



## THE TWO YEAR OLD

### DEVELOPMENT

- Kicks a ball and can throw it overhand
- Walks up stairs and backwards
- Stacks 2-3 blocks
- Removes some clothing
- Independently feeds himself
- Combines 2-3 words and names objects
- Tells first name

### EATING

Your child may eat any food he wants except small, hard foods that could cause choking. Remember, most children will rarely choke when sitting in a highchair, only when eating and moving at the same time (walking or running). A serving size for most children this age is only 2-3 tablespoons. Many children prefer the same foods every day. This is fine, as long as the foods are healthy and include milk products, grains (cereal, oatmeal, bread), protein (meat, beans, nut butters) fruit or juices, and vegetables.

### PLAY

- Picture books and simple stories, poetry and rhymes
  - Remember your public library has children's books and CDs.
- Crayons and lots of paper; puzzles and wooden blocks
- Parks and playgrounds
  - climbing and swinging provide wonderful entertainment; two year olds love short hikes

### BEHAVIOR

Encourage developing independence and give choices whenever possible (example: Do you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt?) More choices = less frustration and anger.

Communication is still limited, so expect some frustration and temper tantrums. Sit down, talk, and listen to your child face to face at their eye level. Recommended books for parents: [Ain't Misbehavin'](#) by Alyson Schafer and [How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk](#) by Faber. Security objects are still very important (blankets, dolls, teddy bears, thumbs). Do not be surprised if your child wants to carry his blanket everywhere. These security objects will help comfort your child through real and imaginary fears, bumps, and scrapes.... and bedtime.

### SLEEP

Children can change from the crib to a bed this year. A bedtime routine is important (bath, brush teeth, story). Routines add security and help your child accept bedtime limits. Nightmares are common and a few minutes of parental comforting usually works.

### SAFETY

A two year old's increasing physical abilities of running and climbing along with their wonderful curiosity can place them in dangerous situations. Close supervision is the best prevention. Never leave a child alone near water or in the back yard. Continue to use your car seat until age four. Poison Control at Vanderbilt 1-800-222-1222.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT THREE YEARS.



## THE THREE YEAR OLD

### DEVELOPMENT

- Throws a ball overhand
- Pedals a tricycle
- Builds a tower of blocks
- Knows full name, age and sex
- Learns to share and take turns
- Jumps in place
- Alternates feet ascending stairs
- Draws a circle and a cross
- Asks what, where and why questions
- Plays chase and make-believe
- Speaks in sentences and most words can be understood

### DIET

Limit junk foods such as cokes, Kool Aid, chips and candy! These types of foods are unhealthy and lead to obesity and cavities. It is best not to have these foods in the house because we cannot expect a child to have self-control if they know they are available. Your child will beg constantly for these foods if they are around. Your child will eat healthy foods and drink milk and water if alternatives do not exist. It is much easier to say, "We do not have any. Would you like some yogurt or a banana?"

Brush teeth twice a day. This is a good time for the first visit to the dentist.

### PLAY

Allow your child to explore, show initiative and communicate his desires. Offer your child choices in appropriate situations. If your child suggests an idea or activity, follow through if possible. A child will learn to respect and love himself if he feels his ideas are important to you.

### Outside ideas:

- Go to playgrounds
- Throw, catch and kick balls
- Ride tricycles and big wheels
- Take a hike (Radnor Lake, Edwin Warner Nature Center and Montgomery Bell State Park are nearby)

### Inside activities:

- Do puzzles, build with blocks, string beads
- Read books, go to story time at the library
- Pretend play with clothes, household objects and toys
- Use crayons, markers and paint

*Limit TV. A child needs to learn how to play and use his imagination. Watching TV and playing video games promote poor attention spans. Children need to learn to play with toys, look at books and interact with people. Even educational electronic devices are not good compared to discovering the world through real life experience!*

### DISCIPLINE

1. Give clear instructions.
2. Explain the consequences of an unacceptable behavior (for example, removal of a toy). Give one warning and then follow through.



3. Try to redirect in a positive way. For example, "Food is for eating, not throwing. Let's throw a ball outside after dinner." Or, "Let's not play with that. Here is a pot to play with. Let's pretend it's a drum!"
4. Use "when" and "then". "When you get your shoes on, then you can go outside!" Get what you want first and then reward that behavior.
5. Catch your child doing things you like and praise those behaviors! Children want to please you.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT FOUR YEARS.