

JANUARY-MARCH 2024

# WV BIRTH TO THREE REGION 3 NEWSLETTER



## AREAS OF TODDLER DEVELOPMENT

Your child will change substantially during his or her toddler years. You can expect to see development in these areas.

### Cognitive Development

Cognitive development refers to intellectual capabilities, such as thinking and reasoning, as well as the acquisition of knowledge and the ability to process information. During the toddler years, parents will see tremendous leaps in this area.

### Physical Development

Physical development includes a toddler's growth as well as their gross and fine motor skills. While changes in this area won't be as pronounced or rapid as it is in the infant stage, you will see lots of leaps and bounds (literally) from ages 1 to 3.

- Fine motor development includes skills that involve the use of smaller muscles, like fingers and hands.
- Gross motor development refers to skills that require the use of a toddler's large muscles, like his legs and arms.

### Language Skills

Language skills are another significant aspect of toddler development. From 12 to 36 months, toddlers typically go from using a handful of words to connecting pictures and objects with words to speaking in complete sentences and communicating more complex thoughts and ideas.

### Social Development

Social development involves your toddler's ability to learn and adjust to societal norms, like indicating needs, asking for help, and appropriately interacting and playing with his peer group, while also acquiring independence and a sense of self.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

JAN 24- PAJAMA PARTY AT THE  
KANAWHA CITY REC

MARCH 13-LUCKY BUNNY PARTY AT  
KID-A-ROOS

\*\*APRIL READING BOOK CHALLENGE  
APRIL 30-PIZZA PARTY

MAY 15- DINO DIG

JUNE 25- FAMILY/PRACTITIONER  
PICNIC





# TODDLER TIPS

Did you know?

Toddlers are especially happy when they see that they are making the adults around them happy as well.


- Give your child things to put into containers and take out. She will try to take them out and put them back on her own, which is great for the development of eye-hand coordination skills.
- Give your toddler things to stack up. He should try to stack more things on his own and make them fall down, or will stack things up until they fall down.
- Ask your child simple questions and respond to your child's attempts to talk. She should be willing to interact by responding and/or asking further questions.
- Try to talk about different realities with your infant, such as nature, pictures and things from the surrounding environment. You should see your toddler move around and be willing to explore the environment.
- Watch what your toddler does and name it: "You are filling the box." He will be happy to show you what he learned and will gain self-esteem.
- Play with your toddler and offer help: "Let's do it together. Here are more stones to put into your box." These discoveries should make her happy and more confident.
- Use every opportunity to engage in a conversation, including when feeding or bathing, or when working near him. He should soon begin to understand what you are saying and be able to follow simple directions.
- Turn simple questions into games: "Where is your toe?" or "Where is the bird?". You can look at pictures and talk about what you see. She should show more and more curiosity and willingness to communicate about what she sees and hears.



# My WINTER Bucket List

 Catch snowflakes  
on my tongue


 Make a snowman

 Go sledding

 Make a snow angel

 Watch snowflakes  
melt in my hand

 Throw snowballs

 Drink hot cocoa

 Make paper  
snowflakes

 Paint the snow

 Shovel a neighbor's  
driveway

 Indoor picnic









## TIPS ON HELPING YOUR CHILD DEVELOP CONFIDENCE

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SELF-CONFIDENCE IS AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT FOR ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR CHILD'S HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND A KEY INGREDIENT FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS. HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP THE SELF-CONFIDENCE THEY NEED FOR FUTURE SUCCESS.

CONFIDENCE IS A BELIEF IN YOUR ABILITY TO MASTER YOUR BODY, BEHAVIOR, AND THE CHALLENGES YOU ENCOUNTER IN THE LARGER WORLD. CHILDREN WHO ARE CONFIDENT ARE EAGER TO LEARN NEW SKILLS AND FACE NEW CHALLENGES. THEY ALSO EXPECT ADULTS TO BE HELPFUL AND SUPPORTIVE OF THEIR EFFORTS. SELF-CONFIDENCE IS ALSO CRUCIAL FOR GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS AND WORKING OUT THE MANY SOCIAL CHALLENGES—SUCH AS SHARING, COMPETITION, AND MAKING FRIENDS—THAT CHILDREN FACE IN SCHOOL SETTINGS. SELF-CONFIDENT CHILDREN SEE THAT OTHER PEOPLE LIKE THEM AND EXPECT RELATIONSHIPS TO BE SATISFYING AND FUN.

