

# Growing Together



Because My First Years Last Forever

Volume 1

Issue 7

## Thirteen to Fifteen Months

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Dear Parent,

This past year has been filled with many changes. You and your baby have created many memories. The second year will have just as many firsts but you will need to remember to laugh. Your child will try to do everything on his own. He will try to copy you and want NO help. You need to remember he does not know what is safe. It is your job to think for him. He needs you to teach him limits and to provide a safe place to explore and use his new skills.

The second year is a time when your child will want to:

- Dress and eat by himself.
- Do things on his own.
- Touch everything.
- Get mad when he cannot do something on his own.

All things are temporary at this age.  
So laugh and enjoy.



*This newsletter is provided to parents by Help Me Grow of Cuyahoga County*

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# What It's Like to Be...

## THIRTEEN TO FIFTEEN MONTHS OLD

### How I Grow

I can pick up things with my finger and thumb. Even tiny pieces of lint under furniture catch my eye.

I may be able to climb out of my playpen or crib.

I can hold a cup with both hands, but spills are frequent. I like to use a fork and spoon.

I have more regular bowel movements, but I am not ready for toilet training.

I may take fewer naps or begin waking up at night.

I can stand up and sidestep while holding on.

### How I Talk

I say about four words clearly. I play at making sounds and say the real words I know over and over again.

I will usually give you a toy when you ask me for it. But then I want it back.

When you ask me "Where is the ball?" I look for it.

I know names of family members and I respond to my own name.

I like rhymes, jingles and songs. I will try to sing along with you.

I use my finger to point at things I want. It's my way of asking for them.

### How I Understand

I throw or drop things from my high chair to see what happens to them. I like to empty drawers, cabinets, wastebaskets and purses because I'm curious. I don't do it to upset you.

I understand more than I can say.

I may point to the correct body parts when you say "Show me your nose, eyes, toes."

I put small things into containers, dump them out and do it again.

I pat or kiss pictures in a book.

### How I Respond

I am very definite about my likes and dislikes.

I seek attention and approval, but do not always cooperate.

I'm loving and affectionate with my favorite people and things.

I think a lot of things are funny.

I am easily distracted and entertained.

I am beginning to learn about things I'm not supposed to touch, but I may still touch them.

I show a wide variety of feelings and respond to emotion in others.

Kreeger, J., Haverson, V., & Marezki, A. (1996). Keiki 'O Hawai'i. *A Newsletter for New Parents*, 11. Cooperative Extension Service College of Tropical Agriculture University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Hawai'i. Department of Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

## How You Help Me Learn . . .

- Spend time with me. Smile at me and talk to me. Tell me what I'm doing and what you are doing. These activities will help me learn to talk.
- Give me pots and pans, plastic bowls and wooden spoons. Keep them in a lower drawer, shelf or box in the kitchen. I will play with them while you're cooking.
- Save your shoe boxes and oatmeal boxes for me. I will drop objects into them and take them out.
- Hold me and dance with me while listening to music. Let me listen to different kinds of music.
- Let me have space indoors and outdoors to practice crawling and walking. I am going to be running by the end of this year. Right now, let me practice crawling, standing, sitting and walking on my own.
- Read simple stories or rhymes to me.

### Him or her?

*This series of newsletters gives equal time to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "him" or "her." Keep in mind that we are talking about all children when we use "him" or "her."*

The information in this newsletter describes an average child at each age. Because your child is unique, he may do things somewhat earlier or later than is indicated.

***Even professionals are not always in agreement on specific child-rearing and feeding recommendations. Consult your doctor if you receive conflicting information.***

***If you have concerns about how your child is growing and developing, call Help Me Grow at 216-736-4300 or visit [www.helpmegrow.org](http://www.helpmegrow.org)***

# Play is Learning

## Copy Play: An All-time Favorite

You may have seen how your toddler likes to copy you. She may try to feed you pieces of food, the way you feed her. If you eat the food and show you enjoy it, she will laugh gleefully. This makes her feel important.

You will enjoy seeing your child try to copy the things you do –eating, washing, cooking, cleaning and so forth. She will especially like having you play games where you copy her.

When you do this, you are being responsive. She likes this because it shows her that what she does is important to you. This helps build her self-confidence.



## Other Imitation Games

You can have your child build with smooth cans, paper egg cartons, formula containers, boxes or other similar objects. Try having her build designs by copying what you do. Together, you can build pyramids, trains or two towers.

Here are some simple ideas to help you play:

- Watch your child play without interrupting. Notice what interests her and what she knows how to do.
- Join in and play at your child's level, letting her lead.
- After playing for a while at your child's pace, try doing something a little more challenging.

Steinberg, J., Riley, D., & Schatell, D. (1997). *Copy play: Other Imitation Games* Parenting the Second and Third Years. University of Wisconsin-Extension Cooperative Extension, NCR publication No. 578.

