

Positive Discipline through Ages and Stages

(adapted from the Parenting Kit, 1998)

Your Toddler: One to Two Years

Try to relax. The change in your child is normal for this stage of her life. Remember these 4 important points:

- 1) Toddlers are “supposed” to explore.**
This is how they learn! Accept that your toddler will be “into everything”.
- 2) Toddlers are learning that they are a person separate from mom and dad.**
This is exciting and a little scary for your toddler. He might want to do things for himself and also need you to feel safe. He will also say “no” to you more, as he tries to get his own way.
- 3) Toddlers are impulsive (act without thinking).**
They do not yet have the self-control that helps them to think before they follow strong urges, even if they “know” they’re not supposed to.
- 4) Toddlers don’t always remember or pay attention.**
They don’t understand hard ideas. You might think she “knows” not to go on the road, but does she know that you mean any road, not just the road in front of your house? Or that you mean everyday, not just today?

This is often an age where parents start to have a harder time with discipline. Your child begins walking and talking, and wants to do things her way.

It’s an exciting fun age, but also a time when your child starts to say “no” to you and has stormy emotions.

During this time, some parents feel they need to ‘get control’ of their child.

Tips:

- ✓ Keep setting limits for your toddler. And, as your child starts talking more, start telling why (ex. “That hurts Fido. Pat him softly, like this.”)
- ✓ Your toddler loves to do things the way you do. This is a very good way to teach simple things like “boots off at the door”.
- ✓ Keep your rules easy, tell them often and you follow the rules too. If you do this, your child will have learned a lot by his second birthday.

Remember this ...

Toddlers can start to understand rules and steps to follow, but they don’t have much control over their own impulses.

For more information on parenting and positive discipline, contact your local Northwestern Health Unit office, or phone the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program toll free at 1-800-465-4377

