

Tots In Action: 24-30 Months¹

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Hip, Hip Hurray!

I am finally two. I'm intrigued by how happy everyone reacts when I stick two fingers up in the air to show I'm two. I don't really know what this means but it's fun to do.

At two, I continue to explore with more determination than ever. The more you let me explore in a safety proof home, the more opportunity I will have to satisfy my curiosity. This will not only strengthen my motor and social skills but I will be channeling my boundless energy wisely and my demands to get constant attention from you will be decreased. I continue to develop.

Physically

Now I can:

- jump with both feet off the ground.
- brush my teeth with your help.
- pedal my tricycle with more ease and ability. I enjoy kiddie cars too. Remember, safety first.
- open doors by turning doorknobs.
- pour and fill -- sand and water are my favorites.



Cognitively



As I conquer my second year, my basic reasoning abilities will improve greatly.

I . . .

- have become absorbed in figuring out a situation at hand: how to squeeze a bottle to

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water the plants, or to find the ball where I last saw it.

- like to ask "Why?" and "What's that?"
- have the ability to imagine a block is a boat or that I'm someone else.
- pretend I can read all by myself but I especially like it when you read my favorite story again and again. What patience you have!
- can sing parts of songs.
- can put objects together and then take them apart.

My language development is improving more and more every day. I still understand more than I say, but my vocabulary is continuously increasing. I'm up to two, three and even four word sentences. I usually refer to myself as "me," such as "me all dirty," although occasionally I use "I" or "Chris." I sure don't have problems expressing my negative feelings and I definitely don't have any trouble declaring something is "mine" either.

Socially

I view the world primarily through my own needs and desires. I imagine that everyone thinks and feels exactly as I do. I can't put myself in anybody else's shoes, so it's really hopeless for you to tell me, "How would you like it if Mary did that to you?" I will understand this concept in a number of years but in the mean time you will need infinite patience. Please remind me that hitting Mary is not acceptable. Help me express my anger with words. Thanks for laying the foundation for my healthy development. Other social skills I'm conquering are the ability to:



- put things away and clean up.
- imitate other people's peculiarities and actions. Sometimes in my pretend games I sound just like you. Be careful of what you say and do!

- take turns in simple games.

Emotionally

My emotional impulses are not very stable. Sometimes I have the "Mr. Moody" bug inside of me. I might be grumpy and tearful one moment and agreeable and happy the next. I just get infuriated when I'm hard at work being adventurous and I exceed my boundaries and you step in. Unfortunately, I lack the ability to understand safety issues. I will probably have a temper tantrum, but we've talked about this before.



I'm a pro. I started those a while back (see Tots in Action 12-18 months for suggestions). It takes time for me to understand my limits. Other emotions that are part of my repertoire are:

- **Lack of patience** - it's hard for me to wait for my turn.
- **Ritualistic** - I want everything "just so."
- **Silliness** - I sometimes act silly just to make you laugh.

One emotion I'm conquering with practice is the ability to become less upset when you leave me with a babysitter. That's because I'm beginning to understand you will return. It's so nice to hear Mommy will be back soon and know what it means.

Parents' Corner



Being a parent is a tough job but at the same time it can be very joyful.

Parents who take their parenting role seriously want to raise responsible children. When parents set reasonable limits and follow through, children seem more secure. Kids who misbehave without having to

face consequences are spoiled and confused about the world they live in.

In their book "Parenting with Love and Logic", Cline and Fay believe parents can use certain techniques to show children how to take charge of their actions. They suggest using "thinking words" rather than "fighting words." This strategy produces kids who misbehave less and who develop self-confidence. With fighting words you are constantly commanding your children to do as you say "put your shoes on," "Don't shout at me," "stop spilling water on the floor" and so on. Here are some examples of thinking words:

- Would you rather put your shoes on now or in the car?
- Chris, you sound angry. I'll be glad to listen when you speak softly to me.
- Chris, would you rather play nicely in the bathtub or would you like to get out?

This approach asks questions and offers choices. It is the opposite of giving orders to children and therefore puts decision making in your child's court. As your child matures, he * will be able to have more control over his life. He will have plenty of practice making choices and living with the consequences of his behavior.

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*Tots in Action uses "he" "his" or "him" to
represent toddlers of both genders, to avoid
confusion