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## Countryside Public Health



Health

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# TRACKS

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## Age 2 years

### *Greetings!*

By now you've realized how unique your toddler is. He is standing up now and walking a lot. Like most toddlers, he is probably no longer content to stay in one place. At 2 years of age toddlers are curious about the world and want to explore it. They walk, touch, poke, smell, and taste things. They work hard finding out about things. In this way, they learn to master new skills.

### *Your child's health care*

#### **Well-Child Check Ups:**

Your toddler's 2 year check-up is now due.

Child and Teen Checkups are available from your health care provider for children receiving Medical Assistance or MN Care, Countryside Public Health Staff can also assist with finding a doctor, dentist, interpreter and arrange transportation.

Check with your health care provider if your child needs a fluoride supplement or their blood tested for lead.

#### **Immunizations (shots):**

No immunizations are needed now if your child's shots are up-to-date.

- ♥ Remember - annual flu shots are recommended Oct. - Jan.
- ♥ Check his immunization record now to check if he is up-to-date. It is never too late to get their shots.
- ♥ Call us if you are not sure of his status. 1-800-657-3291

#### **tip**

Continue to read to him and hug him often. Introduce him to the library and check out tapes, records, and books. Sign up for a parent/toddler class. Contact your local school district or ECFE (Early Childhood Family Education).

### *Common health concerns*

- Injury is the biggest threat to a toddler's life.
- Most injuries have predictable causes - and most can be prevented.
- Please follow the safety tips in these letters to prevent injuries.

#### **tip**

As your toddler begins to imitate and imagine, give him some of your old clothes (hats, scarves, jackets, shoes) to use for "dress up". Have him look at himself in the mirror.

# *Ideas to help your child learn to talk*

<b>When to start</b>	<b>Do the first activities as long as your child enjoys them. Add new activities as he or she grows older.</b>
<b>Birth</b>	<p><b>Help your baby learn how nice voices can be.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sing to your baby. You can do this even before your baby is born! Your baby will hear you.</li> <li>✓ Talk to your baby. Talk to others when baby is near. Baby won't understand the words, but will like your voice and your smile. Baby will enjoy hearing and seeing other people, too.</li> <li>✓ Plan for quiet time. Baby needs time to babble and play quietly without TV or radio or other noises.</li> </ul>
<b>3 months</b>	<p><b>Help your baby see how people talk to each other.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Hold your baby close so she or he will look in your eyes. Talk to baby and smile.</li> <li>✓ When your baby babbles, imitate the sounds.</li> <li>✓ If baby tries to make the same sound you do, say the word again.</li> </ul>
<b>6 months</b>	<p><b>Help your baby understand words (even if he or she can't say them yet).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Play games like Peek-a-Boo or Pat-a-Cake. Help baby move his hands to match the game.</li> <li>✓ When you give baby a toy, say something about it, like "Feel how fuzzy Teddy Bear is."</li> <li>✓ Let your baby see himself in a mirror and ask, "Who's that?" If he doesn't answer, say his name.</li> <li>✓ Ask your baby questions like "Where's doggie?" If he doesn't answer, show him where.</li> </ul>
<b>9 months</b>	<p><b>Help your baby "talk" by pointing and using his or her hands.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Show baby how to wave "bye-bye". Tell baby "Show me your nose." Then point to your nose. She will soon point to her nose. Do this with toes, fingers, ears, eyes, knees and so on.</li> <li>✓ Hide a toy while baby is watching. Help baby find it. Share her delight at finding it.</li> <li>✓ When baby points at or gives you something, talk about the object with her.</li> </ul>
<b>12 months</b>	<p><b>Help your child to say the words he or she knows.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Talk about the things you use, like "cup", "juice", doll." Give your child time to name them.</li> <li>✓ Ask your child questions about the pictures in books. Give your child time to name things in the picture.</li> <li>✓ Smile or clap your hands when your child names the thing that he sees. Say something about it.</li> </ul>
<b>15 months</b>	<p><b>Help your child talk with you.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Talk about what your child wants most to talk about. Give him time to tell you all about it.</li> <li>✓ Ask about things you do each day - "Which shirt will you pick today?" "Do you want milk or juice?"</li> <li>✓ When your child just says one word, like "ball", repeat it with a little extra - "That's baby's ball".</li> <li>✓ Pretend your child's favorite doll or toy animal can talk. Have conversations with the toy.</li> </ul>
<b>18 months</b>	<p><b>Help your child put words together and learn how to follow simple directions.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ask your child to help you. For example, ask her to put her cup on the table.</li> <li>✓ Teach your child simple songs and nursery rhymes. Read to your child.</li> <li>✓ Encourage your child to talk to friends and family. A child can tell them about a new toy, for example.</li> <li>✓ Let your child "play telephone". Have a pretend telephone conversation.</li> </ul>
<b>2 years</b>	<p><b>Help your child put more words together. Teach your child things that are important to know.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teach your child to say his or her first and last name.</li> <li>✓ Ask about the number, size, and shape of things your child shows you. If its worms, you could say, "What fat wiggly worms! How many are there? ... Where are they going?" Wait, watch and listen to the answer. Suggest an answer if needed, "I see five...Are they going to the park or the store?"</li> <li>✓ Ask your child to tell you the story that goes with a favorite book.</li> <li>✓ Check your local library for programs for toddlers. Ask at your health clinic for other guides.</li> <li>✓ Don't forget what worked earlier. For example, your child still needs quiet time. This is not just for naps. Turn off the TV and radio and let your child enjoy quiet play, singing, and talking.</li> </ul>

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 U.S. Department of Education, Richard W. Riley, Secretary; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Sharon P. Robinson, Assistant Secretary; National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education, Naomi Karo

## *Feeding your child*

Physically, your toddler is growing more slowly than during the first year. His appetite may also be decreasing.

