

Let's GROW...

...with your
2 to 2 1/2 year old

How Two-Year-Olds 'Work'

If we could give toddlers their own theme song it would be Frank Sinatra's 'My Way'!

Your toddler has a tremendous desire to develop his own way of doing things, whether it's wearing shorts in February or finishing the tower before anything else. He only thinks in the present and usually only thinks of himself. This is a good thing as it helps your toddler develop a strong sense of self. In time he will be able to take other people's feelings and thoughts into account.

Your toddler also likes to do things "right now" and doesn't always understand the need to wait. Encouraging your child to do another activity while waiting is a good way of teaching him the concept of time. It's hard for your two year old to listen to a long explanation or sort out a lot of choices. Give your child 2 choices, "Would you like to wear the blue shirt or the red one?". It is important for your toddler to start to do things for himself. Starting to dress or feed himself, even washing should all be encouraged in a positive way.

Understanding the kind of temperament your toddler has makes it easier for all. Every child is different. If your child is shy don't force him to interact directly with other people. A simple wave, with praise, shows him he is learning polite behaviour. With encouragement and comfort his degree of interaction will grow.

Be patient and understanding. Helping your child to feel good about himself sets the right path for this next stage of growing independence.



Dear Mom and Dad:



You have seen my fingerprints
on windows, wall and door.
And sometimes you are cross
at finding them once more.
But little hands grow very fast,
And years just slip away,
So I'm sending you my
fingerprints, my size,
this special day.



Love
Your Child

Showing Love



The most important thing a father can do for his children is to show love and respect for his mate.

Kissing your mate and showing affection reminds kids what love looks like. We forget that our toddlers watch and imitate us a lot. Keeping this in mind helps to shape our toddlers' growing sense of place in the family. But this is not the only gift a father can give his children. Involvement in your toddler's life is also very important.

Dads do things differently to moms and this is necessary. Fathers are more likely to engage in rough and tumble play. Getting physical whether it's a hug or wrestling match keeps your child in touch. Your toddler finds the playful, unpredictable interactions that Dads enjoy highly stimulating. Always remember to keep it safe and fun. Watch for signs when he has had enough such as whining or distracted then change to a quieter activity; building blocks or make believe.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is a special time for you and your child. Relax and enjoy this stage of his development. Most children are open to toilet training between the ages of 2 to 3. Let their behaviour be your guide not your timetable. Most girls learn the art a little faster than boys. Patience and encouragement will help your child feel good about her successes.



Signs of readiness

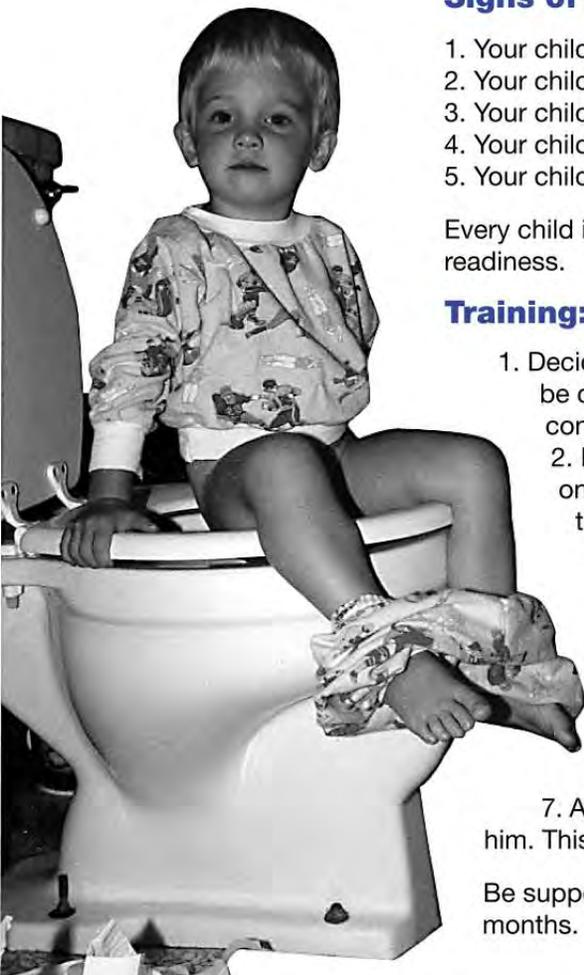
1. Your child stays dry for at least 2 hours at a time.
2. Your child has words or gestures for urine and bowel movements.
3. Your child has regular bowel movements about the same time everyday.
4. Your child understands and follows simple directions.
5. Your child understands the concept of wet and dry, and finds a dirty diaper uncomfortable.

