



Government of **Western Australia**  
**Child and Adolescent Health Service**  
**WA Country Health Service**



**Edition 2**  
**2024**

# Your toddler



# 1-2

**Years**

health

family

development



## About this magazine

The **Child and Adolescent Health Service** and **WA Country Health Service** are here to support you to raise a happy and healthy child.



This magazine includes a range of information and advice for your toddler until they turn 2.

The articles are based on current 'best practice', and have been written by experienced health professionals and reviewed by a wide range of families.

The magazine has been designed to be used together with your toddler's Purple Book by providing extra background information about your toddler's growth and health.

### Acknowledgement of country and people

The Child and Adolescent Health Service and the WA Country Health Service acknowledge Aboriginal people of the many traditional lands and language groups of Western Australia. We acknowledge the wisdom of Aboriginal Elders both past and present, and pay respect to Aboriginal communities of today.

### Have your say

We welcome feedback, positive and negative. It helps us provide you with a better service. If you have any compliments or complaints about your child health appointment, please tell a staff member or contact:

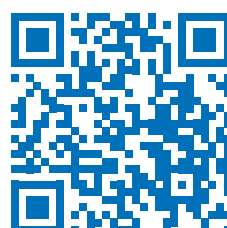
- Metropolitan:  
[cahs.health.wa.gov.au/cahsfeedback](https://cahs.health.wa.gov.au/cahsfeedback)
- Country:  
[wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/feedback](https://wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/feedback)
- You can also share your feedback anonymously (without your name) at [CareOpinion.org.au](https://CareOpinion.org.au)

### Your Toddler magazine – what do you think?

This magazine is how we provide information to families in WA.

Because every family is different, your feedback can help us make it better for other parents.

Please scan the QR code or visit [cahs.health.wa.gov.au/magazine](https://cahs.health.wa.gov.au/magazine) to let us know what's useful, what we should remove, and what we missed out.



## Contents

### Information

Child health nurses	4
Parenting groups	5

### Relationships and development

Your toddler's development	6
Relationships	6
Talking and communication	7
Social and emotional	8
Physical skills	9
Play	11
Active play	13
Screen time	14
Talking about body safety	15

### Behaviour

Crying and emotions	16
Behaviour	16
Routine	17
A scary world	19
Tantrums	20

### Sleep

Why is sleep important?	23
How much sleep?	23
Tired signs	23
Sleep routines	24
Sleep issues	24
Cot or bed?	24

### Healthy eating

Breastfeeding	25
Healthy eating	25
What types of food should I offer?	27
How much food should I offer?	28
Common concerns	30

### Your toddler's health

Immunisation	31
When to see your doctor	32
When to get help	32
Daily care	33
Your toddler's skin	34
Nappies and toileting	35

### Teeth

Baby teeth	36
When do teeth come through?	36
Caring for your toddler's teeth	36

### Safety

Beds and bedrooms	38
Burns and scalds	39
Car safety	40
Choking	41
Drowning	41
Falls	41
Farm safety	42
Heat and sun safety	42
Pet safety	42
Poisoning	43
Smoking and vaping	43
Alcohol and other drugs	43
In an emergency	43

### Family

Parenting	44
A new baby	44
Family and domestic violence	46

### Contacts/services directory 50





## Child health nurses

Child health nurses are specially trained in child and family health, and work in local child health centres.

- They offer health and development checks at key stages of your child's life.
- They can assist with the many aspects of parenting and family health.
- They can link you to local services and doctors in your community, as well as hospitals and other health professionals when needed.

Your child health nurse appointments are a great opportunity to discuss your toddler's health and development. The nurse will check that your toddler is growing and learning new skills as expected. The visits are also a good time to talk about how you are doing – how you're feeling and coping, and any concerns you are having looking after your toddler.

**We recommend you visit the child health nurse when your toddler turns:**

- 12 months (until 18 months)
- 2 years (until they turn 3)

**You can also visit or contact your nurse at any other time if you are worried or have any questions.**

## Booking

If you live in the Perth metropolitan area you can make appointments by calling **1300 749 869** or register for an appointment at **health.wa.gov.au/purplebook**

If you live outside the metro area please contact your local child health centre for a booking.

To find your local child health centre (metro and non-metro) visit **healthywa.wa.gov.au/service-search**, or Google 'child health centre'.



Always bring your toddler's Purple Book (All about me) to your appointments.

## Drop-in sessions

**Some centres offer drop-in sessions when you want to:**

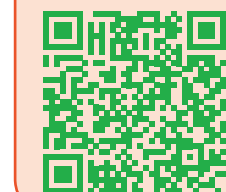
- see the nurse for a quick question
- get parenting information and support.

You don't need an appointment – your nurse will tell you about local drop-in sessions.

★ **If you think your toddler is sick, you need to see a doctor. Your child health nurse cannot help when your toddler is sick.**

## Other services

If needed, the Child and Adolescent Health Service and WA Country Health Service offer families additional help in areas such as Aboriginal Health, Child Development and school health. You can also self-refer to the Child Development Service if you have concerns about your toddler's development (see page 10).



**Kids Health Matters** provides trusted advice on common child health concerns from leading WA child health experts.

Find out more at **cahs.health.wa.gov.au/childhealthresources** or scan the QR code.



## Parenting groups

### Circle of security (4 months to 6 years)

This is an 8-week program with one 2-hour session each week. It's aimed at parents and carers who are interested in finding different ways to connect with their child or handle their child's behaviour.

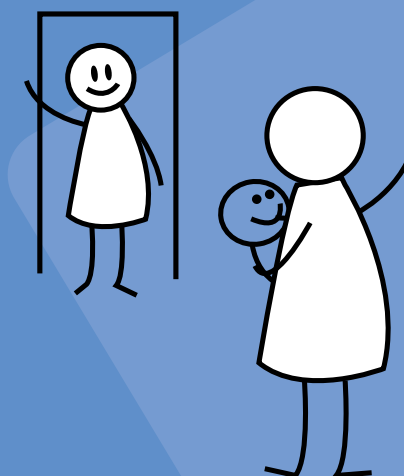
This program will help you to understand and learn to read your child's emotional needs. Through the program you'll learn to support your child to manage emotions and develop their self-esteem, to help your child feel more secure.

Talk to your child health nurse or visit **healthywa.wa.gov.au/ParentGroups** to see if this group is suitable for you.

### Playgroups

A playgroup is a group of parents, carers and extended family who come together with their babies and toddlers to learn together through play. Your toddler will benefit from the social experience, plus playgroup is a place for parents to make friends and learn from each other.

Child health nurses offer health and development checks at key stages of your child's life.



### Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- **cahs.health.wa.gov.au/ParentingGroups**
- Playgroup WA



## Your toddler's development

You'll see lots of change in your toddler between 1 and 2 years.

