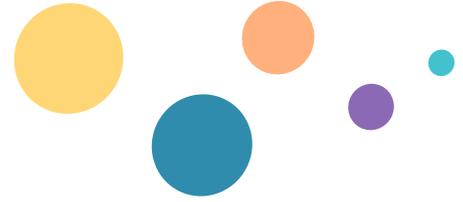


TODDLER 1 TO 3 YEARS BUSY AND BOLD!



This section includes facts, guidance, and ideas for you to try out with your toddler aged 1-3 years old. This can help you see a bit more into the world of your child but you know your child best; enjoy getting to know more about the little person in your life.

In this age range there is a lot of change you will likely notice in your child. Here are some of the key milestones to look out for:



Goes from babbling, to saying words, to full sentences.



Might be shy or scared around strangers, to eventually welcoming new people and playmates.



Will point to objects she wants, eventually learning their names and asking for them.



Will start to follow speech and conversation more, understanding simple directions.



Will learn to walk and eventually run—watch out!



Will start to develop and express their own opinions, likes and dislikes.



IS YOUR CHILD ON TRACK?

Children develop at their own pace. If something worries you, seek help and guidance from a healthcare professional. It is particularly important that you bring your baby to the doctor if any of the following are true for your baby. Additionally, if your child is not on-track for whatever reason, alongside seeking medical guidance here are some things you can do to help them.

1-2 YEARS

OBSERVATIONS

- Cannot walk by herself by 18 months
- Walks only on her tippy-toes and not with heel-then-toe touching the ground
- Does not have at least 8 words by 18 months
- Does not use two-word sentences such as "me want" or "me go" or "no touch" by age 2
- Does not copy simple actions or words by 2 years of age
- Cannot follow simple one-step instructions by 2 years of age ("Put down the ball please")

WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- Give her something movable to hold on and push (a chair with wheels, a small cart). Let her train by herself—do not train her by holding her hands yourself. She will slowly find confidence and detached from the chair/cart alone.
- It can be a game for her or a proper walking difficulty. Let her walk barefoot when possible and try to play games walking on your heels, then walking on your toes.
- Talk back to her by repeating one of the sounds she makes, smile and show your interest in his sounds. Have conversations with her in her language. When she begins to say words, repeat and pronounce them clearly and correctly.
- To get him used to language, explain everything you do with him. Use clear, simple words, the same ones each time. Name toys, objects, body parts, etc. Repeat yourself often.
- Rhythm is important to language development. Sing songs, play music, and have her imitate body movements. Clap your hands, touch your toes or beat a drum. Use the children's songs.
- Encourage her to "do as I do" and demonstrate this with your spouse or other caregiver.
- Make eye contact when performing simple tasks and narrate what you are doing.
- Repeat the instructions, making eye contact and demonstrating, if appropriate, the desired action

2-3 YEARS

OBSERVATIONS

- Falls over a lot and has difficulty walking up even 3 or 4 steps on the stairs
- Drools a lot or has very unclear speech
- Cannot build a tower of more than 4 blocks
- Has difficulty to make his fingers do things with small objects such as holding a crayon or picking up stones; Cannot copy a circle by 3 years of age
- Does not use short 3- or 4-word phrases to communicate by age of 3 years
- Does not engage in any pretend play (pretend to make a phone-call, walking their baby-dolly etc)
- Shows none or only little interest in other children
- Has a very hard time being away from mom, dad, or another caregiver

WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- Seek a medical consultation
- Sing simple songs with him every day, especially those that have actions to go with the words.
- Make a game by having him point to the objects that you name. You can use pictures or actual objects like a ball, block or cup.
- Tell him simple stories that have pictures showing what you talk about.
- Your child needs hand and wrist stability to place blocks with control. Try using large wooden ones, which are bit easier for toddlers to manipulate than small soft materials.
- Try to wrap something around the crayon to make the holding object bigger. Slowly reduce the size of the support by the weeks.
- Make a game by having her point to the objects that you name. You can use pictures or
- Tell her simple stories that have pictures showing what you talk about.
- Seek a medical consultation.
- Encourage him to imagine and ask about what he thinks others are thinking or feeling to help promote perspective-taking
- Seek a medical consultation.
- Reassure your child that you will return and provide them with context: "Mommy is leaving now for a little bit to go shopping, but will come back soon and we can play with your ball."