Every child is different. If your child is not interested, this is OK. Wait until they show you their readiness.

Training: One Step At A Time

1. Decide on your toilet terminology and encourage all family members and caregivers to be consistent. Teach the correct anatomical names, a penis is a penis. This is less confusing for all.
2. Decide whether you will use a potty chair or the actual toilet. The choice depends on what is comfortable for your child. (Use an adaptable seat for your child if using the toilet.)
3. Encourage your child to sit on the toilet or potty with his clothes on, several times a day. This will help him get used to the new habit.
4. Once comfortable, have him sit with his clothes off. This is practise so don't expect results.
5. Change your toddler's diapers as soon as they are wet or soiled, this helps them to distinguish wet and dry.
6. Try leaving his diaper off for a short period of time so he can go by himself if he wishes.
7. After much success with step 6, try training pants or regular underpants. Keep helping him. This new habit takes months to learn.

Be supportive. Read a book to him about toilet training. If he's not ready, try again in a few months.



OODLES OF NOODLES



I know I'm being very hard to please these days - but all I want to eat are noodles. This is called a "food jag". It will last for a while and then go away. Mom and Dad are trying to be very patient with me. They let me eat noodles. They also offer me small portions of everything else we are eating. Pasta is a healthy food from Canada's Food Guide.

I wasn't very hungry yesterday and I'm not very hungry today either. Mom and Dad, understand that I am not growing as quickly these days. My appetite is smaller so they make sure that I have small portions on my plate. I also seem to eat more at meal-times when I finish my snack or juice at least one hour before we sit down to eat.



I'm still kind of messy when I eat. I want to use my spoon and feed myself. I look to you to teach me how to eat healthfully. Let's eat together!

Help! Monsters!

Well, we finally have Trevor falling asleep on his own, except he still wakes in the night!" Chronic sleep deprivation can take its toll on your energy and patience levels, to say nothing of your sex life. Trading the "night shifts" with your partner can help with catching up on your sleep and make both of you feel better in the morning. There are a few reasons why you might have a night owl in your family.



Listen...And...Talk

- Physical discomfort; teething, ear infections, colds, fevers.
- Environment; becoming too hot or too cold in the night or wetting the bed. Blankets may fall off or room is hot.
- Nightmares or bad dreams; this can be related to daytime events, a parent returning to work, new caregiver, starting pre-school, scary movie or story. Reassure, and leave a nightlight on.
- Night terrors; these are different to nightmares as the child does not wake with these. Your toddler may let out a terrifying yell, sit upright in bed with eyes wide open and cry. He is unaware of his surroundings and may not recognize you. It is impossible to wake the child and you should not try. Stay with him until he lies back down and returns to sleep.



keep me safe

My curiosity and excitement can lead me into dangerous situations.

Keep my abilities in mind when setting rules. I might be able to turn the taps on for my bath, but please do not let me. Many kids have spent months in the burn unit of hospitals recovering from serious burns that they got in the bathtub. Be sure that I am not in the bathroom alone. Check the water temperature with your elbow or your hand. Swish it around to make sure there are no pockets of hot water before I get into the bathtub. Keep the water temperature in our home set no higher than 120 degrees. Always turn the cold water on before the hot and turn the hot water off before the cold to keep me safe. Also, you can buy a spout cover to prevent burns and bumps.

Teach me simple traffic rules. I must always hold onto an adult's hand when we walk along the roads, sidewalks, in parking lots and especially when we cross the street. Please do not trust me to cross the street by myself. I might run across the street to see a sweet little puppy and not remember the traffic dangers around me. Make sure I always wear a safety approved helmet when riding my tricycle.

Please keep the rules clear and simple, so that I can understand them. I still need you to help me to remember the rules. Keeping me safe is your job. Thanks Dad and Mom!



I like me, I like you

Baby #2?

Do I have to share you with the new baby? Maybe this isn't such a good idea after all! These changes can make me feel alone and insecure. Let me know I'm still important. We can look at my baby books and you can tell me stories about when I was a baby. Tell me what it will be really like when the baby comes home, not how much fun it will be in 1 or 2 years!