HOW DOES SELF-CONFIDENCE DEVELOP? BABIES ARE BORN WITH NO REAL SENSE OF THEMSELVES AS SEPARATE AND DISTINCT BEINGS. THEY LEARN WHO THEY ARE PRIMARILY THROUGH THEIR INTERACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS. PRIMARY CAREGIVERS—PARENTS, RELATIVES, CAREGIVERS, AND TEACHERS—REFLECT BACK TO CHILDREN THEIR UNIQUE STRENGTHS AND SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES. IN LARGE PART, A CHILD'S SENSE OF CONFIDENCE IS SHAPED AND NURTURED (OR NOT) BY THOSE WHO CARE FOR HIM. WATCH HOW CONFIDENCE GROWS ACROSS THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF LIFE:

A NEWBORN CRIES AND IS COMFORTED BY HER PARENT. THIS BABY IS LEARNING THAT SHE IS LOVED, IMPORTANT, AND WORTHY OF SOOTHING.

AN 8-MONTH-OLD SHAKES A RATTLE AND SMILES AT THE SOUND IT MAKES. HIS CAREGIVER SAYS, "YOU FIGURED OUT HOW THE RATTLE WORKS! NICE JOB!" THIS BABY IS LEARNING HE IS A CLEVER PROBLEM-SOLVER.

A TODDLER TAKES A STOOL TO REACH HER FAVORITE TOY—DAD'S CELL PHONE—ON THE COUNTERTOP. "I CAN'T LET YOU PLAY WITH MY PHONE," SAYS THE GIRL'S FATHER, "BUT HOW ABOUT PLAYING WITH THIS?" HE HANDS HER A TOY PHONE AND SHE HAPPILY BEGINS MAKING CALLS. THIS TODDLER IS LEARNING THAT HER INTERESTS ARE IMPORTANT AND WILL BE RESPECTED AND SUPPORTED (WITHIN LIMITS) BY THOSE WHO LOVE HER.

A 3-YEAR-OLD SOBS AS HIS PARENTS LEAVE FOR A NIGHT OUT ON THE TOWN...WITHOUT HIM. THEY HELP HIM CALM DOWN AND GET SETTLED WITH HIS BABYSITTER. THIS TODDLER IS LEARNING THAT HIS FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT AND THAT HIS PARENTS WILL LISTEN AND RESPOND TO HIM WHEN HE IS DISTRESSED.

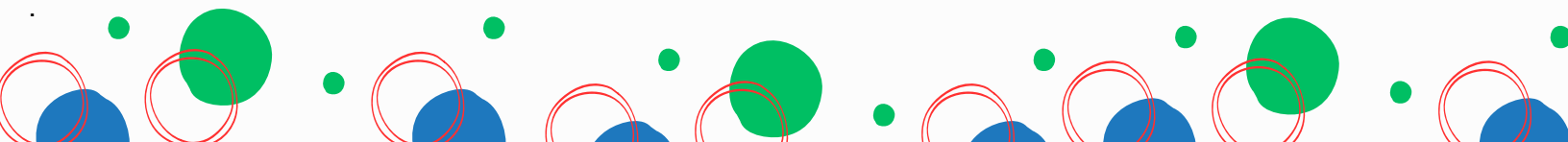
BELOW ARE WAYS YOU CAN NURTURE YOUR CHILD'S SELF-CONFIDENCE THROUGH YOUR EVERYDAY INTERACTIONS TOGETHER.

ESTABLISH ROUTINES WITH YOUR BABY OR CHILD

WHEN EVENTS ARE PREDICTABLE, WHEN THEY HAPPEN IN APPROXIMATELY THE SAME WAY AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME EACH DAY, YOUR CHILD WILL FEEL SAFE, SECURE, CONFIDENT AND IN CONTROL OF HIS WORLD. HE KNOWS THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, BATH COMES FIRST, THEN BOOKS, THEN SONGS AND THEN BEDTIME. HE UNDERSTANDS THE WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT AND CAN PREPARE HIMSELF FOR THOSE CHANGES. IF DAY-TO-DAY EVENTS SEEM TO OCCUR RANDOMLY, IT CAN CAUSE CHILDREN A LOT OF ANXIETY. IF LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, IT MAY FEEL TOO SCARY TO FULLY EXPLORE. WHEN CHILDREN KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT, THEY ARE FREE TO PLAY, GROW, AND LEARN.