JUST PART OF WHAT MAKES THEM UNIQUE

Some children might take a bit longer to speak and develop clear pronunciation and others may not speak or make clear words at all. In this case it is important to speak with your healthcare centre and seek help with a speech and language specialist.

If your child is 1-2 years old...

- Talk back to him by repeating one of the sounds he makes, smile, and show your interest in his sounds. Have conversations with him in his language. When he begins to say words, repeat, and pronounce them clearly and correctly.
- To get him used to language, explain everything you do with him. Use clear, simple words, the same ones each time. Name toys, objects, body parts, etc. Repeat yourself often.
- Rhythm is important to language development. Sing songs, play music, and have him imitate body movements. Clap your hands, touch your toes or beat a drum. Use the children's songs that are traditionally used.
- Let him see your face and mouth when you make the sounds. Then ask him to make the same movements with his mouth to make the sounds.
- If he wants an object, name it, and wait for him to make some sound. As he gets the idea of this procedure, encourage him to make sounds to be more like the name of the object.
- Play with your mouth and encourage him to do the same movements: blow your cheeks, wrinkle your lips as when you kiss, blow one cheek at the time, make big or small Os with your lips. You can do the same games with your tongue as well: tongue out, tongue in, tongue folded, etc.

If your child is 2-3 years old...

- All the above ideas for 1-2-year-old children, AND
- Sing simple songs with him every day, especially those that have actions to go with the words,
- Make a game by having him point to the objects that you name. You can use pictures or actual objects like a ball, block, or cup,
- Tell him simple stories that have pictures showing what you are talk about.

It can help parents enormously to speak with parents of other children who are the same age. All parents can share their stories of food disasters and late nights, while other parents of children with similar difficulties as your child can help you see your situation differently, share resources, and their experience. If you need help finding contacts, get in touch with [NATIONAL ENTITY SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES](#) to connect with other parents.

EAT WELL



Children ages 1-3 years...

Toddlers need a balanced diet including energy foods (carbs like rice, bread, potatoes, or noodles), body-building foods (proteins like meat, fish, beans, lentils, nuts, chicken, and dairy products) and protecting foods (vegetables, fresh and dried fruits, and seeds).

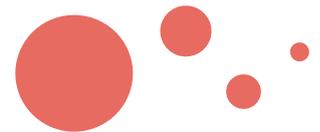
Children who are a healthy weight tend to be fitter, healthier, better able to learn, and are more self-confident.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...



Sugary foods like sweets, juice, and cake can cause sleep problems, tooth decay, mood swings, and other health problems in young children, inviting stressful situations and tension. A little treat once or twice a week after a meal can work well for everyone.

Salt on food or in cooking water can damage your child's kidneys. It is best to skip salt in cooking and let adults add it at the table.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?



Difficulties around food and mealtimes are unfortunately common at this age; toddlers bite at the breast, often run around at mealtimes, playing with or wasting their food and generally making a mess. Many mums and dads find this stressful or annoying. Mealtimes with toddlers can also lead to arguments as mums, dads and grandparents can have different ideas about how a child should eat or what to do when your child behaves like this at mealtimes. For ideas on how to reduce stress and manage stressful situations at mealtimes see the **Respond** section. For practical tips on how to manage your child's eating, read on!

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE MY BABY EATS WELL?

- **NATIONAL PLACEHOLDER – TOP NUTRITION CONCERN** – iron, iodine, obesity etc.
- Keep it simple. You decide what and when to offer food, and your child decides how much to eat. Encourage him to eat when hungry and stop when full.
- Avoid making mealtimes a battleground, as trying to police young children around food can lead to power-struggles that can harm them later in life.
- A simple regular routine of three family meals together a day, with regular snacks can help children to eat well. They watch you and learn what to expect.
- Many toddlers will eat the same regular family food as everyone else. Healthy family meals prepared without salt can save time and a lot of extra hassle.
- Have just one thing on the plate that your child will definitely eat and keep putting little bits of other foods, so she tries and slowly gets used to other foods.
- Turn off the tv at mealtimes and avoid using phones or screens to encourage a toddler to eat their meal. Try chatting or storytelling over a meal if you need to keep them entertained.
- Children who are teething, very tired, or unwell are unlikely to eat well. Do not push them to eat if they don't want; offer fluids and simple food: apples, bread, plain rice or pasta.

