Ages and Stages: 2-Year-Olds

Lesia L. Oesterreich

Iowa State University, loesterr@iastate.edu

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Two-year-olds like to be independent! Favorite words are “Mine” and “No” and “I do it!” A great deal of time is spent exploring, pushing, pulling, filling, dumping, and touching.

Physical development
- weight: 22-38 pounds
- height: 32-40 inches
- has almost a full set of teeth
- walks up and down stairs by holding onto railing
- feeds self with spoon
- experiments by touching, smelling, and tasting
- likes to push, pull, fill, and dump
- can turn pages of a book
- stacks 2-4 objects
- scribbles with crayons or markers
- many children (but not all) will learn to use toilet
- walks without help
- walks backwards
- tosses or rolls a large ball
- stoops or squats
- opens cabinets, drawers
- can bend over to pick up toy without falling

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Mental development
- enjoys simple stories, rhymes, and songs
- uses 2-3 word sentences
- says names of toys
- hums or tries to sing
- enjoys looking at books
- points to eyes, ears, or nose when asked
- repeats words

Social and emotional development
- plays alongside others more than with them
- acts shy around strangers
- likes to imitate parents
- easily frustrated
- affectionate—hugs and kisses
- insists on trying to do several tasks without help
- enjoys simple make-believe like talking on phone, putting on hat
- very possessive—offers toys to other children, but then wants them back

Books

Books for parents
Your Baby and Child, From Birth to age Five, Penelope Leach
Caring for Your Baby and Child, Birth to Age Five, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shevlov, ed.

Books for children
Sounds My Feet Make, Arlene Blanchard
Mr. Little’s Noisy Truck, Richard Fowler
Harold and The Purple Crayon, David Johnson Leisk
Mouse Paint, Ellen Stoll Walsh
The Little Red House, Norma Jean Sawicki
The Best Behavior Series, Elizabeth Verdick

A word on development
Your child is unique. Children’s learning and growth rates differ from other children their age. If, however, your child is unable to do many of the skills listed for a certain 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.

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.

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