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Ages and Stages: 12–18 Months

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AGES & STAGES

The second year is a delightful time for parents and children. Your baby is developing a personality and rewards your time together with laughter, funny faces, and affectionate hugs. First steps and first words are exciting family events.

Physical development

- weight: 17-30 pounds
- height: 27-35 inches
- crawls well
- stands alone, sits down
- gestures or points to indicate wants
- likes to push, pull, and dump things
- pulls off hat, socks, and mittens
- turns pages in a book
- stacks 2 blocks
- likes to poke, twist, and squeeze
- enjoys flushing toilets and closing doors
- enjoys carrying small objects while walking, often one in each hand
- holds crayon and scribbles, but with little control
- waves bye-bye and claps hands
- walks without help
- enjoys holding spoon when eating, but experiences difficulty in getting spoon into mouth
- rolls a ball to adult on request

IDEAS FOR PARENTS

- Enjoy some “floor time” with your child each day. Crawl around together, play peek-a-boo behind the sofa, or roll a ball back and forth. Your child will love having you down on his or her level.
- Review your baby proofing. Your child’s increasing growth and mobility make it possible to reach unsafe heights and play with dangerous material. Get down on your knees in each room and look at things from your child’s perspective. Put toxic items like paint, dishwashing detergent, medicine, and make-up in high cupboards, preferably with a safety cabinet latch.
- Put together a box of items that are fun to feel, poke, and squeeze. You might include plastic margarine tubs, an old sock, tissue paper to crumple, measuring cups of different sizes, a turkey baster, a nylon scarf, an egg carton, and paper cups. Choose items larger than a half-dollar to avoid choking hazards.
- Relax and have fun dancing to music with your child.
- Use bath time to point to some body parts and say them with your baby. Nose, ears, arms, legs, tummy, toes....
- Talk frequently to your child to increase his or her language skills and encourage cooperation. You can make dressing time more fun by pointing to and identifying body parts and clothes. For instance, “See this pretty red shirt? The shirt goes over your head. Your arms go into the sleeves. What shall we put on your legs?”
- Around 18 months your child may begin clinging and become anxious about being separated from you. If possible, reduce separations and be sure that your child is cared for by someone familiar.



Mental development

- says 8-20 words you can understand
- looks at person talking to him or her
- says “Hi” or “Bye” if reminded
- uses expressions like “Oh-oh”
- asks for something by pointing or using one word
- identifies object in a book
- plays peek-a-boo
- looks for objects that are hidden or out of sight
- understands and follows simple one-step directions
- likes to take things apart

Social and emotional development

- becomes upset when separated from parent
- likes to hand objects to others
- plays alone on floor with toys
- recognizes self in mirror or pictures
- enjoys being held and read to
- imitates others especially by coughing, sneezing, or making animal sounds
- enjoys an audience and applause

Toys

- nesting cups
- bath toys, small boat
- soft, huggable dolls (large)
- large animal pictures
- objects to match
- large, plastic blocks
- musical records or tapes
- soft balls of different sizes
- push cart, dump truck
- teddy bear
- plastic jar with lid; lids and containers
- toy telephone

File: Family life 8

Written by Lesia Oesterreich, ISU Extension family life specialist. Graphic design by Valerie Dittmer King.

BOOKS

Books for parents

Your Baby and Child, From Birth to Age Five, Penelope Leach

Caring for Your Baby & Young Child, Birth to Age Five, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shevlov, ed.

Books for children

Baby! Talk!, Penny Gentieu

Baby's Colors, Neil Ricklen

Baby's First Words, Lars Wik

Farm Animals, Phoebe Dunn

Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown

Moo, Baa, La La La, Sandra Boynton



A word on development

Your child is unique. His or her learning and growth rates differ from other children the same age. If, however, your child is unable to do many of the skills listed for this age group, you may wish to talk to an early childhood specialist. You are the best person to notice developmental problems, if any, because of the time you spend with your child. If your child has special needs, early help can make a difference. If you have questions about your child's development or want to have your child assessed, contact:

- Your pediatrician or health care professional
- Area Education Agency—Early Childhood Special Education Department
- Iowa COMPASS 1-800-779-2001.

Contact your county Extension office to obtain other publications about children, parenting, and family life. Also visit the ISU Extension Website at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu>.

The developmental information provided in this bulletin has been compiled from a variety of professional resources to help you understand your child's overall growth. It is not a standardized measurement tool.

... and justice for all

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