GROW STRONG

Children ages 1-3 years...

Toddlers need 11-13 hours of sleep every day, children with enough sleep have better attention, behavior, learning, memory, and overall mental and physical health. A lack of sleep can lead to high blood pressure, obesity, and even depression as kids get older!

As you know well, toddlers have lots of energy! To stay healthy, a toddler needs to be active for around 3 hours every day; walking, running, dancing, and playing ball, ideally outdoors, are good ways to stay active.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...



Toddlers love to do things by themselves and you can help by teaching her to brush her own teeth (with supervision), wash her hands properly, get a tissue for her nose, or show you little cuts or bumps. By 3 years of age, toddlers love to pick their own clothes and try to dress themselves; offer choices, show him how to do up buttons and zips, and praise his efforts as much as his successes.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

Managing life with (several) small children is fun and fulfilling. However, family life can also be demanding, and it is often hard to get a break as someone always needs or wants something. Try your best to find even one hour of time alone each week to check-in and take care of yourself a bit. See **Respond section** for ideas about small things that can make a big difference.

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD TO GROW STRONG AND HEALTHY?

- Keep your child healthy by making sure they get their vaccinations and regular check-ups with [NATIONAL CARE PROVIDER SYSTEM](#) when they are [NATIONAL VACCINATION SCHEDULE AGES](#)
- There are many things you can do to help your toddler sleep well. Science says that:
 - o A calm bedtime routine (brush teeth, read story, off to bed) can improve sleep in young children. Start as young as possible and try to do the same thing, at the same time, in the same order every night.
 - o Avoid screens an hour before bedtime, as the light can stimulate their brain.
 - o If she gets out of bed or calls out, go to her and be firm, kind, and as boring as possible. Bring her back to bed, repeating it is time for bed. Do this as many times as it takes and try not to give too much attention.
- Make sure your child gets outside and is active every day. He needs activity and daylight in his day to sleep well at night. If your child needs a mobility support aid, outdoor activity is a great way for them to socialize and get used to using their aid on different surfaces and environments.
- Screen-time is a tricky topic in any family. Instead of counting minutes, focus on:
 - o Making sure that your child eats well with you at mealtimes without a screen
 - o Plays and runs around for 2-3 hours a day, ideally outdoors
 - o Has enough chance to play and stay social with other children
 - o Sleeps 9-11 hours at night and is generally able to focus on learning
 - o Views age-appropriate and ideally educational content on screens, supervise closely to make sure your child is safe!
- Helping a toddler to use a potty or a toilet takes time; when your child starts showing an interest, trying to take off his diaper or talking about using the toilet, take it slowly and be patient. Every child develops at a different rate.





PLAY HAPPILY

Children ages 1-3 years...

From 1.5-2 years old, your child will not yet play interactively with other children but may stop with what she is doing and watch other children who are playing nearby.

Children this age like to know what will happen throughout the day, and often love to do the same things, every day, at the same time, and like to repeat the same action many times. In difficult periods or moments of big change (a new sibling, a new house) it can help your toddler to have familiarity in play, food, and sleeping arrangements (favourite book, blanket or soft toy).

From 2-3 years old, children play alongside each other but still not playing interactively together, and it is normal that they do not want to share their toys.

Toddlers love experimenting and testing their ideas about how the world works. This is why they like to draw on the walls, throw all the wrong things in the toilet, and generally seek to provoke your reactions with their behaviour.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...



Children in this age range begin to form a sense of identity and independence and like to do things for themselves. Support them by encouraging them to take on simple tasks, like putting together a simple puzzle, cleaning up their toys, or picking out their favourite book for story time. Finding their independence can also mean they are less compliant and may throw a tantrum when they do not get their way. For more on how to handle this sort of situation, see the Respond section.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

Toddlers are good fun and often have lots of energy. Regardless of whatever else is happening, it is very important that parents eat properly, as a balanced diet and good rest every day helps you to keep up with your busy toddler and avoid mood swings yourself. Sharing time with other young families or with grandparents, aunts, and uncles can offer a chance to build and strengthen your community by staying in touch with friends, cousins, and family. See **Respond section** to see more about how to manage your stress and avoid stress in family life.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD TO PLAY AND DEVELOP HEALTHILY?

