

What's Up? Your Baby's Development

12-Month Visit



This is a really fun time for parents as 1-year-olds are able to explore the world in new ways and are eager to do things all by myself! They watch their loved ones very carefully and copy a lot of what they see. This is one of the most important ways toddlers learn how the world works. *How do you see your child learning from watching you?*

What Your Baby Can Do

I'm moving!

- I may walk on my own or by holding your hand.
- I am learning to crawl up stairs but can't come down yet.
- I can throw a ball and turn pages in books.

I'm starting to talk and understand so much more.

- I may use some words like *duhduh* for dog.
- I can show you what I want through my actions. I may bang my highchair when I want more food.
- If you ask me to, I can point to a body part or a picture in a book.

I want to do more for myself.

- I say "no" or show you in other ways that I want to do things on my own.

I love to imitate.

- I copy actions I've seen other people do, such as stir a pot or talk on the phone.

What You Can Do

Give your child just enough help to reach his goal. If he wants to stand, let him hold your fingers for balance.

Support your child as he practices new skills such as climbing stairs. Children need time to work on these new skills...safely!

Encourage your child to turn the pages when you read together.

Choose books about topics that interest your child like animals or other children.

Build your child's vocabulary. If she points to or says "bus," you can say, "That's a yellow school bus."

Name the people, places, and things that your child sees each day: "Here is the grocery store, where we buy our food."

Play games that involve following directions: "Throw the ball to me."

Involve your child in self-help tasks such as washing his hands.

Follow your child's lead. Let him choose what toys or games to play.

Join in your child's play. If you see her putting a blanket on her toy bear, ask, "Does Teddy need a bottle before bed?"

Give her objects that she sees in "real life," such as plastic dishes, a toy telephone, a small dust broom.

As you use the HealthySteps handouts, remember that your child may develop skills faster or slower than indicated and still be growing just fine. Every child develops at her own pace—and your HealthySteps Specialist will be available to answer any questions you may have. Your family's cultural beliefs and values are also important factors that shape your child's development.



12–14 Months: What’s on Your Mind

My 14-month-old is such a picky eater! Sometimes I worry that he is not eating enough to stay healthy.

Picky eating is very common at this age. Most children are feeding themselves. This means they are able to choose what to eat—or not eat. The key is to avoid turning mealtime into a power struggle. Offer your child three or four healthy food choices that he usually likes at each mealtime (such as pieces of turkey and cheese, cooked peas, and some banana). Then let him decide what and how much he wants to eat. Remember, as long as your child seems to enjoy eating and has the energy to play and interact with you, he is probably doing just fine. Be sure to talk to your child’s health care provider if you are concerned or have questions.

Spotlight on Temperament

Every child is born with her own individual way of approaching the world— this is called her *temperament*. For example, some children are easygoing about changes. Others react very strongly to what seems like a small change, such as new pajamas. Some children are very active. They love to move. Other children prefer to sit and watch the world around them. Some children enjoy new experiences and meeting new people. Others are slower to warm up in new situations. These are all examples of different aspects of temperament.

There is no right or wrong, better or worse temperament. Temperament is not something your child chooses, and it is not something that you created. It’s very important for children to be accepted for who they are. Use what you know about your child’s temperament to encourage his strengths and to support him when needed. For example, if your child has a hard time with separations, you can guess that bedtime might be challenging. You can help your child by using the same bedtime routine each night (story, milk, teeth-brushing, and lullaby).

Your temperament matters, too. You might love to meet new people and try new things, but your child doesn’t. Being aware of this difference is important. It helps you understand how your child’s needs may be different from yours. It also helps you learn what to do in order to support and respect your child for who she is.

How would you describe your child’s temperament? How do you see her temperament influencing her behavior?

Did you know...

Many parents (43%) believe that children under 2 years old are able to share, when in reality most children learn to share and take turns between 3½ and 4. Even after that, they need a lot of practice and help with these important social skills.¹

What It Means for You:

Young toddlers can seem like “big kids” in many ways. They understand so much of what they hear and see that it can be easy to expect a lot from them—more than they really can do yet. Young toddlers do not yet have the self-control necessary to share and take turns. They can’t stop themselves from reaching for a favorite toy, even while someone else is playing with it. This is because the part of the brain responsible for self-control is still developing. But you can begin teaching your child about sharing. Explain the rule: “We are going to take turns with the jack-in-the-box. Derek is going to use it now. When he is done, you will have a turn.” Then help your child focus on another activity while his friend has a turn. Most important, stay calm and be patient. Sharing is a skill that comes with time, and with your support and guidance.

At this visit the pediatric team will measure your baby’s length, weight, and head. They’ll listen to your baby’s heart and look at his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Your baby will receive any needed immunizations. We will talk about your baby’s development and routines like sleeping and eating. We’ll also review safety guidelines. And, of course, we’ll make time to discuss any questions or concerns you might have!

1. ZERO TO THREE & Bezos Family Foundation. (2015). *Tuning in: A national parent survey*. Washington, DC: Author.