ALLOW FOR AND FACILITATE PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PLAY

PLAY IS HOW CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT THEMSELVES, OTHER PEOPLE, AND WORLD AROUND THEM. THROUGH PLAY, CHILDREN ALSO LEARN HOW TO SOLVE PROBLEMS AND DEVELOP CONFIDENCE — FINDING THE BALL BEHIND THE COUCH, GETTING THE RIGHT SHAPE INTO ITS HOLE, GETTING THE JACK-IN-THE-BOX TO POP UP. AN INFANT WHO SUCCESSFULLY PRESSES A BUTTON ON A TOY THAT PRODUCES A PLEASANT SOUND IS LEARNING THAT HE CAN MAKE SOMETHING HAPPEN.



IT IS ALSO THROUGH PLAY THAT CHILDREN LEARN HOW IT FEELS TO BE SOMEONE ELSE, TO TRY ON NEW ROLES AND TO WORK OUT COMPLICATED FEELINGS. A TWO-YEAR OLD WHO DRESSES UP, PLAYING A MOMMY GOING OFF TO WORK, MAY BE WORKING OUT HER FEELINGS ABOUT SEPARATIONS. A THREE-YEAR OLD PLAYING POWER RANGERS MAY BE PRACTICING BEING MORE ASSERTIVE, MASTERING FEARS OR VENTING AGGRESSIVE FEELINGS. LET YOUR CHILD LEAD PLAYTIME—THIS WILL BUILD HIS CONFIDENCE, ASSERTIVENESS, AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS.

HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN TO BE A PROBLEM SOLVER

HELP YOUR CHILD WORK THROUGH PROBLEMS, BUT DON'T ALWAYS SOLVE THEM FOR HER. MOVE THE BLOCKS ON THE BOTTOM OF THE TOWER SO THEY ARE A LITTLE MORE STABLE, BUT DON'T PUT THE TALL ONE ON TOP—LET HER FIGURE OUT HOW TO MAKE IT BALANCE. THIS WAY YOU GIVE HER THE CHANCE TO FEEL SUCCESSFUL.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BUILDING A BLOCK HOUSE ON THE RUG AND IT KEEPS FALLING, YOU COULD:

TELL HER THAT YOU SEE HOW FRUSTRATED SHE IS

ASK HER IF SHE KNOWS WHAT MAY BE CAUSING THE PROBLEM

OFFER YOUR OBSERVATIONS, I.E., THAT THE RUG IS SOFT SO THE BLOCKS AREN'T STABLE

ASK IF SHE HAS ANY IDEAS ABOUT WHAT MIGHT MAKE THEM STEADIER

ASK IF SHE WANTS SUGGESTIONS: "HOW ABOUT MAKING IT ON THE HARD FLOOR?"

THE GOAL IS TO GUIDE AND SUPPORT YOUR CHILD IN HER PROBLEM-SOLVING EFFORTS BUT NOT DO FOR HER WHAT SHE HAS THE SKILLS TO ACCOMPLISH HERSELF. SOMETIMES, YOUR CHILD'S TIMES OF GREATEST FRUSTRATION ARE IN FACT GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR HER TO DEVELOP FEELINGS OF CONFIDENCE, COMPETENCE AND MASTERY. SHE'LL LEARN THAT SHE CAN DEPEND ON YOU TO ENCOURAGE HER. MEANWHILE, SHE'S THE ONE WHO FINDS THE SOLUTION.

GIVE YOUR CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES

FEELING USEFUL AND NEEDED MAKES CHILDREN FEEL IMPORTANT AND BUILDS CONFIDENCE. JOBS SHOULD BE AGE-APPROPRIATE. VERY YOUNG CHILDREN CAN SORT LAUNDRY WITH YOU, HELP FEED PETS, WATER PLANTS, AND PICK UP TOYS. BE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT IS EXPECTED. SAY, "PLEASE PUT A NAPKIN ON EACH PLATE," NOT "HELP ME SET THE TABLE."

