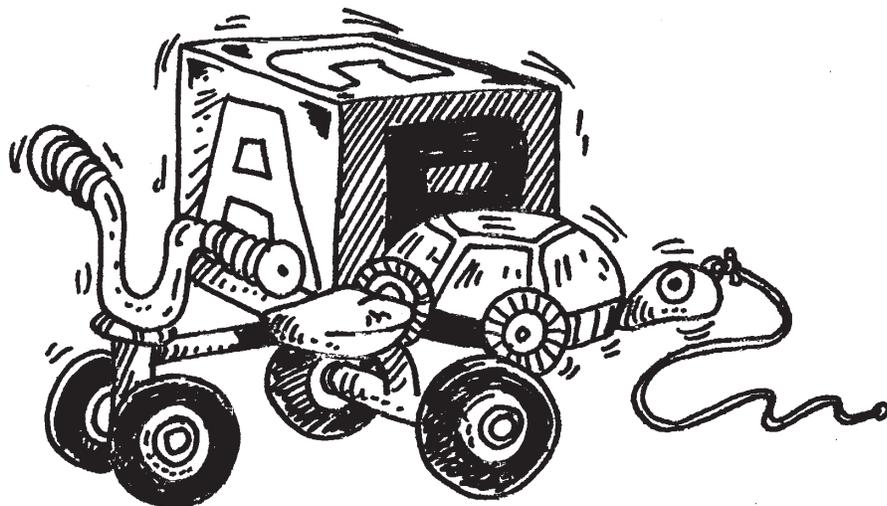
- Help the child learn about cause and effect and why one thing can cause another thing to happen.

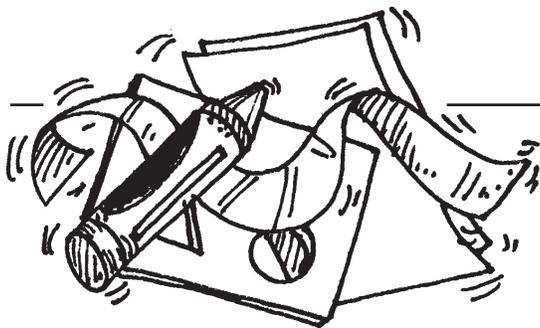
Stimulate his development.

Provide a time for the toddlers to enjoy messy play and learn from mixing, pouring, sifting, and shaping.

This will also:

- Allow the toddler to become very aware of his senses.





A Great Place to Grow

Toys and Materials

- Toddlers love art supplies: plain paper, leftover flyers, grocery sacks, ribbon, crayons, paint, glue

Safety Tips

- Make sure door latches are high enough. You may need to install a lock at the top of the door.
- Make sure window screens are secure and teach children to stay off window ledges.
- Check to make sure booster chairs are securely fastened. As toddlers wiggle, they often loosen the buckles holding them onto a chair.

HELP!

I have a two-year-old who I think is ready to potty train. Is she too young?

Every child potty trains at a different age. Their bodies mature differently and the environment around them is different. It is possible that a child is ready to train by age two, especially girls. There are several things you can observe, and then try training if you think she is ready. Is she interested in the potty and what others are doing there? Does she stay dry for long periods of time? Does she have any idea when she is urinating in her diaper? Does a wet or dirty diaper make her uncomfortable? One more important question to consider is are her parents interested in reinforcing the training process at home? If she appears to be ready and the parents are ready to partner with you, then give it a try. If the child doesn't seem interested after a few days of trying, forget about it for awhile and try again later. Often it takes several attempts before a child is ready to potty train.

Working with Parents

Be sure to save a the child's artwork so parents can see what their pride and joy is doing at your house. While sometimes the paperwork will seem like nothing, it is fun for parents to see the progress their child is making as they develop small motor skills. You can also show parents

what their child is capable of doing and how to do some simple activities. Invite the parents to help their child with an art activity while the child is still at your house. Often parents are afraid of the mess an activity might cause.

What to do if you are concerned about a child's development

Child care providers are often in a position to be the first to notice when a young child has a developmental delay, chronic illness, or disability. If you suspect a child's behavior is indicating a problem:

- Talk with parents in a calm way, being careful to say that there probably isn't a problem, but that it would be worth checking out further.
- Work **with** parents, comparing what you have seen in child care with what they have seen at home and talking together about what to do next.
- Suggest resources, community professionals, articles to read, etc.
- Be a compassionate listener; hearing that there may be something wrong with your baby is very tough.

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Reference: Berk, L. (2000). *Child Development* (5th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.