- Make a habit of sharing a book and chatting about what he looks at on the page. Books can keep him calm and busy at the clinic, in the car, or at snack-time and help settle your child before bed. See for how to get the most from every book including with developmental delays or disabilities.
- Take your child out for a little walk every day, for even just 10 minutes, to the shop, mosque, park, to visit a family member or friend with children, and chat about what you see and hear.
- Make a habit of singing a song or telling her a story or rhyme, and chat together while preparing food, eating, dressing, bathing, driving etc.
- Notice if there are special songs your child likes to listen to, dance together, and give your child some pots, pans, plastic bowls and wooden spoons to hit and play drums.
- Roll, throw, catch, or run after a ball together. Help her take turns and share toys with other children, praising when he shares and explaining how other children feel when he shares and why sharing is important.
- From around 2 years-old, you can play "I-Spy" using colours instead of letters – "I spy something green. Can you guess?"

LOVE DEEPLY

Children ages 1-3 years...

Within this age range, children begin to understand that they are not the boss of the world. As a result, toddlers often experience big feelings that they need to learn to manage properly from their parents. Toddlers are often aggressive and loud: biting, hitting, throwing toys, and screaming are all normal ways a toddler communicates fear, anxiety, and frustration.

Believe it or not, rough-and-tumble play such as rolling, tickling, wrestling, and playing chase or monster games with your young child, is not only great fun but it also teaches your child self-control and social skills. Research shows that they learn best if you DON'T let them win every time. Instead, model self-control and respect such as stopping when they show signs they have had enough.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Home safety is increasingly important as your child is big and fast enough to rush into everything. Toddlers need close supervision as they can quickly fall from tables and furniture, stairs, windows high-up, and other heights. Keep poisonous items out-of-reach or locked away, including colourful, small, or squishy things that are typically attractive to toddlers including sharp objects, laundry pods, medication, vitamins, and cleaning products or liquids. Read the **Safety First** sheet and keep it close by in case you need it.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

Parenting a toddler is fun but can also be frustrating, exhausting, and hurtful. It is normal to struggle. If you find yourself getting snappy or short tempered, take it as a sign of stress and do your best to take care of yourself and each other. A short break, walk or exercise, chat with a friend or family member, or even just taking a shower alone can make a big difference. Try out the Fathers' and Mothers' Quizzes to get some insights into what you are each feeling and going through. See **Respond section** to get some ideas about how to manage stress and take care of yourself. Over weeks or months, if you feel consistently down, stressed, upset or just numb it is a good idea to speak with someone you trust about how you are feeling and what might help. [NATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT HERE.](#)

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE MY BABY FEELS LOVED AND IS SAFE?

- Do not use any form of violence. Violence harms children and their development, undermines relationships and weakens trust, destroying families over generations. See **Respond section** to get some ideas about how to manage stressful situations with your child.
- Try playing pretend games where your child is the boss for a while, in a safe way. Get into his game; if he says go to sleep or eat then pretend to sleep or eat. Or try pretending to do the wrong thing and invite him to correct you.
- Encourage your children to take turns to do different chores in and outside of the house and try to praise girls for things other than their appearance (such as their sense of humour, their hardworking nature) and boys for things other than their strength (such as their kindness, their attentiveness).
- Help your child to notice and recognise her feelings by giving her simple words: hurt,

sad, happy, sleepy, excited, or scared. Set an example by telling her your feelings: "I feel excited to see granny. How about you?"

- If your child is minded by someone else or goes to preschool, be clear you are leaving and will come back. Give them something small and safe belonging to you such as a hairbrush, comb, or empty coin-purse, that they can keep with them while you are apart. Tell them that they are safe and practice a regular pick-up and drop-off routine, so they learn what to expect.

CONCLUSION

The days are long, but the years are so short. Whether your toddler is a shy child who needs your help to make friends or is a wild child who needs your help to watch before he jumps, toddlers grow up. As time passes, your toddler will become more playful and chattier, learning, and enjoying new skills and abilities. Read ahead to the next module (4-5 years) to see what is coming your way and how best to support your child's healthy growth and development.

