

18 Month Visit – Parent Handout

Talking and Hearing

- Read and sing to your child often.
- Talk about and describe pictures in books.
- Use simple words with your child.
- Tell your child the words for her feelings.
- Ask your child simple questions, confirm her answers, and explain simply.
- Use simple, clear words to tell your child what you want her to do.

Your Child and Family

- Create time for your family to be together.
- Keep outings with a toddler brief - 1 hour or less.
- Do not expect a toddler to share.
- Give older children a safe place for toys they do not want to share.
- Teach your child not to hit, bite, or hurt other people or pets.
- Your child may go from trying to be independent to clinging; this is normal.
- Consider enrolling in a parent-toddler playgroup.
- Ask us for help in finding programs to help your family.
- Prepare for a new baby by reading books about being a big brother or sister.
- Spend time with each child.
- Make sure you are also taking care of yourself.
- Tell your child when he is doing a good job.
- Give your toddler many chances to try a new food. Allow mouthing and touching to learn about them.
- Tell us if you need help with getting enough food for your family.

Your Child's Behavior

- Set limits that are important to you and ask other to use them with your toddler.
- Be consistent with your toddler.
- Praise your child for behaving well.
- Play with your child each day by doing things she likes.
- Keep time-outs brief. Tell your child in simple words what she did wrong.
- Tell your child what to do in a nice way.
- Change your child's focus to another toy or activity if she becomes upset.
- Parenting class can help you understand your child's behavior and teach you what to do.
- Expect your child to cling to you in new situations.

Healthy Teeth

- Use a small amount of fluoride toothpaste (size of a grain of rice) on a toothbrush to brush your child's teeth.
- Take your child for a first dental visit if you have not done so
- Brush your child's teeth twice each day after breakfast and before bed.

Safety

- The car seat should be rear-facing in the back seat in all vehicles for the first two years of life.
- Read the instructions about your car safety seat to check on the weight and height requirements.
- Remove coat before buckling in car seat.
- Everyone should always wear a seat belt in the car.
- Lock away poisons, medications, and lawn and cleaning supplies.
- Call Poison Help (1-800-222-1222) if you are worried your child has eaten something harmful.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs and guards on windows on the second floor and higher.
- Move furniture away from windows.
- Watch your child closely when she is on the stairs.
- When backing out of the garage or driving in the driveway, have another adult hold your child a safe distance away so he is kept safe.
- If you have a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Prevent burns by keeping hot liquids, matches, lighters, and the stove away from your child.
- Have a working smoke detector on every floor.
- Use sunscreen when outdoors. Reapply frequently.

Toilet Training

Signs of being ready for toilet training include:

- Staying dry for 2 hours
 - Knows if he is wet or dry
 - Can pull pants down and up
 - Wants to learn
 - Can tell you if he is going to have a bowel movement
- Read books about toilet training with your child.
 - Praise sitting on the potty or toilet even with clothes on.
 - Take your child to choose underwear when he feels ready to do so.



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Rev 2/22