**Your child's attention span is very short.  
Let her decide when play is over.**

# My Job Is to Play!

## Active Play, every day.

I love to move and be active. These things keep me healthy and happy. Can you find me a safe place to run and play? I need to be active for an hour every day.

### I like to:

- Play with you.
- Walk, run, climb and dance.
- Copy what you do.
- Drop things from my high chair.
- Play with things I can push, pull or pound.
- Throw socks, foam or beach balls.

## Quiet Play, every day.

I like to do the same thing over and over again. I need to eat and go to bed at the same time each day. If I sit and play before I eat and you read with me before bed, this helps me know what to expect and makes me feel safe.

### I like to play with:

- You, to roll a ball or copy what you are doing.
- Puzzles with large pieces the size of my hand.
- Toys in the bathtub, but never leave me alone.
- Boxes, blocks or anything I can build a tower with.
- Touch and feel books.
- Books with cardboard pages that have big pictures.
- My food and feed myself with my hands.
- A small cup, use a no spill lid.
- My socks and shoes.

Every time I play, I am learning something new and helping my brain grow.

Kelly Hendricks, Program Assistant, OSU Extension Cuyahoga County

Reference: *Things Toddlers Treasure*. 1, 2, 3 Grow: A newsletter for parents and toddlers, Iowa State University Extension.

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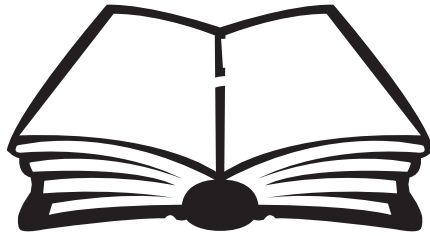
# Just for Parents

## Take Time for You!

Some days it feels like your child controls your world. They do not understand that mommy or daddy may be tired at the end of the day and not want to pick up all the toys for the 10th time that day. Anyone that has experienced the joy of spending time with a child this age agrees it is like a being on roller coaster with ups and downs that can happen over an hour or in minutes. Even the most patient person needs a break. Take time for you. Try and find a “playgroup” not only for your child but also for you. A group will allow you to share common parenting issues and let you know that you are not alone. Check with your church, library or **Help Me Grow** on line at <http://www.helpmegrow.org> where new groups are always forming.

You are the most important person in your child’s life. You need to take care of you. If you need help dealing with your feelings or any parenting issues, contact **First Call for Help at 2-1-1**.

There are many books that can explain how your child is growing and changing. If you have specific questions call **Help Me Grow at 216-736-4300**.



## Helpful Books on Toddlers

The library is a free resource for books that can help you learn more about your child.

*Toddlers and Parents: A Declaration of Independence*  
by T. Barry Brazelton. Uses a realistic family profile to illustrate life with a child from 1 year to 2 years.

*The Second Twelve Months of Life*  
by Frank and Theresa Caplan. Discusses month-by-month development.

*Your Toddler*  
by Richard Rubin, John Fisher and Susan Doering.  
Information on a variety of topics: growth and development, play and personality.

*Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age Five*  
by Penelope Leach. Comprehensive book with some medical, child care and development information.

## Family Planning

The decision to have another baby will affect your entire family in many ways. Consider your own values and goals as you decide on family size.

- A second child creates changes in the family. Your older child may go back to some of her babyish ways. She may need extra care and comforting from you.
- Some parents can take two children under two years of age in stride. For others, it may be taxing both physically and emotionally. Studies have shown that it takes about two years for a mother’s body to recover after the birth of a child. Close spacing of babies makes the recovery period longer.
- Your temperament, energy level, financial needs and feelings of support from other family members are also things to consider.
- Some parents report that children who are close in age have a special relationship with each other. Other parents have found that closely spaced children are more competitive, and that children three or four years apart are likely to be better companions. Siblings are going to have arguments and fights no matter what their age differences.
- Some parents would really prefer to raise an only child. Research indicates that only children are as happy and well adjusted as children in larger families.

Check with your doctor or health care professional if you have any additional questions on family planning.

## Taming Temper Tantrums

Tantrums are a normal part of growing up. Toddlers have tantrums because they get frustrated very easily. They have trouble asking for things and expressing their feelings. Toddlers also have very few problem-solving skills. Tantrums are most likely to happen when your toddlers are hungry, exhausted or overexcited.

### How to Handle a Tantrum

#### **Try to Remain Calm.**

Shaking, spanking or screaming at a child will only make the tantrum worse instead of better. Set a positive example for children by remaining in control of yourself and your emotions.

#### **Pause Before You Act.**

Take at least thirty seconds to decide how you will handle the tantrum.

#### **Distract.**

Try to get the child's attention focused on something else. If he screams when you take him away from something unsafe (like an electrical outlet), offer something else to play with.

