

# Q&A: Toddler language, thinking & learning development

TODDLER

ARTICLE

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Develop your toddler's basic language skills by using songs to increase their vocabulary. As for social and observation skills, use everyday items like measuring tools for them to play with.

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After twelve months with your little one, you're finally adjusting to life with your newborn. You've come to recognize all the different sounds they make, and what they mean. You've even made considerable progress with weaning your little one from breastfeeding to solid foods.

Now, are you ready for the next phase of toddlerhood? The next two years of your baby's development from twelve to thirty-six months will bring about incredible changes including your little one developing language skills, social skills and even starting to show off their unique personality.

So what signs should you be looking for to make sure your child is on the right track developmentally and how can you boost your child's development? Let's find out!

## What kind of activities support my toddler's development?

The key to helping your little one's development is through developing their observation skills. As your toddler learns to pay more attention to their environment, you will notice development of language and critical thinking skills in him or her.

Some great ways to encourage your little one to be more observant include using everyday items as measuring tools, giving them items with different textures to play with and singing songs to increase their vocabulary.

Don't forget about their nutritional needs when it comes to your toddler's

development. Products like S-26 Progress GOLD are packed full of essential nutrients like DHA, an important building block for the brain, lutein which supports eye development and choline which boosts overall mental functions.

## **What developmental milestones should I be watching for from 12-24 months?**

During this year, your little one should be learning to recognize some basic parts of the body like hands and feet and be able to point to them when you ask. You can help them learn this vocabulary by repeating the words frequently when you're playing with them.

You'll see that your young toddler is starting to develop basic language skills. This includes things like understanding simple commands and enjoying some stories and songs. From listening to you speaking, they are constantly gaining new words and then use them in basic questions and statements.

## **What language skills should my child have by the time they are 24 months old?**

By the end of 24 months, your little one is on track with their language development as long as they know a minimum of 50 words, can link words together to make basic sentences and speak with relative clarity so at least mum and dad can understand.

## **What other skills should my 24-month-old have?**

We're sure you have heard of the terrible twos! By the time your toddler is two years old, their social skills will have developed to the point where they are defiant to you and show more independence. Their cognitive skills will have developed so that they are able to play simple games with other children and even locate hidden objects.

## **What developmental milestones should**

# my 36-month-old have?

Between 24 and 36 months, you'll see a dramatic increase in your toddler's vocabulary. From knowing a few dozen at the beginning of the year, they should be able to speak between 300 to 500 words by the end of 36 months and be able to use these words in more complex sentences than previously observed.

Additionally, they will have a much greater understanding of their environment and know both their own name as well as being able to identify people as "I" or "you". Maybe most importantly, by this age, your little one's language should be understandable to not just you, but to strangers as well.

This can be one of the most rewarding stages of parenting because toddlers become very good at showing affection at this stage. At the same time, it is a very stressful phase because their physical skills will have developed to the part where they can run, climb and even pedal a tricycle! Your little one is ready to explore the world, and nothing is getting in their way!

## What should I do if my child is not reaching these milestones?

Firstly, don't panic. As with anything, each child is different and develops at his or her own pace. Always feel free to reach out to your child's doctor with any questions or concerns, they will be happy to answer and don't forget, they've seen hundreds of children go through these milestones.

Your doctor may suggest that you take your little one to a speech-language therapist to perform a series of tests to determine what, if any, is the cause of your little one's delayed speech.

## References:

1. Mayo Clinic. Healthy Lifestyle: Infant and toddler health. Available at <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/infant-and-toddler-health/expert-answers/toddler-speech-development/faq-20057847>. Accessed on 10 September 2017.
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4. National Institute on Deafness and and Other Common Disorders. Speech and Language Developmental Milestones. Available at <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/speech-and-language>. Accessed on 10 September 2017.

