

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

As your baby grows into a toddler, one of your most important jobs is to help him develop a positive view of himself. This is called self-esteem. Tell him you like who he is and how he does things. Set realistic expectations. Catch him succeeding and reward him with praise, smiles, thank you's and hugs. Listen to your child and respect his feelings. This will help him feel important and capable, now and in the years ahead.

## What I Need

*I want to explore everything. I love to climb and I'll empty any container I can get into. I need safe places to move around inside and out.*

*I want you around. I get scared when I don't know where you are.*

*I love to turn switches on and off and to drag around a blanket or soft toy. I learn about textures and shapes when I play with water, sand, mud (and sometimes my food).*

*I love picture books, but I might rip them if you are not looking.*

*I get angry when I can't do what I want. Sometimes I'm stubborn and bossy. Sometimes I'm loving. Please be patient with me.*

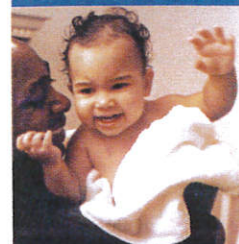
## HELP YOUR TODDLER SUCCEED STEPS FOR HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT (12 to 18 months)

### SAFETY



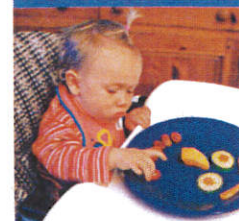
- Buckle your child into a solid high chair for all her meals.
- Keep him away from baseboard and portable heaters.
- Avoid small, hard foods such as nuts and candies. They are a choking hazard.

### SECURITY



- Tell your child you like the way she is and the things she does. For example, say "thank you" when she helps and "well done!" when she accomplishes small things.
- Hug him when he is frustrated. Help him deal with his changing moods.

### HEALTH



- Ask about your child's development when you take her for her 18-month vaccinations.
- Encourage him, but don't force your child to eat vegetables and fruits. Keep mealtimes pleasant.

### LEARNING



- Sing, talk, listen, read and play with your child every day.
- Show her photographs of herself and family members.

### ADJUSTING



- Give your toddler simple, one-step requests such as "Please get your shoes." Praise him when he does it. Say "You got your shoes—good for you."
- Help your child label her feelings. For example, say, "You are feeling angry."

**What to Expect** *Remember:* Every child develops at his or her own pace. Your child may be slightly behind or ahead of these guidelines. If you are worried, talk with your doctor, a public health nurse or another trusted health professional.

- Baby will progress from first steps to walking, running and even walking backwards. She will bump into things and fall a lot.
- He will start with imitating sounds and then say about 10 words ("no" is probably his favourite). He may have long babbling conversations with himself.
- He can scribble and make simple lines with a big crayon.
- She can let you know she has wet or soiled her diaper but she is still too young to be toilet trained.
- He may imitate grown-up actions (such as sweeping the floor) and begin to play pretend games such as driving a make-believe car.
- She will wave bye-bye and show her love with kisses and hugs.

## Take Care of You

It is hard to be a parent. But it is even harder to do it alone, especially at first. If you are a full-time single parent, don't try to do everything yourself. Ask for help from family members, friends, professionals and community services. Visit an Ontario Early Years Centre or a parent support program near you.

If you are a part-time parent, take best advantage of the times you have with your child. Keep communicating with his other parent. Talk with work colleagues and friends about the funny and interesting things he does.