He often develops specific food likes and dislikes, refusing vegetables one month, meat the next month, and milk the next.

- Offer a variety of small amounts of nutritious foods.
- Give your toddler choices between 2 things like "crackers or apples".
- Be ready to offer seconds.



Most toddlers enjoy feeding themselves and are skilled with a spoon and cup by now.

- During this learning period expect a messy face and spilled milk.
- Use large bibs and have a sponge or paper towels ready for spills.
- Pour small amounts of liquids (1-2 oz) at a time into your toddler's cup to prevent large spills.
- Continue to encourage brushing teeth.

**Any questions or concerns contact Countryside Public Health Service or WIC.**

**WIC is a program that provides nutrition education and special foods to pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children to age five.**

**Call 1-800-244-6026 to see if you are eligible to receive WIC Program benefits.**

## *Your growing child*

- ♥ Can jump, run or walk up and down the stairs
- ♥ Listens to short stories
- ♥ Can turn pages of a book
- ♥ Copies another child's play
- ♥ Sometimes uses two word sentences
- ♥ Premature infants may develop more slowly

**Please call if you have any concerns.**

**Remember: Wait until your child is ready for toilet training. Don't rush the issue.**

## *Messages for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity*

- ♥ Active kids are healthy kids. Encourage your child to get moving every day.
- ♥ Make meals memorable. Take time to eat too!



## *Safety check*

Here are a few simple rules to follow to make sure that your toddler is safe:

- ✓ **Never** leave your toddler, even for a few seconds, in or near any body of water without supervision. This includes:
  - Bathtub
  - Swimming pool
  - Fish pond
  - Whirlpool
  - Hot tub
  - Lake
  - Bucket of water
- ✓ Supervise when he is near stairs and block entrances to stairs.
- ✓ **Never** leave your toddler alone in the car, even if it's locked and in your driveway.
- ✓ Make sure your child rides in a car seat at all times.
- ✓ Don't let your toddler play with electrical cords or outlets. Keep outlets covered.
- ✓ Put safety lock on cupboards and cabinets that have dangerous things in them. Keep them "**out of sight and out of reach**".
- ✓ Have the phone numbers of Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) and your doctor.
- ✓ Keep pot handles turned inward on the stove.
- ✓ Use at least a #15 sunscreen.
- ✓ If your child is climbing out of the crib, now may be the time to introduce a bed.

## *Positive parenting*

**Because the toddler years are a time of change and learning, don't be surprised if...**

- ♥ Your toddler's favorite words are "no" and "mine".
- ♥ Your child often does the opposite of what is asked.
- ♥ Your child appears stubborn and uncooperative.
- ♥ Don't give in if your child resists the idea of riding in a car seat. He will accept it if you are firm.
- ♥ Praise your child when she is behaving well.

This is normal behavior for a child of this age. So expect it and prepare for it. It will soon pass.

It will soon be time to have him sleep in a bed. Be sure to block the sides so he can't fall out. You may want to place the crib mattress on the floor next to the bed just in case.

# Toilet Training

Sometime after 18 months of age a toddler will begin to show an interest in his parent's/siblings' routine use of the toilet.

## **Cues that say he may be ready to "learn"**

- Stays dry for several hours at a time.
- Regularly lets you know when a bowel movement is coming.
- May squat, tug at his diapers, become very still, or hide in a corner after he has a bowel movement.
- Complains about wet or dirty diapers and wants to be changed.
- Becomes more aware of cleanliness (his clothes, room, or food).
- Understands what you want him to do.

## **Once you notice the cues for readiness, begin slowly and be patient**

- There is no "one method" that works for every child.
- If you expect too much of him, or try too hard, toilet training will be a struggle for everyone involved.

Laxatives, enemas and suppositories should not be used for toilet training.

Begin by getting your child comfortable with the potty chair. Let him see it as you explain how it'll be used.

Next, help him to understand the REAL purpose of the potty chair or toilet (set him on the chair or toilet after he has a BM in his diaper - unfasten diaper and drop the contents into the chair or toilet.) After a few days or so he will understand what the chair/toilet is for.

Reward success with praise. When he's unsuccessful, don't criticize him.

Bladder control usually follows bowel control. It may take longer to achieve.

Your child's sense of independence will increase as bowel and bladder control occurs.

If he is unsuccessful in his attempt to learn, stop trying to train him and try again in a few months. Some people don't start training until their child is 2-1/2 years old.

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## **Countryside Offices**

### **Swift County**

201 13th St. S. • Benson, MN 56215  
320-843-4546 or 1-800-657-3291

### **Yellow Medicine County**

415 9th Avenue • Granite Falls, MN 56241  
320-564-3010 or 1-800-407-3628

### **Chippewa County**

719 N. 7th St. • Suite 308 • Montevideo, MN 56265  
320-269-2174 or 1-800-894-0192

### **Lac Qui Parle County**

600 6th Street • Madison, MN 56256  
320-598-7313 or 1-800-255-0736

### **Big Stone County**

47 NW 2nd St. • Suite 104 • Ortonville, MN 56278  
320-839-6135 or 1-866-277-5587

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Health Tracks was adapted from Communities Caring  
for Children MDH, NW District