CELEBRATE YOUR CHILD'S SUCCESSES

SHOWING YOUR CHILD THAT YOU RECOGNIZE HOW HE IS GROWING AND LEARNING HELPS TO BUILD HIS CONFIDENCE. MAKE A PHOTO ALBUM OF HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS. TAKE PICTURES OF YOUR CHILD STRUGGLING TO CLIMB ONTO A CHAIR, AND ONE OF YOUR CHILD SITTING IN IT PROUDLY.

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO TRY TO MASTER TASKS HE IS STRUGGLING WITH

CHILDREN LEARN BY DOING. BREAK DOWN DIFFICULT TASKS INTO MANAGEABLE STEPS TO HELP HIM FEEL IN CONTROL, CONFIDENT, AND SAFE. FOR EXAMPLE, IF HE IS TRYING TO LEARN TO PUT HIS SHOES ON:

UNLACE HIS SHOES AND OPEN THEM FOR HIM

LINE THEM UP SO HE CAN STEP IN

LET HIM LEAN ON YOU WHILE HE STEPS IN

GUIDE HIS HAND, IF NECESSARY, AS HE FASTENS THE SHOES

TELL HIM: "NICE JOB GETTING YOUR SHOES ON!"

AS YOU WORK ON A TASK OR SKILL THAT IS TOUGH FOR YOUR CHILD—LIKE MAKING THE TRANSITION TO TRAINING WHEELS OR LEARNING TO GO DOWN THE BIG SLIDE—LET HIM KNOW YOU BELIEVE IN HIM, BUT ALSO COMMUNICATE THAT YOU WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED IF HE ISN'T YET READY. YOU ARE THERE TO SUPPORT HIM WHENEVER HE IS READY TO TRY AGAIN. WHEN CHILDREN FEEL IN CONTROL, THEY FEEL STRONG IN THE WORLD.

PROVIDE LANGUAGE FOR YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCES

THIS SHOULD BE LANGUAGE THAT ACCURATELY REFLECTS HIS EXPERIENCE, SHOWS UNDERSTANDING AND EMPATHY, AND INSTILLS CONFIDENCE. "YOU TRIED TO POUR YOUR OWN JUICE. GOOD FOR YOU. SOME JUICE IS IN THE CUP. SOME SPILLED. YOU LOOK SAD ABOUT THAT. HERE, WIPE IT UP WITH THIS SPONGE. THAT PITCHER IS HEAVY FOR LITTLE HANDS. I'LL GIVE YOU A SMALLER ONE AND YOU CAN TRY AGAIN."

BE A ROLE MODEL YOURSELF

CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS KEENLY WATCHING THEIR PARENTS FOR CLUES ABOUT WHAT TO DO OR HOW TO FEEL ABOUT DIFFERENT TASKS OR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS. WHEN IT COMES TO LEARNING HOW TO MANAGE EMOTIONS LIKE HURT, ANGER, OR FRUSTRATION, YOU ARE THEIR "GO-TO" PERSON. IF YOU CAN MODEL PERSISTENCE AND CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF, YOUR CHILD WILL LEARN THIS TOO. TRY NEW THINGS AND PRAISE YOURSELF ALOUD. "I WAS REALLY FRUSTRATED PUTTING UP THAT SHELF. IT WAS HARD TO DO. WHEN IT FELL, I WAS MAD. I RESTED AND TRIED AGAIN. NOW I'M PROUD OF MYSELF FOR GETTING THE JOB DONE AND NOT GIVING UP."

IF YOU CAN SAY TO YOUR CHILD WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY, "I DON'T LIKE THAT YOU THREW THAT BALL AT ME. I KNOW YOU ARE ANGRY AND THAT'S O.K. BUT THROWING HURTS. YOU CAN TELL ME WHY YOU ARE MAD AND HIT THIS PILLOW IF YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING WITH YOUR BODY." YOU ARE NOT ONLY ADDRESSING YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR, AND OFFERING ALTERNATIVES, BUT THE WAY YOU ARE DEALING WITH YOUR ANGER GIVES YOUR CHILD A HEALTHY MODEL FOR COPING WITH STRONG FEELINGS