- Your toddler is on the move and discovering the world. As a parent, you will need to think about safety and setting limits or boundaries.
- Your toddler may be clingy and wary of strangers, but is forming special relationships with you and other family members.
- They begin talking.
- Your toddler loves you talking to them, looking at picture books together, and pointing to and naming objects they know.
- They will become better at feeding themselves but may become fussy about food.
- They become more independent and their personality may start becoming clear.

## Relationships

Loving and stable relationships are essential to your toddler's development and wellbeing. This is important for their emotional development, both now and in the future. Your toddler will be better able to cope with stress, have fewer behaviour problems, and have a healthy self-esteem and rewarding relationships.

This sense of security gives your toddler confidence to explore the world and learn. As they explore the world, your toddler learns so much – how to think and understand, communicate, show emotions and behave, and develop social skills.

It is important your toddler knows that they can always count on you – not only when they are happy, but also when they are upset or not feeling 'OK'.

### Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Circle of Security (CircleOfSecurityInternational.com)
- Bright Tomorrows Parenting App
- Raising Children Network

## How can you develop healthy parent-child relationships?

Try to consistently respond to your toddler with warmth and love, as this helps develop trust in you and trust in the world around them.

Try and see the world through your toddler's eyes – talk to them about what's going on, as well as how they are feeling, emotionally and physically. Label their feelings, particularly when they're sad, angry or frustrated (see page 16).

- **Spend quality time with your toddler.**
  - Share smiles and laughs during bath time, or share a story and a cuddle before bedtime.
  - Eat meals together as a family.
  - Focus your attention on your toddler when you're together – try to put your phone away at these times (see page 14).
- **Cuddle your toddler often** – but only if they want to be cuddled (see page 15).
- **Read books and sing together.**
- **Help your toddler's growing independence.**
  - Let them take the lead in exploring and play – follow their lead, and help them just enough when they need it. (You still need to make sure they are safe as young children are not aware of danger.)
  - Offer them simple choices such as 'carrot or apple', or 'red t-shirt or blue t-shirt'.

You can find lots more tips and ideas on the Bright Tomorrows App.

## What if I have concerns about my relationship with my child?

Sometimes it can be hard to relate to your toddler the way you want to. If you have any concerns with connecting with your toddler, or feel you don't understand or know how to respond to their needs, talk to your child health nurse or your doctor.

## Talking and communication

Your toddler is starting to say a lot more single words, and starting to put words together to make short sentences.

They'll still want you to help them put some situations into words when they are not yet able to. For example 'I want the green cup for my water'.

Talk to your toddler a lot. Repeat what they say, and add new information to keep the conversation going when you reply. Use simple words to describe things you see together, such as 'Look at the big bus'!

- Your toddler can say around 5 to 20 words at 18 months, and up to 150 to 300 words by 2 years. They can understand many more.
- They might not say words correctly.
- 2 year olds should start using different types of words:
  - naming words like 'ball', 'daddy' and 'teddy'
  - action words like 'eat', 'drink' and 'run'
  - describing words like 'big', 'red' and 'yucky'.

- Their sentences will become longer and more accurate – from 'more' to 'want more', and then 'I want more'.
- Your toddler can understand more language, and remember 2 things at a time, such as 'Get the ball and bring it to Daddy'.
- Besides words that say what they want, your toddler's beginning to learn words about how they feel, such as 'ow' when they hurt themselves.
- By 2 years, your toddler will have enough language skills to tell people what they want them to do – 'no' or 'go away'.

### Books

- Read with your toddler every day.
- Choose books with lots of repetition and rhythm.
- Make sure you can both see the pages, and watch to see what your toddler is interested in, then talk about what they're looking at.
- Join your local library, and let your toddler start choosing books. Choose books with simple story lines, and lots of bright clear pictures.





## Social and emotional

Your toddler now understands that they're a completely separate person from you and is starting to understand that they can 'own' things. Having their 'own' way or calling an object 'mine' is your toddler's way of dealing with this exciting, but sometimes frightening, new idea.

Your toddler still can't understand abstract concepts like 'time'.

Watching your toddler develop their own personality is exciting, but it can sometimes feel like hard work, physically and mentally.

Toddlers often seem to ignore you when you tell them to do something, and need to be distracted, moved away or picked up. Even though they seem to understand 'no', your toddler still can't control their impulses enough to always do what you ask (see page 20).

Your toddler:

- will be curious and energetic, but still needs you to be there for reassurance
- will depend on you and become very attached. They're likely to be afraid if you leave them because they still don't completely understand that you will come back.
- will enjoy playing with you, and love repetitive games
- will copy actions and games, such as actions in songs, or feeding dolly
- may show interest in other children, but usually plays alone or alongside other children. At this age, toddlers don't understand the idea of sharing.
- may be more cooperative in things like dressing because they want to copy adults and 'do it myself', but may become really frustrated if they can't do a task.

## Developing understanding

Your toddler's working hard at sorting things they see into groups. At first, these groups will be simple. For example, after seeing and remembering a duck, they'll say 'duck' when they see a chicken because both have feathers and wings.

Enjoy seeing how your toddler organises the objects, characters and animals you come across.

- Your toddler's getting better at remembering – they're starting to think before they act, such as remembering something is hot. They'll also remember and copy past events.
- Between 18 months and 2 years, they'll get better at recognising similarities and differences in things, and your toddler will start sorting things into groups such as cars, blocks or animals. They'll also begin to work out what things belong together – putting crayons with paper.
- Your toddler will begin to try matching and fitting, and simple puzzles, such as shapes or animals, but may still need your help.
- However, your toddler still has very little understanding of time and what tomorrow means. They don't yet understand abstract words such as 'empty' or 'heavy'.



## Physical skills

Your toddler's increasing movement means you need to look at ways to make your home safer. They'll go from crawling short distances to walking confidently and exploring, pulling every handle and turning every knob they can see.

Try to limit using negative words like 'no', 'stop', or 'don't', as these will have a powerful effect on your toddler's view of themselves and the world. Paint a positive picture of a world – not a place where nothing is allowed. If you need to tell your toddler 'no' or 'stop', remember to tell them what they can do instead – 'Here's something else you can play with'.

When you need to guide your toddler's behaviour, try to suggest alternatives and explain the dangers as simply as you can.

### By around 15 months, your toddler can:

- push themselves by 'scooting along' on a four-wheeled riding toy
- walk alone with feet wide apart and arms held high to keep their balance
- get to their feet using their hands to push themselves up.

### By 2 years, your toddler:

- can get up without using hands
- can probably run without bumping into things, and stop when necessary
- can probably go down stairs while holding on, but will put both feet on each step before moving to the next one
- will want to – and be able to – turn knobs, push buttons and open cupboards.

Testing 'how far they can go' is a part of your toddler's development. Try to let them explore freely, but don't let them run too far.