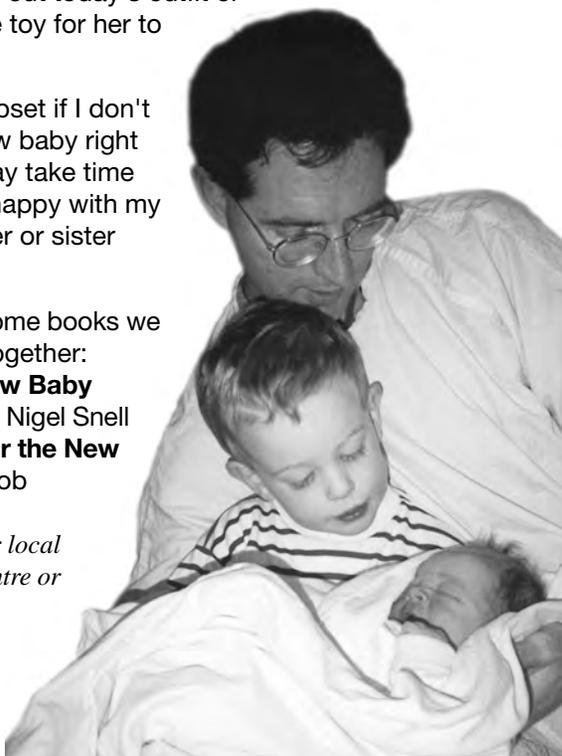
I like to go shopping with you to get some new things for the baby. I can help pick the colours of sleepers or diapers. I can be a real help for other things, especially if you can't reach that sock under the bed. I can also help with the baby, let me pick out today's outfit or choose the toy for her to play with.

Don't be upset if I don't like the new baby right away. It may take time but I'll be happy with my new brother or sister eventually.

Here are some books we can read together:

Clare's New Baby Brother by Nigel Snell
Waiting For the New Baby by Bob Graham

(Check your local resource centre or library.)



I grow, you grow
let's grow together

I Am Happy, You Are Happy

I feel happy and secure when we follow our daily routines. I am starting to know when it is time to eat, when it is bedtime, and when it is time to go to the drop-in centre. Brushing our teeth together after each meal and at bedtime helps me to learn good habits. Bath time is fun. I love it when you blow bubbles and pour water on me. My favourite routine is bedtime when you read me a bedtime story, snuggle and kiss me good night. A change in my routine can make me cranky. For example, I need my meals, snacks and naps at my usual time. I rely on you to follow our schedule. Be patient and guide me gently.

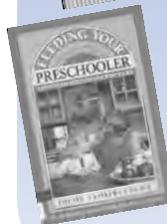
in print and on the web



A Dad's Guide to the Toddler Years
by Armin Brott



www.canadianparents.com



Feeding Your Preschooler
by Louise Lambert-Lagacé

Kids Picks

Before You were Born: the Inside Story,
Owl Books

The Potty Book For Girls,
by Alyssa Satin Capucilli

The Potty Book For Boys,
by Alyssa Satin Capucilli



Check with your local resource centre or library for these books and others.

*Topics and points of view vary between books and authors.
Be sure the information is consistent with your family's values.*

If you have any questions about your child's growth and development, contact your local health unit office.

Cochrane (705) 272-3394
Hearst (705) 362-4854
Hornepayne (807) 868-2091
Iroquois Falls (705) 258-2247
Kapuskasing (705) 335-6101
Matheson (705) 273-2954
Moosonee (705) 336-2294
Smooth Rock Falls (705) 338-2654
Timmins (705) 267-1181
Toll-free 1-800-461-1818

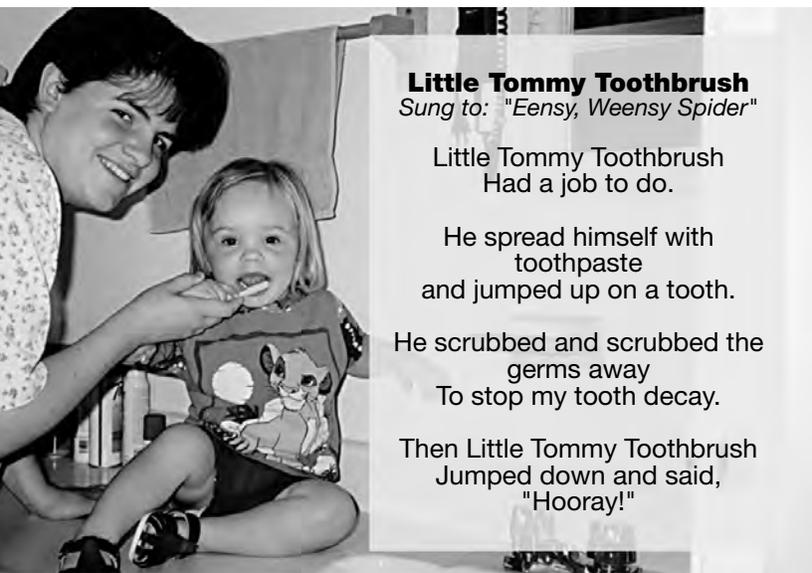


Porcupine

Health Unit • Bureau de santé

Change of address, Comments:
Call: (705) 335-6101 or Fax: (705) 337-1895
Email: kapusk@porcupinehu.on.ca

