

## Developmental Checklist      15 to 18 Months

Yes, your child is becoming a toddler! Remember that children will live up to your "labels." In other words, if you call a child "good," he will be good. Likewise, if you think of him as "bad," he will likely be bad. This is a time of "negativism." It is normal for a toddler to say "no" even when he or she really means "yes." It is a normal and healthy part of growing up. You have to stay one step ahead of your toddler. . . be smart and avoid asking questions in ways that give toddlers a chance to say "no." Give more positive attention and praise when toddlers are doing what you want them to do. Remember, your child is now moving from babyhood into their first forms of personhood and becoming independent!

### Things Your Child May Do At This Age

- Try new ways to fit things together
- Take covers off containers
- Throw a ball while sitting or standing
- Explore his world by climbing to things out of reach

### Safety First!

- It is time to check your house again for safety. A beginning toddler can stack items to get to counter-tops, etc.
- Never leave a developing toddler alone!
- The toilet bowl will become an interesting play area. Unless you prevent it, he will find ways to make toilet bowl splashes and/or drink the water. This is dangerous not only because of germs, but because he could tip over into the bowl and drown. The same is true of inexpensive small wading pools and open buckets of water. Keep the lid down on toilets and always watch your child when near water.

### Health Hints

- Well Baby Check-ups: 15 months.
- Immunization at 15 months: DTaP, PCV (if not given at twelve months)
- Develop good eating habits.
- Continue to introduce new types of food whether you like them or not.
- Continue to clean baby teeth with a small toothbrush moistened with water.
- Remember to buckle up you and your baby when you are riding in the car.

### Nutrition Notes

Most children eat best when they are served meals at regular times of the day. When adults and older children act angry or upset at mealtime, small children may also become unhappy and not want to eat. Calm meal times make it easier for your child to enjoy eating.

### Special Note

Temper tantrums often happen at this age because toddlers this age lack the language to describe the feelings they are having and have not yet learned appropriate ways to get their needs met, so they become frustrated easily. Remaining calm and in control you're your child loses control is most effective. You may have to pick the child up, go into another room or out of the store. Until your child calms down, hold them gently but firmly and tell them in simple words that they cannot do what they are doing. Then after cooling off time (5 to 10 minutes) your child can return to their former activity. Yelling at a child who is having a temper tantrum may only make the situation worse. Hitting and shaking are not truly effective, can seriously hurt your child, and don't teach your child how to behave appropriately to get his/her needs met (so even though punishment may stop the bad behavior, it won't keep it from happening again and again). When you remain calm and help him/her "cool off," you're teaching your toddler to calm himself or herself down – a skill he/she will need throughout his/her life!

## **Things You Can Do Every Day to Help Your Child Grow**

- Read to your child every day. Talk with him about the stories you read. Encourage him to turn the pages. At first, he will turn 2 or 3 pages at a time. Learning to hold a book the right way (right-side up) and where to begin (at the front) are skills that your child can begin to understand.
- Give your child a large piece of paper and a large crayon and allow them to scribble.
- Work with her to solve simple puzzles that have only a few big pieces. Let her pick the pieces up and guide her hand as she places them.
- Expose her to different kinds of music. Teach her to dance to the rhythm of the music. You can make or buy rhythm instruments such as drums, bells and sticks.
- Create a box of dress-up clothes that your child can play with. Use hats, purses, socks, jewelry (nothing smaller than 2 inches) for make believe play. Be sure that the clothes are easy to get on and off.
- Find a safe place outdoors for digging. Use old buckets, spoons, plastic bowls, plastic strainers, cans without sharp edges and plastic cups.