**Always let your toddler know that you are there for them to return to.**



## SAFETY!

**Your toddler does NOT understand about danger.**

**You need to watch your toddler now they are exploring, moving faster, and reaching many more places and things.**

**Secure or remove heavy or breakable items. Leave interesting, unbreakable objects where your toddler can reach them. (See page 38 for more about safety and your toddler.)**





### How to help your toddler develop

(See next page for more play ideas.)

The more things you let your toddler try every day the more they'll learn. Enjoy their achievements with them.

- Talk about what your toddler is looking at, doing or feeling.
- Your toddler learns more words this way, rather than when you only ask questions.
  - Avoid questions you already know the answer to. Instead of asking 'What's that?', say 'Oh, it's a yummy apple'.
  - Play games where they can say 'no', such as 'Is Daddy under the bed?'
  - Add a word or two onto what they say to encourage longer sentences later on. If your toddler says 'fish' say 'big fish', 'yellow fish' or 'fish swimming'.
- Your toddler may love looking at pictures and books.
  - Sometimes read the story – other times talk about the pictures on each page.
  - Sometimes, let your toddler choose books and turn the pages.
- Your toddler will love to turn knobs and push buttons.  
This helps them learn to use their little muscles and to feel that they can manage new things.  
Protect the TV and other tempting equipment, and give them their own toys with knobs and buttons to press.

- They'll enjoy simple puzzles.  
If your toddler loses interest once they can do a puzzle, borrow some from a toy library.
- They'll like toys that link together such as trains or stacking toys, hammer and peg sets, and filling and emptying containers.
- Provide different toys and objects so your toddler can learn about different and same, such as fruit, animals or cars.

Don't forget to just let your toddler play on their own sometimes so that they learn to entertain themselves. They'll ask for help if they want it.

### Toilet training

Most children are NOT ready to control their poo and wee until they are 2 or even 3 years old.

If you are concerned or want to know more about toileting your toddler, please talk to your child health nurse or doctor.

### When to be concerned about your toddler's development

#### ★ Contact your child health nurse or doctor if your toddler:

- is tripping over their feet a lot and this is not improving
- can't walk
- can't hold a spoon and get most of the food to their mouth
- can't pick up small objects
- can't build a tower of 2 or more bricks
- only regularly uses 20 single words or fewer
- doesn't understand simple directions. (This doesn't mean they'll always do as you tell them.)



#### Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Ngala
- Raising Children Network
- Bright Tomorrows App
- Better Beginnings (better-beginnings.com.au)



### Play with your toddler

You are your toddler's first teacher and playmate.

Play is important for your toddler's learning, development, growth and health.

- Your child's brain develops faster in the first 5 years than at any other time. This is when the foundations for development, learning and health are all being laid down.
- Toddlers learn best when they are actively involved and having fun with you during everyday activities, so spend time each day playing, learning and having fun with your toddler.
- Through play, toddlers learn skills like moving, thinking, speaking, socialising, and how to manage emotions.

#### When it comes to play, toddlers:

- need lots of active play – walking, running, climbing, jumping, rolling, ball games (see page 13)
- like simple, repetitive play – push and pull-along toys, blocks, hammering, sit-and-ride toys, simple puzzles, putting objects in and out of containers, sand and water
- enjoy talking about play – 'all gone', 'more cars', 'big ball'

- are still learning how to share – teach them by taking turns – 'My turn, now your turn'
- may start to play further away from you, but still like to be able to see you
- love to do everything themselves – 'me do it'. There will be fewer tantrums if you let them have a go and praise their effort.
- will begin to show interest in playing with other children.

#### What you can do:

- Be available – find lots of small amounts of time every day to do fun things together. Get down to their level, show interest – copy what they do and encourage them to copy you.
- Let your toddler make choices about play.
- Try not to rush your toddler when they're trying something new, and allow time for lots of repetition.
- Be ready to settle disagreements if a few toddlers are playing together.
- Limit screen time – toddlers learn best through doing things with you (see page 14).
- Join your local playgroup and toy library.

#### Some activities to try:

- Be playful – you are your toddler's best play mate!
- Blow raspberries on their tummy, let them climb over you, play peek-a-boo, roll and jump on the grass, look for bugs, let them brush your hair, sing songs and look at picture books together.
- Include your toddler in everyday activities – while changing nappies, driving, hanging out the washing, and during mealtime and bath time.
- Play 'pretend' – show your toddler how to play with dolls, teddies, tea sets, a toy phone, cars and trains, farm and zoo animals, and dress ups.
- Get outdoors and active – outdoor activity is ideal for toddlers. Let your toddler have fun on swings, slides and climbing frames. A big, soft ball is great to practise catching, throwing and kicking.



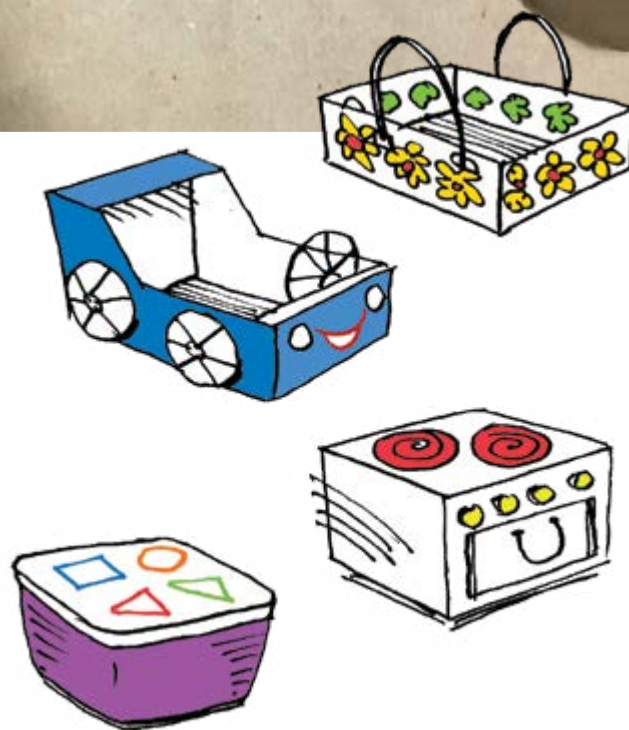


Image: bridgewaycentre.ca

### Homemade toys for toddlers

Homemade toys are fun, easy to make, cheap, and help to develop creativity. Make toys together – involve your toddler in recycling boxes and containers.

- Teddy/dolly carry basket – decorate a box, add some handles through holes inside of the box and use a tea towel to make a bed.
- Car/bus/fire-engine – use a strong box large enough for your toddler to sit in. Add some wheels, controls and a steering wheel using lids and paper plates. Decorate together.
- Toy stove – draw or glue hot plates on top of a box – use paper plates. Cut a large flap in one side for an oven door. Draw on some knobs and make a handle with a short loop of string.
- Posting box – take an ice-cream container or shoebox and cut the lid to make holes to 'post' different objects like pegs, blocks, and cards.
- Books – glue pictures, cards or photos on paper with your toddler, and put inside plastic sleeves to make a book. Some ideas are 'me and my family', 'favourite things', 'cars and trucks', 'big and little', or 'animals'.