Growth Workout



Little Tommy Toothbrush *Sung to: "Eensy, Weensy Spider"*

Little Tommy Toothbrush
Had a job to do.

He spread himself with
toothpaste
and jumped up on a tooth.

He scrubbed and scrubbed the
germs away
To stop my tooth decay.

Then Little Tommy Toothbrush
Jumped down and said,
"Hooray!"

Talk with me

Under or Over

I am starting to learn about where things are, like "the ball is under the chair". Play a hide and seek game with me. Hide my toys around the room: "Is it on the table?" "Is it in my toy box?"

I am using about 150 to 200 words by the time I reach 2½ years old. Remember to share books with me. I especially like books with flaps I can flip over and see what's underneath.

I like books with heavy pages that I can turn more easily. Point out objects, people and actions when you are reading with me! Reading books and singing songs together are a special time for me to share the world with you!



Grow with me

Meeting Friends

I am very curious about the world around me. Be patient with me. I do not always want to share toys with friends, but I like to be with other children. You can take me to visit new places. Resource centres, drop-ins, libraries, and community playgroups are good places for me to practice my social skills. You can have fun talking with all the other parents that are there. While we visit I can play with paint, build with blocks, and sing songs. My toys are very important to me right now. They help me feel secure. I am becoming very independent. Let me do things; that's how I learn.



The Best Play Dough Ever

1 cup flour
1/2 cup salt
1 cup water (add colouring)
2 tsp cream of tartar
1 tbsp oil
food colouring

Stir all ingredients together and cook over medium high heat for five minutes or until the right consistency. Store in a plastic bag or airtight container. Remember - keep pot handles turned to the back of the stove.

Play with me

Roll it, Poke it, Pound it

Let's make play dough together. We can shape the dough with our hands. We can squeeze, poke, and pound this funny feeling dough. For added fun let's use a rolling pin, a block, a popsicle stick, a spoon, etc. to cut and shape the dough. Rolling worms of all shapes and sizes is fun. Help me to be creative. Don't do it for me. Talk with me about what we are making. If you buy play dough, be sure it is non-toxic.

Let's
GROW...

Look At What I Can Do!

From 2 to 2½ years, these are some of the things that I can do:

2

- At age 2, I can use 50 or more single words
- I can build a tower of at least six blocks
- I like throwing balls overhand
- I can speak and be understood half the time
- I might be able to jump with both feet off the ground at once
- I can put on some of my clothes like my pants and coat
- I like to wash and dry my hands and brush my teeth
- I might be able to balance on each foot for 1 second
- I can name family members and a friend
- I can use some descriptive words like "in, on, big, and good"
- The word "no" has power for me and I use it often
- I can display a wide range of emotions such as love, pleasure, joy and anger
- I want to do things for myself and it is frustrating when I can not
- I can use 150-200 single words by the age of 2½

2½

Play & Toys

I still like to play with all my old toys, along with some new ones to challenge my physical and intellectual growth. Please encourage my search for knowledge. I need to know why things work the way they do. I am learning to entertain myself, but I still need someone to play alongside me. I am beginning to learn to take turns in play. Come play with me!

Exploring the Senses

- Texture books, peek-a-boo books, puzzles
- A surprise bag - hide a familiar toy in it for me to feel and guess what it is
- Warm water play/cool water play - washing my dolls is a favourite activity
- Playdough to roll, squish and push things into (with supervision only)
- Musical instruments including a toddler tape recorder or homemade shaker
- Play in the mud and in a pile of leaves
- Help me notice smells and sounds around the house and in our neighbourhood
- Make a tape or record some household sounds and have your child guess what they may be

Create Your Own

Continue to add to your collection of beautiful junk. A roll end of newsprint will keep me in paper for years! Start a scrapbook for my amazing pieces of art with the date that I created them. You will be glad you did!

