

# 18 Months to 3 Years: Toddlers and Two-Year-Olds

## I Learn Who I Am

### **Sometimes, I feel powerful. But independence can be scary.**

I count on you to set clear and consistent limits that keep me safe.

When I test limits, I am learning who I am and how I should behave. I am not trying to “get you” – even though it may feel that way at times.

### **I feel good about myself and where I come from when my culture is reflected in my child care setting.**

I feel I belong when you speak to me in my home language.

I feel proud when I see pictures of my family and other people like me hanging on the wall.

I feel safe when I see adults who care about me working together.

### **I sense how you feel about me. Your feelings help shape how I feel about me.**

When you respect me, I respect myself.

I know when you think I am good or bad, pretty or ugly and smart or dumb.

I tune in carefully to your tone and words when you talk about me. Please don't talk about me as if I can't understand.

### **Sometimes I want to be big. Sometimes I want to be a baby again. And sometimes I want to be both – at the same time. This is one of the reasons why my behavior is sometimes hard for you to understand. I don't understand it myself.**

Sometimes I will walk. Other times I want a ride in the stroller.

Sometimes I insist on doing things my way. Other times I want you to do things for me.

Sometimes I push you away. Other times I want you to hold me close. It's O.K. – I still love you.

### **I am learning more self-control.**

I understand more often what you expect of me.

Sometimes I can stop myself from doing things I shouldn't.

Sometimes I can't.

I learn to control my behavior best when you give me only a few simple, clear rules to follow and are there to help me in case I forget them.

## I Learn About My Feelings

### **I Learn About My Feelings**

My feelings can be very strong.

I feel proud of things I make and do.

I can get very frustrated and angry. I may hit, push or bite to express myself.

I may be afraid of the dark, monsters and people in masks or costumes.

### **I am learning to control my feelings.**

I am learning to use words to express my feelings.

I sometimes practice how to express my feelings when I play.

You show me how to treat others by the way you treat others.

### **I know you have feelings too.**

I may rub your back to comfort you or pat your cheek. I learn how to care for others by the way you care for me.

I sense when you are happy and truly there for me. It makes me feel good.

I can tell when you are very sad, scared or upset. Sometimes it makes me feel sad, scared and upset too!

## I Learn About People, Objects and How Things Work

### **I am more aware of other children.**

I am aware when other children are my age and sex.

I am aware of skin color and may begin to be aware of physical differences.

I can tell who is missing from the group when I see who is present.

### **I like to play together with other children.**

I may pretend we are going to work or cooking dinner.

I explore our environment with them, going over couches or under tables.

I build block towers with them.

### **I am beginning to be aware of other children's rights.**

I learn I don't always get my way.

Sometimes I can control myself when things don't go my way. Sometimes I can't.

I am learning to take turns.

Sometimes I share. Sometimes it's just too hard.

### **I am becoming aware of how you respond to my actions.**

I know when you are pleased about what I do.

I know when you are upset with me.

### **I learn about how the world works.**

I may be able to put toys in groups, such as putting all of the toys with wheels together.

I can find a familiar toy in a bag, even when I can't see it.

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## I Learn to Move and Do

### **I can do many new things with my fingers and hands.**

I turn the pages of a book.

I scribble with a crayon or marker and may be able to draw shapes, like circles.

I pound and squeeze clay. Sometimes I make shapes with a cookie cutter.

I can thread beads with large holes.

I am learning to use scissors.

I move in new ways.

### **I kick and throw a ball.**

I stand on one foot.

I am learning to stand and walk on tiptoes.

I may be able to walk upstairs putting one foot on each step.

### **I can handle many everyday routines by myself.**

I am learning to eat with a spoon and fork – though sometimes I use my fingers.

I can dress myself in simple clothes.

I can pour milk on my cereal.

## I Learn to Communicate and Relate

### **I have many things to tell you.**

I may know up to 200 words in my home language and sometimes in a second language. I can put them together in sentences.

I can tell you about things that happened yesterday and about things that will happen tomorrow.

I may get frustrated when I have trouble expressing myself. Then I need you to listen patiently. It may help me if you put into words what you think I am trying to say.

### **I like you to read and tell me stories.**

I especially enjoy stories that are about something I know.

Sometimes I may listen for a long time. Other times I may listen for just a little while. I like it when you know the difference.

I like to join in when you tell a story.

Sometimes I like to “read” or tell you a story too.

### **I play with words.**

I like songs, fingerplays and games with nonsense words.

My friends and I talk together as we act out scenes about serving dinner, driving a car or building a house.

Sometimes I use an object as if it were something else. For example, I might use a block for a phone.