### Keeping your toddler safe

(See page 38 for more about safety.)

- Supervise your toddler closely all the time, especially around water, play equipment, or when they're using things like scissors, pencils, glue or paint.
- Babies, toddlers and young children can choke on small toys and objects.
- Check toys regularly to make sure they are safe. Strings on toys should be less than 20 centimetres long.
- Do a safety check and make sure your home is safe for your toddler to explore.

### Active play

Active play gets your toddler moving, and should raise their heart rate.

**Toddlers need to be active every single day because it helps:**

- build strong bones and muscles, and maintain a healthy weight
- improve balance and coordination
- improve learning and thinking
- keep them healthy – physically, mentally and emotionally.

**Your toddler should get a total of at least 3 hours of daily physical activity spread across the day, including active play such as:**

- walking
- running and skipping
- dancing and jumping.

Try to make activities fun to encourage your toddler to keep doing them, and to explore and discover new things about the world and themselves.

Active play doesn't have to be organised or have rules or special equipment. You can sometimes join in, but also let your toddler 'make up' their own play – trying new things lets them learn from their mistakes and enjoy being active at their own pace.

**Active play can be:**

- inside your home, such as dancing to music
- in the garden or park, such as running and climbing, or ball play
- outdoors or in a shopping centre, such as walking (instead of sitting in the stroller) or playing on play equipment.

### **i** Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Nature Play WA ([natureplaywa.org.au](http://natureplaywa.org.au))
- Ngala
- Playgroup WA
- Raising Children Network







## Screen time

Screen time is the amount of time spent looking at all screens including TVs, computers, smartphones, tablets and video consoles.

Children under 2 years of age should not have any screen time except for video-chatting (such as Facetime or Skype).

Toddlers need social interaction to develop social skills.



## Why limit screen time?

**For healthy development, your toddler needs:**

- face-to-face contact and social interaction with adults and other children to develop social skills
- to learn to play and interact without screens. This helps them learn how to experiment, think, imagine and solve problems.
- to be active for at least 3 hours, spread throughout the day. Toddlers usually don't move during screen time.

**Screen time can affect sleep:**

- Screen time just before bed can delay how quickly your toddler falls asleep or the quality of sleep they get.
- Sharing a book or story together is a great way to calm down and prepare for sleep.

**How you can help:**

Avoid checking the phone during meals, bath time, story time and play times.

Turn off the television and other screens when not in use, during mealtimes, or when you're playing, reading and talking with your toddler.

### **i** Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Raising Children Network

## Talking about body safety

It's important to start talking about personal and body safety early, even with your toddler. Everyone has the right to be safe and feel safe.

Even at this age, though your toddler won't have the words to say how they feel, it's important to talk to your toddler about their body and keeping safe.

For example, if you can see your child's friend doesn't like being hugged, step in and stop the activity. Then, in a quiet place, say something like 'Jo didn't enjoy that. Next time, let's ask before we hug Jo.'

Set a good example yourself by asking before you hug your child or other people.

Of course, your toddler can't make all the decisions, such as having a bath or sitting in their car restraint. If you can, try and give choices at these times, such as 'do you want the special bubble bath?', but also explain that you need to keep them safe and healthy, and that this sometimes means doing things they don't want to do.

## Body parts

It's important to be comfortable and teach your toddler the right words for all their body parts, including 'private' parts such as nipples, vagina and penis, so they don't feel it's wrong to use these words.

Teach your toddler about private body parts, and which people are allowed to touch these areas and why, such as you or day care staff to help them in the toilet, or a doctor for medical problems.

Always tell your toddler what you are doing before touching them – 'I'm going to change your nappy now'.

As they get older, talk to your toddler about consent when someone touches them. Let your toddler choose if they want a cuddle or to sit on someone's knee, and respect that choice – and ask friends and family to do the same.

Teach your toddler that 'no' means no and 'stop' means stop, and that you'll listen if they don't want to be hugged, touched or tickled.

But they also need to learn to stop when someone else tells them 'no' or 'stop', too.



### **i** Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Perth Children's Hospital Child Protection Unit (6456 4300)
- 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732)
- Raising Children Network





## Crying and emotions

Just like a baby, your toddler will cry when hungry, in pain or uncomfortable, or when they need comforting and a cuddle.

Your toddler may now cry with frustration, or because they're sad or angry.

When your toddler cries, they need you to respond before they get too upset.

- One of the most important things you can do is simply be with your toddler.
- Try some rest time, or quiet time such as reading a story, especially if your toddler seems to be tired.
- If your toddler is frustrated, help them by naming their feelings – 'I think you're feeling angry.' – and offer to work on a solution together – 'Can Mummy help?' or 'Let's try and do the puzzle together'.
- Take your toddler somewhere safe and quiet to calm them down during a tantrum (see page 20).
- If your toddler cries at bedtime, consider some bedtime routines (see page 24).
- Avoid using food as a comfort or reward for your toddler.
- If you can't seem to find a reason, try and encourage your toddler to do something else, such as going for a walk or dancing to some music.

## Behaviour

Your toddler is changing from being a baby who needs you to do everything for them to becoming independent and their own person.

They still need your love, and to feel safe and close to you, but at the same time to learn to make choices and do things themselves.

Balancing these mixed feelings and behaviour can sometimes be difficult for both you and your toddler!

Help your toddler by helping them understand their feelings and letting them become more independent, while keeping them safe at the same time.

### Your toddler is:

- active and curious – they want to touch, open and shut, explore, run, climb and throw
- learning who they are – what they like and don't like, and trying out their will – by saying 'no' a lot
- learning to be in charge of themselves – to walk, talk, feed and dress themselves
- learning to live with others – how to show love, share and take turns, and not hurt others.

### Your toddler cannot:

- understand your reasons or see things from your point of view. Try and see things through their eyes.
- sit still and wait, share, or control their feelings – these things take time and support to learn
- always stop doing something you've told them not to do. They're not being naughty. They're learning self-control but haven't quite got there yet. You still need to gently remind them and keep them safe.

### Your toddler needs:

- understanding, love, patience and encouragement
- time to explore
- the chance to make simple choices
- to test their independence but know they can always come back to you for comfort
- your help to start learning how to understand and manage big feelings and behaviour
- your help to learn new skills
- you to keep them safe – they don't understand danger yet.

## Routine

Toddlers like routine – for example, sleep and mealtimes. Knowing what to expect helps them feel safe and secure.

### Things that can change your toddler's routine include:

- the arrival of a new baby (see page 44), moving house, or moving to their own bed
- being sick
- being separated from you including starting child care.