#### **Remove.**

Take the child to a quiet, private place to calm down. Avoid trying to talk or reason with a screaming child. Stay nearby until you see that she has calmed down.

#### **Comfort and Reassure.**

Tantrums really scare most kids. Often they are not sure why they felt so angry and shaken when it is all over. They need to know that you disapprove of their behavior, but that you still love them.

If you have any specific questions on temper tantrums or other behavioral issues, call **Bellflower Center's 24-Hour Family Help Line at 216-229-8800.**

Bloir, K. (1995). *Understanding children: temper tantrums*, (adapted) Iowa State University Extension.



## Safe Space Away from Home: What to Ask Your Child Care Provider

Now that your child is probably able to move around by himself he will be interested in exploring everything in his environment. This is a good time to be sure once again that your child is spending his time in a safe and appropriate environment, both at home and in child care.

Look carefully at the child care environment to be sure it is safe for your curious toddler. Is there plenty of space for him to move around and use his new walking and climbing skills? Check to be sure the space has no places where he could get into things that would be dangerous; things such as cleaning fluids, dangerous tools and so forth. Check to be sure that cupboards are not able to be opened or that they contain safe objects if they can be opened, that outlets are covered and that stairs are blocked. It is important that children of this age have plenty of opportunity to explore their environment freely, so you want to avoid the use of things such as play pens. Walkers should never be used at this age, or at any other age, because they are not safe and can result in serious injury. Children at this age still may put anything and everything into their mouths. Exploring objects by mouth is an important learning tool for toddlers. You don't want your child to spend his day hearing the word "No" every time he tries to explore.

While it is easy to look around your own home for these items, it can be a bit harder to talk to your child's care giver about these issues. Ask questions about things that are not immediately obvious. Let your care giver know that you want the best for your child and his new skills. While the conversation may be difficult, it may just save your child's life.

**For more information on child care, call Starting Point at 216-575-0061 or 1-800-880-0971.**

Whalley, K. (1999). *Safe space away from home: What to ask your child care provider*. Ohio State University Extension.

# Feeding Your Toddler

## What Should My Toddler Drink?

Your baby will need less milk as she eats more table foods. Whole milk can now replace formula or breast milk. Unless your doctor suggests otherwise, whole milk or breast milk are the best choices for your child until she is two years old. Your child needs to get 16-24 ounces of whole milk (offer in a cup, not from a bottle) or breast milk every day. Your child should not drink more than 6 ounces of 100% juice per day. Toddlers will fill up with juice and will not eat other foods. Offer water in between meals and with snacks. If your child seems to want to drink all the time or is still hungry after meals, try offering additional healthy foods instead of extra juice or milk.

Kreeger, J., Haverson, V., & Maretzki, A. (1996). Keiki 'O Hawai'i. A Newsletter for New Parents, 11. Cooperative Extension Service College of Tropical Agriculture University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Hawai'i. Department of Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

## Say "NO" to Sugary Beverages

Now that your toddler is drinking new beverages like whole milk, he'll also want to drink what you drink. **Pop, juices and fruit drinks are not a substitute for milk.** Sugary beverages are high in calories and low in nutrients. Sugary beverages can cause tooth decay.

## Look Mom, I Can Feed Myself

By now, your child has become an expert at putting things in his mouth. This is good and bad news. The bad news is that lots of things go in the mouth that don't belong there. The good news means your child can begin to feed himself! Encourage self-feeding. Offer well-cooked cut or mashed foods from the family meal. Allow him to sit with the family for meals everyday. It is normal for toddlers to spill and be messy. Plan ahead by protecting the floor and his clothes. Feeding himself is your child's way of saying "I want to do it myself."

Steinberg, J., Riley, D., & Schatell, D. (1997). *Look mom, I can feed myself.* (adapted). Parenting the Second and Third Years. University of Wisconsin-Extension Cooperative Extension, NCR publication No. 578.

## Appetite Swings

Your child's appetite may change from day to day as your child's rate of growth varies. Preferences for certain kinds of foods, refusals to eat and being picky are common. These feeding issues are called "food jags." Keep meal time relaxed and enjoyable. Your child knows when she has enough to eat and what foods she likes. Offer her a variety of healthy foods and snacks from all food groups, but don't force her to eat everything served to her. Most children need to be offered foods many times before they accept them.



**If you have any specific questions on toddler feeding and would like to speak to a registered dietitian at the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Help Me Grow, Nutrition Program, call 216-201-2000, Ext. 1526.**

# Prevent Poisoning

**Plan.** Program the National Poison Control Center, 1-800-222-1222 into your home phone and cell phone. Keep the number close to every phone and give it to all sitters.

