



# Communication

Activities to Help Your Toddler Grow and Learn



Your toddler is beginning to enjoy language and words. She has many new words now and is beginning to put two words together for simple sentences. She looks at you when you are talking to her, says “hi” and “bye,” and points to things she wants. She also enjoys singing and will try to imitate singing favorite songs.

**Chatter Stretchers** Your toddler may use single words for requests, such as “juice” when he wants a drink. Help him stretch his sentence by saying it for him: “Would you like some juice?” “Say, I want juice, please.” Praise him when he attempts to make the sentence longer.

**What Happened Today?** When you get home from an outing, ask your toddler to tell someone else about what happened or what the two of you saw. “Tell Grandpa about the horse we saw.” Help her if you need to, but let her tell as much as she can.

**“Help Me” Game** Ask your toddler to help you by giving simple directions such as “Help Daddy. Can you get my shoe?” or “It’s time to change your diaper. Can you get me a diaper?” You may need to point with your finger to help him in the beginning. Be sure to say, “Thank you. You’re such a big help” when he helps.

**Animal Sounds** Teach your toddler the sounds that animals such as cats, dogs, and cows make. Read books about baby animals, and play with your toddler by making the baby animal sounds. Later, pretend you are the animal’s parent and your toddler is the baby animal. Call each other with animal sounds. This game can be a lot of silly fun.

**Read, Read, Read** Find times to “read” throughout the day. At this age, you can point to pictures and words and your child will begin to learn what words are about. At the grocery store, point to and read signs to your child. At a restaurant, let your child “read” a menu. At home, help her “read” magazines by looking at pictures.

**Junk Box** Put together a junk box of safe, everyday items that are interesting to explore and feel. Examples of things to put in the box are plastic cups, a soft sock, a scoop from a detergent box, a sponge, and a small shoe. When your child pulls something out of the box, say, “Look, you found a soft blue sock,” or “That sponge is squishy.” Use new language for your child, and change items in the box every few days.



16–20 months