Toddlers don't usually have the words to say how they feel. Instead, their behaviour may change – such as being more uncooperative (saying 'no'), being unusually quiet, or feeling sick.

Your toddler still needs you to be close. It's important to spend time with them, and to let them still be a 'baby' when they want, especially during these changes. There will be less difficult behaviour as your toddler starts getting used to all these changes.







### What you can do

Just like many of us, the best way for your toddler to learn is in small, simple steps, and they'll probably need to do something many times before they get it 'right'.

- Praise your toddler when they're doing the right thing. Saying 'Thank you for packing up', or 'That's really helpful' is more likely to encourage this behaviour.
- Be positive and try not to say 'don't' all the time. Instead of 'Don't slam the door' try saying 'Let's shut the door quietly', then praise your toddler when they succeed.
- Use simple words, and help your toddler understand feelings by naming them – 'I can see you're angry because you can't reach your toy.' Then offer to help.
- Read stories where people are showing different feelings, and talk about this with your toddler.
- It's normal for toddlers to get very upset or have a 'tantrum'. They need your help to calm down (see page 20).
- Never threaten to leave your toddler alone – this is very frightening. If you are out and your toddler refuses to come with you – calmly pick them up and carry them, gently but firmly, to let them know you're in charge.

Your toddler needs lots of praise and encouragement.

Punishment or forcing them to 'behave' or 'be good' doesn't help toddlers learn and 'behave' the way you want.

Punishment can teach toddlers to be scared of you rather than to behave in the way you want them to.

- Choose your battles – ignore things that don't matter too much such as a mess – but insist on important things like using the harness in the car or stroller.
- Let them know before it's time for a change, such as 'We have to leave the playground soon. What shall we play on for the last 5 minutes?' or 'You can have 10 more swings'.
- Give your toddler choices – but only real options – such as asking if they want to wear their green or red socks. Don't give a choice if there isn't one.
- When you have to tell your toddler to stop doing something, always say what you want them to do instead – 'Let's read a book now'. If they're doing something unsafe, then provide an alternative – 'Stop jumping on the couch. The couch is for sitting on. Please sit down.'
- Try to make a game of things they don't want to do, such as, 'Let's see who can put the most toys in the toy basket', or add bubbles to the bath.

It's OK if your toddler sees you cry. Crying can be a healthy way to deal with pain or sadness for us all. Seeing grown-ups cry (and laugh) can help your toddler learn how and when to show their feelings, and that you have feelings too.

However, children can be very sensitive to a parent's stress and pain – if you're having serious or long-term problems with feelings, stress or relationships, you need to get help and support.

See 'Looking after yourself' (page 22) for help on what to do if you become overwhelmed with your toddler's behaviour.

### A scary world

The world can sometimes seem very scary for toddlers because there are lots of things they don't understand yet. Toddlers may be afraid of things like the dark, dogs, loud noises, 'monsters', or being alone.

Your toddler might not understand that:

- you will come back soon – they don't understand time
- the monsters in their dreams or imagination won't get them – they don't understand what is real and what is not
- they can't fall down the plug hole in the bath – they don't fully understand size and space.

### Things to try for fears

For your toddler, these fears are very real. But, with your support, your toddler should start to understand, and their fears will go away. Help them when they feel scared by giving your toddler familiar routines.

Don't tell your toddler that they're being silly or babyish. Comfort them, and show you understand and are there for them.

### Fear of separation

Stay with your toddler until they feel safe. If you have to leave them (such as at day care or with grandparents), always let them know you are going and that you will be back later. They will learn to trust that you'll always return.

### Night-time fears

Reassure your toddler that they are safe. Cuddle and comfort them until they settle.

- If they're scared of the dark, stick to your bedtime routines, but stay a short while until they feel safe, and use a night light.
- If they wake from a nightmare, tell your toddler that it's only a bad dream.
- If they're worried about monsters, explain that monsters can't hurt them.

### Bathroom fears

- Don't pull out the plug while your toddler's still in the bath.
- Flush the toilet after your toddler's left the bathroom.
- Let your toddler pull out the plug or flush the toilet with your help.

If you are concerned about your toddler's fears, please talk to your child health nurse or doctor.







## Tantrums

Tantrums are very common in toddlers between the ages of 1 and 3 years.

Your toddler is experiencing and learning lots of new things, so it's easy for them to be overwhelmed with lots of big feelings so that they lose control of their behaviour – and have a tantrum.

Your toddler might cry, scream or shout, kick or hit, fall to the ground, or even run off.

Toddlers don't have the words to express all these feelings, and don't know how to calm themselves down. Tantrums can be very scary for toddlers – and for you too.

Tantrums are one way your toddler can learn about big feelings, and by helping them, you're also helping your toddler learn skills to manage these feelings and their behaviour.

Toddlers begin to learn to manage feelings and reactions from around 12 to 18 months. As they learn to use words to express what they want or need, and to understand simple rules, your toddler will start having fewer tantrums over time, with tantrums decreasing by around 3 years.

## What causes tantrums?

There are lots of causes of tantrums, and some toddlers have more tantrums than others, but there are things that can make it more likely for a toddler to have a tantrum, including:

- feeling scared or stressed
- not getting their own way
- being hungry or tired.

## Making tantrums less likely

Whatever you do, there will be some tantrums. Here are some ideas to make tantrums less likely to happen:

- **Learn your toddler's tantrum triggers.**  
If your toddler has lots of tantrums, try keeping a note of when they happen and what you were doing to see if you can find a pattern. For example, if it's when you're shopping, try going after their nap or snack, keep the shopping trip short, or let them 'help' by looking for their favourite vegetable.
- **Understand your toddler's feelings.**  
If you're aware of your toddler's feelings, you might be able to recognise when their feelings are about to become 'too big' for them.

Talk to your toddler and help them manage these feelings. You can also try to distract these feelings by doing something else, like going for a walk or reading a book.

- **Help your toddler learn about emotions by helping them name their 'big' feelings and what they think caused them.**

For example, 'Are you upset that I didn't read your favourite book? Is that why you threw this book on the floor?'

- **Be flexible if you can.**

If you know your toddler is tired, stressed or hungry, try and change your plans and spend some one-on-one time with your toddler, or plan outings after meal or snack time.

- **Encourage your toddler to develop their independence by letting them feel in control.**

For example, make a game out of clearing their toys away instead of telling them to tidy up.

Give your toddler simple choices, and let them know a few minutes before it's time to stop doing something fun, like playing in the park.

## Handling tantrums

All toddlers have tantrums at some time.

