

## Play Encourages Learning

For young children, play is their work. Children learn many important things about themselves, about others, and about how things work. Adults can help children learn by finding a safe place for play, offering appropriate toys, and giving love and encouragement.

Important ways toddlers and 2-year-olds play:

### Physical play

Climbing,  
running,  
and jumping

Balancing,  
swinging,  
and riding

Throwing,  
catching,  
and kicking

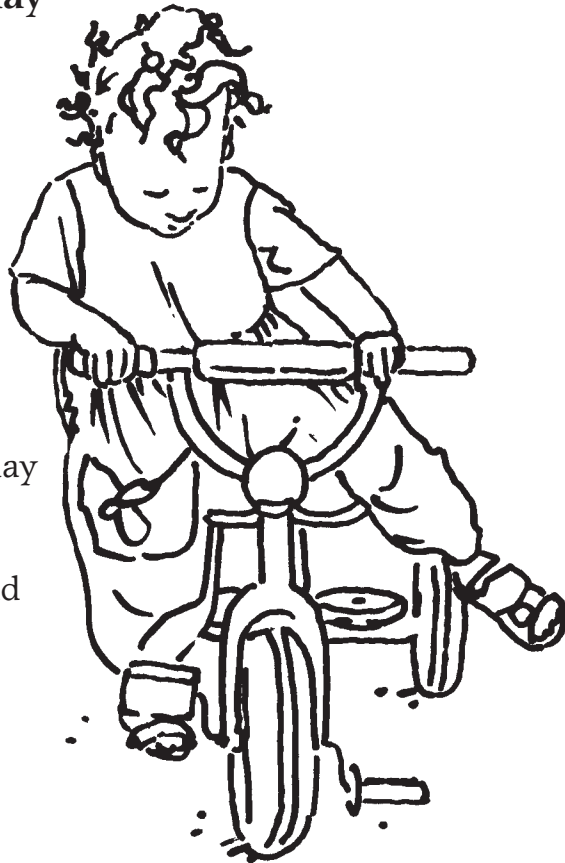
### Activities

Kneading clay

Working  
puzzles

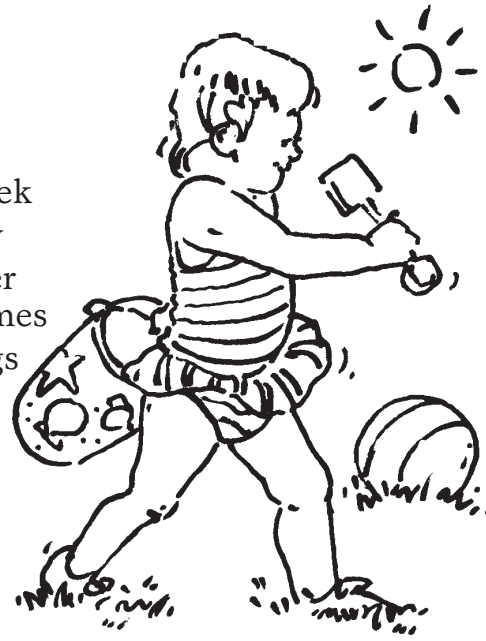
Pouring sand  
or water

Filling and  
emptying  
containers



### Games

- Chase
- Hide and seek
- Hide the toy
- Simple finger and hand games
- Singing songs and saying rhymes



All children grow, learn, and develop at different rates. The information in this brochure is considered typical for this age. If we do all we can to help children develop now, they will have the best chance to do well in school and in life.

This brochure was developed by the Child Care Resource Center and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.



*Your Experts for Life*

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## Ages & Stages

# Toddlers & 2-Year-Olds



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Toddlers and 2-year-olds are full of energy and curiosity. They are becoming much more independent and aware of themselves as individuals. Children at this age may seem selfish and self-centered. This is because they don't have the ability yet to think about how others feel or consider what others want. Toddlers and 2-year-olds need grown-ups who are understanding, alert, flexible, and creative.

## What's It Like To Be A Toddler Or 2-Year-Old?

- I like to do things for myself.
- I am very active and want to find out about everything.
- I can walk and run and climb and jump.
- I have a very short attention span.
- Sometimes I lose control of myself and have a temper tantrum.
- I can understand some rules, but not very many.

- I can be easily frustrated.
- I can show love and affection for the people who are special to me.
- I can feed myself and help clean up.

## How Do Toddlers And 2-Year-Olds...?

### Think And Learn

- They learn through using their senses: smelling, seeing, touching, hearing, and tasting.
- They learn through physical movement.
- They can identify body parts.
- They understand more words than they can say.
- They like repetition.

### Grow Socially And Emotionally

- They usually play alone, but are beginning to enjoy having playmates.
- They don't share well yet.
- They get frustrated when they can't do things.
- They don't like changes in routines.
- Their favorite words may be "no," "let me," and "me do it!"



## What Your Toddler Or 2-Year-Old Wants You To Know:

I need you to help me use words to express my feelings and needs.

I need you to set a few limits for me, so that I know what to expect.

I will understand you better if you talk to me using short, simple phrases.

Please tell me what you want me to do instead of just saying "No!"

I like routine. Please help me follow a regular schedule for eating and sleeping.

When you let me make some simple choices, I feel like I have more control over my life.

Even though I seem very independent, I still need lots of hugs and reassurance from you.

Sometimes I get frustrated because I can't do what I want. It helps me learn how to control myself when you stay calm.

Every child is different. If you watch me closely, you will get clues about why I do what I do and how to help me grow.