## **Keep poisons out of your child's reach.**

Put safety locks on all cabinets and drawers that hold bug sprays, cleaning products, medicines, hair products, makeup, mouthwash, ant traps, charcoal and other poisons. Some plants can be harmful if eaten.

## **Dispose of old or outdated medicines.**

## **Buy products with safety caps.**

**Watch out for hidden poisons.** Not all poisons are easy to spot. Carbon monoxide is an odorless and colorless gas. Install a carbon monoxide detector in every sleeping area in your home, including the nursery. Check the batteries every spring and fall when you change your clocks. If the alarm goes off, leave your home immediately and call 911.

**Look out for lead.** If you live in a building built before 1978, it may contain lead paint. Lead paint is not safe if it is flaking or peeling. Tap water from older pipes can have lead in it. Toys can have lead in them. Breathing lead dust or eating anything with lead in it can cause learning problems, kidney disease, brain damage, growth delay, and other problems. Wash your child's hands, face, and toys until the lead is removed. This will reduce his exposure to lead. For information about lead in your home, call:

**Lead Safe Living**  
**216-263-5323**

**Cuyahoga County Board of Health**  
**216-201-2000**

CHECK TOY RECALLS DUE TO LEAD CONTENT  
1-800-638-2772 or <http://www.cpsc.gov>

**Ask your healthcare provider to test your child for lead.**

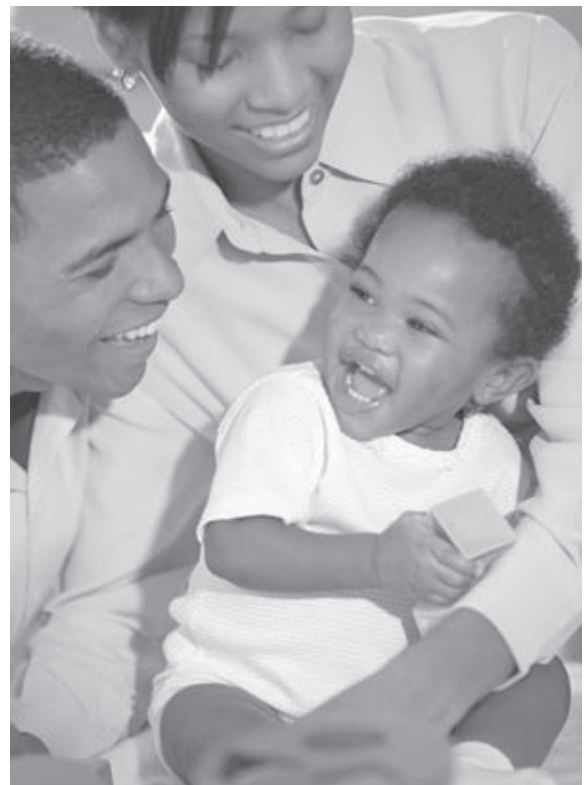
# Your Toddler's Health

## **Immunizations Are Important for Toddlers**

Keep your baby on track to good health! Most children will have three well-checkups in their second year — at 15 months, 18 months and 2 years. These checkups continue to be important to find out if your baby is growing and changing as expected, and to make sure your baby's shots are up to date. These shots protect your baby from serious childhood diseases. If you don't already have a well-checkup appointment scheduled, call your doctor or clinic.

For more information about free immunizations for your toddler, call **City of Cleveland Department of Public Health, 216-664-2324, or Cuyahoga County Board of Health, 216-201-2000.**

Check <http://www.chicohio.com> for more information on free or low cost immunizations in Cuyahoga County.





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 Cleveland, OH 44105-6136

Call any one of these Invest in Children partners below for support or information on how to make sure your child is healthy, well cared for and ready for school.

**Prenatal Hotline • 216-778-BABY**

Prenatal information and support for expectant mothers

**MomsFirst • 216-664-4194**

Prenatal care and support for expectant mothers in the City of Cleveland

**Help Me Grow • 216-736-4300**

Services and support for children prenatal to age three

**Healthy Start • 216-987-7346**

Health Insurance (Medicaid) for children prenatal to age nineteen

**Starting Point • 216-575-0061**

Child care services and information on care for children with special needs

**Family Help Line • 216-229-8800**

Free, anonymous support, information, referrals and crisis intervention

**Tot-Line • 216-431-8200**

Information on child development

**First Call For Help • 2-1-1 or 216-436-2000**

Free, confidential information and support for referrals to other local health or social services

*This newsletter is provided to parents by Help Me Grow of Cuyahoga County.*

*Help Me Grow is a statewide child development program and a partner of Invest in Children. As Cuyahoga County's early childhood initiative, Invest in Children works to increase the development, funding, visibility and impact of early childhood services in the county, so our children start kindergarten healthy, well cared for and ready for school.*



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*If you have specific questions about your child's health or development, or concerns about your own health and well-being, please contact your physician.*