**Here are some ideas for handling tantrums:**

- Stay with your toddler so they feel safe and know they can always trust you.
- Stay calm (at least on the outside) because your toddler needs to know you're there and in control.
- Let your toddler know that you understand their strong feelings. 'I know you're upset because you wanted to play.' Let them know that these feelings will pass, and help them see when this has happened.
- Help your toddler to calm down after a minute or two – by taking big breaths, cuddling a favourite toy or going for a short walk outside.
- However, if your toddler is in danger, be firm and make sure they are safe by moving them away from danger.
- Be consistent. Avoid ending the tantrum by giving your toddler what they want on some occasions and not others. This will confuse your toddler and make things worse.
- If you can't control your own feelings, make sure your toddler is in a safe place, such as in their cot or with a safe adult, and tell your toddler that you're going to a nearby place for a few minutes. It's important to come back when you said you would.







### Things that won't help:

- Don't try to reason with your toddler or change their behaviour during the tantrum – you just have to wait it out.
- Don't ignore a tantrum as your toddler can't cope on their own.
- Don't laugh at or tease your toddler, or threaten to leave them.
- Never punish your toddler for having a tantrum. They are not being 'naughty'.
- Don't think that you're a bad parent – all toddlers have tantrums. Concentrate on helping your toddler learn to cope with their feelings instead.

### Never shake your toddler

It is very important not to hit or shake babies and toddlers.

Shaking your toddler or baby can cause brain damage.

### Looking after yourself

It can be stressful looking after a toddler who cries a lot, or is struggling with their own behaviour and having tantrums.

You may feel exhausted and helpless at not being able to comfort your toddler.

If your child seems 'out of control', or you are feeling very angry, put your toddler somewhere safe and take a break until you feel calmer. If you can, get your partner or a friend/family member to help.

★ If you feel unsupported, overwhelmed, frustrated or angry, contact your child health nurse, Ngala Parenting Line (9368 9368) or your doctor to help manage these feelings and keep your toddler safe.

★ If you think you may shake or hurt your toddler or yourself – put your toddler in a safe place like a cot – and get help immediately by contacting Crisis Care (1800 199 008).

**If you believe that someone's life is in immediate danger, call 000.**

★ Getting help is an important part of looking after yourself and your family.

If you just can't cope, call Beyond Blue (1300 224 636).

### Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Your doctor
- Ngala
- Raising Children Network



### Why is sleep important?

Sleep helps your toddler grow, and to learn and remember things. It restores your toddler physically and mentally, and helps immunity.

A lack of sleep in young children has been linked to problems with weight, mental health, behaviour and brain development.

Sleep can be affected by many different things including your toddler's age and health, and things such as moving house, starting day care or having visitors.

Your toddler is learning lots of new physical skills such as crawling, pulling themselves up to stand, and walking, which can also affect their sleep.

Your toddler may have difficulty separating from you at bedtime or may wake up more often at night. Your toddler may wake up to find that you are 'not there', and may need your help to resettle. When you respond as quickly as possible, your toddler will learn to settle as they become confident that you'll be there when they really need you.

### How much sleep does my toddler need?

Toddlers are individuals (just like you) and the amount of sleep they need can vary a lot. It can also be different each day.

Generally, toddlers need around 11 to 14 hours of good quality sleep in 24 hours. This can be made up of 10 to 12 hours at night and 1 or 2 hours in the day.

If your toddler regularly sleeps less than 9 hours or more than 16 hours, please talk to your child health nurse or doctor.

- As they get older, some toddlers may not want to go to bed because they want to stay up and be with you.
- Toddlers may stay awake for around 4 hours before showing signs of being tired.
- As your toddler has fewer and shorter daytime sleeps, they may need 'rest' and 'quiet' times instead.

### Tired signs

Most parents will know when their toddler is ready for a rest, nap or bedtime.

**Some of the tired signs will be the same as for younger babies such as rubbing eyes, yawning and crying along with:**

- becoming clumsy
- becoming clingy and needing more attention
- being fussy with food
- becoming grumpy or less co-operative.

Try to respond to your toddler's early tired signs and follow a sleep routine – this lets your toddler know it's time for bed.



## Sleep routines

A sleep routine can help your toddler to learn how to settle on their own, sleep well and get all the sleep they need.

A bedtime between 6.30 and 7.30 pm is ideal for most toddlers as they sleep deepest between 8 pm and midnight.

Your toddler's night bedtime can be affected by their daytime sleep. They may not be ready for their night sleep at 7 pm if they just woke up from their afternoon sleep at 5 pm.

Most toddlers will start developing their own way of going to sleep and settling after waking. They will still need your reassurance, guidance and patience.

### Here are some ideas for a sleep routine:

- Have a set bedtime and wake up time each day, including weekends and holidays.
- Avoid energetic play, as well as television and other screen time before bedtime.
- Have a predictable and calm routine that lets your toddler know it's bedtime, such as:
  - cleaning teeth
  - quietly reading a story
  - saying it is time for sleep
  - having a cuddle and a goodnight kiss.
- Place your toddler in their cot or bed while they are awake and calm.
- Comfort your toddler if they're upset. You may need to do this several times until they fall asleep.

If your toddler cries or wakes during the night, respond to them, and encourage them to resettle on their own.



## Sleep issues in children

Some children may have sleep issues including frequent nightmares, bedwetting, childhood snoring and problems with settling to sleep. Talk to your child health nurse or doctor if you are worried.

### Cot or bed?

Most parents begin to start thinking about moving their toddler into a bed after they're 2 years old. Until that age, a cot is generally the safest place for your toddler to sleep.

However, you should move your toddler to a bed if they are climbing out of their cot and might hurt themselves. This usually occurs after children are 2, but can happen as young as 18 months.

See page 38 for more about making your toddler's bedroom safe.

### Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Ngala
- Raising Children Network
- Red Nose Australia



You decide **WHAT** your toddler eats, and **WHEN** and **WHERE** to offer it.  
Your toddler decides **IF** they will eat and **HOW MUCH**.

## Breastfeeding

Although your toddler is learning to eat on their own and food will be their main nutrition, it is normal for your toddler to breastfeed. If you decide to breastfeed your toddler, it can help to protect them from infections and diseases. It is up to you and your child how long you decide to breastfeed.

### Make healthy eating part of your family lifestyle.

## What is healthy eating?

Healthy eating habits start early and set children up for life.

Be a role model for the healthy eating habits that you want your child to develop.

Children's appetites will vary from day to day – generally children sense how much food their bodies need and eat enough to match this. But children lose this natural ability if we try to make them over-eat or finish all the food on their plate.

You decide **WHAT** your child eats, and **WHEN** and **WHERE** to offer it.

Your child decides **IF** they will eat and **HOW MUCH**.

### Healthy eating ideas:

- Try to eat meals together as a family.
  - Let your toddler see you eating a range of foods.
  - Avoid distractions during mealtimes. Turn off the TV, and put phones, toys and pets away.
  - Try to keep mealtimes happy and relaxed.
- Let your toddler feed themselves and drink from a cup.
- Offer new tastes and textures without pressuring your toddler to eat.
- Find ways to reward your toddler which don't include food.
- Buy and offer healthy food and drink options if you can.
- Talk to your toddler about what you are eating at mealtimes, and when you are shopping or preparing food.



# Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

**This guide shows the proportion of the **five food groups** we should all eat daily.**

**Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these **five food groups** every day.**

**Drink plenty of water.**



Use **small amounts**



Only **sometimes** and in **small amounts**



Modified from the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating ([eatforhealth.gov.au](http://eatforhealth.gov.au))

## What types of food should I offer my toddler?

## ‘Everyday foods’

Toddlers are learning about new foods, tastes and textures and what they do and don't like. It is good to offer them many different foods, mostly 'everyday' foods.

**‘Everyday’ foods are from the Five Food Groups:**

- vegetable and legumes/beans
- fruit
- wholegrain and/or high fibre choices like bread, cereal, rice, pasta, oats
- lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, legumes/beans
- milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives.

## What they shouldn't eat and drink

**Help your toddler learn about:**

- eating when they are hungry and stopping when they are full.
- making healthy eating choices.

## ‘Sometimes’ food

Takeaways and party food are often high in sugar, salt, fat – and are not everyday foods.

- Teach your toddler that it's OK to eat this type of food 'sometimes and in small amounts', as long as they eat healthy food on most days.

Regularly eating processed food and drinks with high levels of fat, sugar or salt can lead to health problems and tooth decay in childhood and as an adult.

**Try to avoid:**

- cakes, biscuits, lollies and chocolate, ice cream
- chips and fried foods
- sweet drinks – juice, cordial, soft drinks, flavoured milk
- sports and energy drinks, and caffeinated drinks – coke, tea and coffee
- food in pouches – these encourage toddlers to suck rather than chew food.

## Drinks

The best drinks are tap water and milk.

- Encourage your toddler to drink from a cup, not a bottle.
- Continue breastfeeding to 2 years – longer if you both want to.
- Offer your toddler about 1½ cups (375 mL) of plain, full-cream milk each day (a little less if your toddler has some breastfeeds).
- Drinking too much milk (more than 500 mL) can make your toddler eat less food.
- Offer water at other times. Tap water is clean and safe, and helps protect your toddler's teeth.
- If your toddler is allergic to cow's milk or you choose other 'milks' (such as almond, soy, rice), talk to your child health nurse or doctor about which one is right for your toddler.

## Other drinks

- Your toddler doesn't need any drinks other than tap water, breastmilk or cow's milk.
- Soft drinks, cordial and fruit juice have lots of sugar. They can cause health problems and tooth decay and are not recommended for your toddler.
- Your toddler doesn't need 'Toddler milk' or 'follow-on formula' unless recommended by a health professional.
- Tea, coffee, chocolate drinks, cola and energy drinks contain ingredients like caffeine which are not safe for children.

## Vegetarian and vegan diets

There are many types of vegetarian and vegan diets and, if well-planned, can provide enough energy and nutrition for a toddler. Please talk to a dietitian or your doctor if:

- you're not sure whether your toddler is getting enough, or the right foods to grow and develop well
- you're offering a vegan diet – toddlers eating a vegan diet might need extra nutrients.





How much food should I offer my toddler?

How much your toddler will eat might be different each day. It will depend on their age, growth and how active they've been. Your toddler should know when they are hungry or full.

Offer 3 small meals and 2 or 3 snacks each day. They can ask for more food if they are still hungry.

Don't worry if your toddler doesn't eat all of these every day. If your toddler is healthy, growing well and has enough energy to play, learn and be active, they're probably eating enough.



Recommended number of serves

		What is a serve?					
		1-2 years	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Vegetables and legumes/beans	Boys	2-3	2-3	4 1/2	5	5 1/2	5 1/2
	Girls	2-3	2-3	4 1/2	5	5	5
Fruit	Boys	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	2
	Girls	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	2
Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/ or high cereal fibre varieties	Boys	4	4	4	5	6	7
	Girls	4	4	4	4	5	7
Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, legumes/beans	Boys	1	1	1 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
	Girls	1	1	1 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat	Boys	1-1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2 1/2	3 1/2	3 1/2
	Girls	1-1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	3	3 1/2	3 1/2



## Common concerns

### Picky eating

**It is normal for toddlers to go through periods of picky eating or eating very little.**

- It's probably less about the food and more about your toddler becoming independent and making choices.
- Many children need to be offered foods a number of times before they will try it.
- Some children will not eat food from an entire food group (such as vegetables).
- Most children get less picky as they get older.

**If this behaviour is short term, don't worry. Stay calm and keep offering a wide range of healthy food.**

- Offer a variety of tastes and textures every day.
- Offer 3 or 4 choices if you can, making sure there is some food they regularly eat on the plate.
- Try not to make a fuss if they don't try everything on their plate.
- Keep offering – next time they might try it.
- Offer healthy snacks between meals.
- Let your toddler touch and feel food with their hands as well as a spoon.
- Prepare food in different ways – cubed or sliced in shapes, grated or mashed, raw and cooked, frozen or stewed.

### Constipation

Constipation is when your toddler has hard poo that is difficult to push out. **This can happen when your toddler does not get enough:**

- fibre in food
- water and other fluids.

**You can help your toddler by:**

- giving water with meals and during the day
- offering more fruit and vegetables
- offering wholegrain bread, rice and pasta.

Talk to your child health nurse or doctor if you are worried.

### Choking

Your toddler is still learning how to eat and getting used to food textures.

Choking is a risk for toddlers especially during mealtimes.

Think about doing a first aid course, and have emergency numbers handy.

- Always stay with your toddler when they are eating.
- Ensure they sit still while eating – they're more likely to choke if they eat lying down or while running around.
- Avoid nuts, popcorn, seeds, hard lollies and corn chips.
- Cut small, round foods in half (grapes, cherry tomatoes).
- Cook hard fruit and vegetables such as beans, carrots and apple.
- Remove small bones, skin and gristle from meat, fish or chicken.

### Allergies

Many people in Australia have food allergies. These can cause mild reactions like a rash or stomach upset, or be severe.

#### • **The most common foods people are allergic to are:**

- cow's milk
- eggs
- soy
- wheat
- peanuts
- tree nuts
- fish
- shellfish
- sesame.

★ If you think your toddler has had an allergic reaction to a food, don't give that food again and talk to your doctor.

★ If your toddler has swelling of the face or lips, trouble breathing, vomits a lot, or goes pale and floppy, call 000.

#### **i Need more information or help?**

- Child health nurse
- Eat for health (eatforhealth.gov.au)
- Kidsafe WA
- Raising Children Network



## Immunisation

### Why immunise your toddler?

Immunisations are a simple and safe way to protect everyone, including your toddler, against many diseases that can cause serious illnesses and sometimes death.

