ASQ Ages & Stages Questionnaires®

Supporting Your Toddler's Development

Moving beyond babyhood and into unique personality

As toddlers explore their abilities, begin to assert independence, and forge an identity, it is normal to push boundaries once in a while. Toddler development is where your baby becomes a more of an individual, wanting to exercise more control over things, and wanting to be understood. Gaining the ability to communicate is a huge step in and making all of that happen. But often toddler speech is still quite hard to understand, and that can create some frustration.

Watching for Progress

Just as it's natural for the toddler to rebel, it's natural for parents to worry. Parents who wonder if their toddler is on track for developmental milestones can find solace in knowing they are not alone. Children develop at their own pace, and there's not an exact time they'll learn a specific skill, but common milestones do help establish a general idea of what to watch for and when.

Resources for parents to gauge their toddler's developmental progress are easy to find, and pediatricians are always willing to lend an ear to concerned parents. If there are delays, early intervention services are accessible to all and can significantly improve long-term outcomes.

Noteworthy Milestones

What sorts of developmental milestones should parents notice, when it comes to typically developing children between 1 and 3 years of age? **Jane Squires, Ph.D.**, is an expert in early childhood development and early identification of delays. Squires is also lead author of the ***Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ®-3)***. Below, Squires shares information from The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) about some noteworthy skills and behaviors to watch for as your toddler grows.

At 1 year: waves "bye-bye"; calls a parent "mama" or "dada" or another special name; understands "no" (pauses briefly or stops when you say it); puts something in a container, like a block in a cup; looks for things they see you hide, like a toy under a blanket; pulls up to stand; walks, holding on to furniture; drinks from a cup without a lid, as you hold it; picks things up between thumb and pointer finger, like small bits of food.

At 18 months: moves away from you, but looks to make sure you are close by; points to show you something interesting; looks at a few pages in a book with you; help you dress them by pushing arms through sleeves or lifting up feet; tries to say three or more words besides "mama" or "dada"; follows one-step directions without any gestures, like giving you the toy when you say "Give it to me"; plays with toys in a simple way, like pushing a toy car; walks without holding onto anyone or anything; scribbles; climbs on and off a couch or chair without help.

By the end of year 2: notices when others are hurt or upset, like pausing or looking sad when someone is crying; points to things in a book when you ask, like "Where is the bear?"; says at least two words together, like "More milk"; tries to use switches, knobs, or buttons on a toy; plays with more than one toy at the same time, like putting toy food on a toy plate; kicks a ball; runs; walks (not climbs) up a few stairs with or without help; eats with a spoon.