



Activities



HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 18-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Pretend play becomes even more fun at this age. Encourage your toddler to have a doll or stuffed toy do what he does—walk, go to bed, dance, eat, and jump. Include the doll in daily activities or games.

Toddlers love movement. Take him to the park to ride on rocking toys, swings, and small slides. You may want to hold your toddler in your lap on the swing and on the slide at first.

Put favorite toys in a laundry basket slightly out of reach of your toddler or in a clear container with a tight lid. Wait for your toddler to request the objects, giving her a reason to communicate. Respond to her requests.

Sing action songs together such as "Ring Around the Rosy," "Itsy-Bitsy Spider," and "This Is the Way We Wash Our Hands." Do actions together. Move with the rhythm. Wait for your toddler to anticipate the action.

Toddlers will begin putting objects together. Simple puzzles (separate pieces) with knobs are great. Putting keys into locks and letters into mailbox slots is fun, too.

Your toddler may become interested in "art activities." Use large nontoxic crayons and a large pad of paper. Felt-tip markers are more exciting with their bright colors. Let your toddler scribble his own picture as you make one.

Play the "What's that?" game by pointing to clothing, toys, body parts, objects, or pictures and asking your toddler to name them. If your toddler doesn't respond, name it for him and encourage imitation of the words.

Fill a plastic tub with cornmeal or oatmeal. Put in kitchen spoons, strainers, measuring cups, funnels, or plastic containers. Toddlers can fill, dump, pour, and learn about textures and use of objects as tools. Tasting won't be harmful.





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FUN & EASY SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Try these activities with your 18-month-old—a great way to have fun together and support your child's social-emotional development.

Your toddler likes to have a regular daily routine. Talk to him about what you are doing now and what will be happening next. Give him time to be active and time to be quiet.

Have a pretend party with stuffed animals or dolls. You can cut out little "presents" from a magazine, make a pretend cake, and sing the birthday song.

Your toddler needs a lot of time to move around and exercise. Go for a walk, visit a playground, or take a trip to a shopping mall.

Dance with your toddler. Make a simple instrument out of a large plastic food tub (for a drum) or a small plastic container filled with beans or rice (for a shaker).

Your toddler will love to help with daily tasks. Give her simple "jobs" to do and let her know what a big girl she is. She can wipe off a table, put her toys away, or help sweep up.

Help your child learn about emotions. Make happy faces, sad faces, mad faces, and silly faces in front of a mirror. This is fun!

Set up playtimes with other children. Your child doesn't understand how to share yet, so make sure there are plenty of toys. Stay close by and help him learn how to play with other children.

Storytimes, especially before naptime and bedtime, are a great way to settle down before sleep. Let your child choose books to read and help turn pages. Help him name what he sees.

