

Developmental Checklist 12 to 15 Months

If you are in the habit of reading, talking and singing to your baby, you will now see the rewards of your efforts. He or she will be able to understand more and more. Remember, the more you talk to your baby the more he or she will understand!

A good time to talk to your baby is while he or she is getting dressed. As you hand them each piece of clothing, name it: sock, shoe, pants, diaper, sweater, shirt. After a few days of this, put their clothes on the floor in front of them and ask your baby to give the clothes to you as you say the item's name. While bathing, name the toys in the tub and ask them to hand you a specific toy.

Try to avoid "NO's" except when danger is involved! If your baby does something that you do not like, distract them by taking them to another area and giving them something else to do. If baby is about to touch a hot stove, use the word "no." For example: "No, the stove is hot. That will hurt you." Be consistent when you use the word "no," so that it means "Stop At Once!"

Things Your Child May Do At This Age

- Pick up tiny objects using only thumb and forefinger
- Point and probe with forefinger
- Release objects awkwardly; throw objects to practice how to release fingers
- Hold something out for you to take (Note: doesn't always let go.)
- Experiment with simple ways things fit together
- Walk with one or both hands held or actually walk alone without support
- Rock to rhythm while standing alone
- Stoop to pick up things on the floor
- Climb stairs while holding on to your hand or the banister: (Be sure to supervise!)
- May push riding toys backwards instead of pulling them

Potty Training???

- When your baby is born, the nervous system, which sends messages throughout the body, has not completely developed. As your baby grows and his body develops, he gains more control over his body's actions and functions such as: holding his head up, rolling over, picking up small items with his fingers and walking. The same is true for going to the bathroom. Potty training can only occur when he is able to control his bladder and bowel functions. Babies' bodies develop at different rates, so be patient! Praise him when he is successful. Do not punish him when accidents occur – they ARE "accidents."
- How will you know when the time is right? Let your child's readiness should be the guide – does he or she let you know when the diaper is wet or dirty?
- Introduce toilet training through consistent, positive encouragement. There is no set time to start "potty training."

Safety First

- Lock cabinets, doors and windows as your child begins to move about.
- Use a gate to block entrances to stairs.
- Supervise stairs and/or use a gate to block entrances.
- Your child will love to play with water. Remember, it only takes 4 minutes to drown in less than 2 inches of water.
- SUPERVISE at all times whenever your child is playing with water.
- NEVER leave open buckets of water un-attended.
- Place medicines, cleaning products, matches and firearms on high shelves behind locked doors. Remove all hazardous substances. Cover all electrical outlets and extension cords that are exposed.

- Buckle your child into a front-facing child seat placed in the back seat of the car when you take your child for a ride.
- Supervise play in a sand box or with dirt. She may want to eat the sand or dirt or throw it rather than dig and pour.

Health Hints

- Well Baby Check-ups: 12 months (DO it Now!)
- Immunization at 12 months: If your baby has not had these immunizations yet, now is the time for HIB, Hepatitis B, and Chickenpox vaccine (optional).
- Continue cleaning teeth with a very small toothbrush moistened with water.

Nutrition Notes

- Water is as important as food.
- Offer small drinks of water two or three times each day between meals.
- Limit juice to 4 – 6 ounces (1/2 cup) a day.

Things You Can Do Every Day to Help Your Child Grow

- Read to your child every day. Story time is an excellent way to wind-down before naptime or bedtime. It helps to create a routine: such as "It's bedtime, get your favorite book so we can read."
- Help your child learn how to hold books – turned right-side up and starting at the front of the book. Teach her that they are fun to look at but should be handled gently. Patiently teach her that books are not for chewing or tearing. (Accidents will happen. Have tape handy to repair torn pages. Do not make a "big deal" out of a bent or torn page.)
- Encourage him to express his feelings with words; for example, "Oh, you bumped your head. I know that hurts. Tell me where it hurts."
- Give your child time outdoors. Let him run and play. Climbing in and out of boxes is a favorite game. Remember to watch him closely when outside – he can move pretty fast when he wants to.