- Many serious diseases are rare in Australia today because of immunisation.
- If you and your toddler are immunised, it will prevent you from getting or passing on these diseases to others, especially to young babies who are not yet fully immunised.
- When more babies, children and adults are immunised, these infectious diseases are less likely to spread in the community.

### When should my toddler be immunised?

- Your toddler will need immunisations throughout childhood.
- Check your toddler's Purple Book for a list of immunisations and when they are due.

### Where can I get free immunisation?

Ask your child health nurse, doctor, or Aboriginal Medical Service about your toddler's free immunisations.

Visit [healthywa.wa.gov.au/immunisation](http://healthywa.wa.gov.au/immunisation) to find your local immunisation clinic, the latest immunisation schedule, as well as information about immunisations.

#### **i Need more information or help?**

- Child health nurse
- Your doctor
- [healthywa.wa.gov.au/immunisation](http://healthywa.wa.gov.au/immunisation)
- [health.gov.au/immunisation](http://health.gov.au/immunisation)



Remember to bring your Medicare card and your toddler's Purple Book (which has your child's immunisation record card in it) to all your immunisation appointments.





## When to see your doctor

**It's always OK to visit your doctor if you think your toddler is ill.**

- ★ You know your toddler best. If you notice something is not right don't be afraid to phone or visit your doctor.
- Even if the doctor tells you nothing is wrong – at least it will set your mind at rest.
- You can also get health advice from healthdirect on 1800 022 222.

### ★ Call 000

**If your toddler is so ill that you think they need urgent medical attention, don't hesitate to call 000.**

**Call 000 if your toddler is unresponsive, or has symptoms including strong pain, dehydration, drowsiness, seizures or fitting, difficulty breathing, pale, blotchy or blue skin, or a rash that doesn't fade.**

★ **See your doctor immediately or go to Emergency** if your toddler is feeding poorly, vomiting a lot and/or weeing less than usual.

If your toddler has a fever (a temperature above 38°C) but no other symptoms, take them to your doctor if you can get an appointment on the same day.

**Never give aspirin to children – it can cause a rare but potentially fatal illness.**

## When to get help

**It's OK to put yourself first.**

Talk to your child health nurse or doctor if things become too hard, if you are worried about your own health, or your toddler's health or development.

It can be difficult to know what's 'too hard', particularly if this is your first child.

You don't have to wait for a Purple Book appointment to see your child health nurse (see page 4).

You should get help if:

- you're unhappy a lot of the time (see page 51)
- your toddler cries a lot of the time and is difficult to settle
- your toddler is not developing or growing well
- you feel you're not getting any sleep at all
- your toddler seems fine but you worry about them a lot of the time.

### **i** Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Your doctor
- Ngala
- Beyond Blue



## Daily care

Good hygiene habits make your toddler feel more comfortable and help to keep your toddler healthy.

Toddlers love to be independent and can learn to start washing their own hands and brushing their teeth with your help.

Teach your toddler to wash their hands before eating or helping in the kitchen, after going to the toilet, coughing and blowing their nose, playing outside or touching animals.

Help your toddler to brush their teeth twice a day, morning and night. See page 36 for more about caring for your toddler's teeth.

### Stopping germs from spreading

Make sure everyone washes their hands with soap and water before preparing or eating food, after using the toilet, blowing your nose, getting body fluids (saliva, snot, wees and poos) on their hands and changing nappies.

You don't need special cleaners at home. Clean with detergent and water, then rinse and dry. This will remove most germs and viruses from hard surfaces, such as the kitchen bench and plastic toys.

If your toddler or other children in the house have runny eyes, ears or noses, clean their faces and hands as often as needed. Wash your own hands afterwards. This will help stop the spread of sickness and make the children feel more comfortable.

## Bathing

Bath time can be a special time to spend with your toddler.

- Give your toddler a bath whenever you think they need it – they may not need a bath every day.
- If you aren't giving your toddler a bath, you still need to clean their face, hands and genitals at least once every day.

**Never leave your toddler alone in the bath or bathroom.**

### Bath safety

- Always run the cold water first and last when filling up a bath – your toddler's bathwater should be around 38°C – a little cooler than most adults like.
- Empty the bath as soon as you've finished, though wait until your toddler is out if they are scared of being washed down the plug hole or the sound of the water emptying.
- You can also shower with your toddler, but use a non-slip mat, and make sure the water isn't too hot for them.

**Children can drown in very shallow water in a few seconds.**

**Never leave your toddler alone – or in the care of older children – in the bath or bathroom. If you need to leave the bath area – even for a second – take your toddler with you.**



## Your toddler's skin

Healthy skin helps to stop germs and viruses getting inside our bodies and making us unwell.

You can look after your toddler's skin by:

- keeping their skin clean and dry – bathing, and changing wet and dirty nappies
- washing your own hands before touching your toddler and after changing nappies
- looking for rashes, dry areas or sores when bathing and changing nappies.
- ★ See your doctor if your toddler's skin has any breaks, rashes or weeping sores.

### Common skin conditions

Some rashes and spots are normal and don't need treatment. It's common for toddlers to have dry skin. You can help by avoiding using soap in the bath or shower, and using moisturisers.

### Hand, foot and mouth disease

This is a common viral disease in children causing fever and tiny blisters, mainly in the mouth, hands and feet, and sometimes a sore throat. It generally goes away after a week or 10 days. It is very infectious, so you need to keep your toddler away from others until the blisters have dried. (It's not related to the Foot and Mouth Disease found in animals.)

- ★ See your doctor if you think your toddler has hand, foot and mouth disease.

### Heat rash

Heat rash happens when sweat glands in the skin get blocked and sweat gets trapped under the skin, forming small lumps or blisters. Toddlers often get heat rash in hot weather especially now they're active, if they are over-dressed or have a fever.

- ★ See your doctor if the blisters are filled with pus, the rash lasts more than 3 days, your toddler is feeling unwell or you are worried.

## Eczema

Eczema is common in babies and children. Children with eczema have dry, sensitive skin and get red, itchy, scaly patches on their skin.

- ★ See your doctor if you think your toddler might have eczema.

## Scabies

Scabies are tiny mites that burrow into the skin and cause red, itching bumps or blisters in the skin. Scabies can spread through everyone in the house. In children, the rash usually affects the face, scalp, palms and soles of feet.

- ★ See your doctor if you think your child might have scabies. It is important to get treatment for scabies – you can get cream from the pharmacist.

### Other skin conditions

Now your toddler is more active and probably spending more time with other children, they may develop some other skin conditions. While most of these are harmless, see your doctor if your toddler has any unusual rashes, spots or has itchy skin.

Visit [healthdirect \(healthdirect.gov.au/skin-conditions\)](http://healthdirect.gov.au/skin-conditions) for more information.

### Skin problems that need treatment

- ★ See your doctor as soon as possible if your toddler:
  - has weeping sores on their skin (clean the area and cover with a dressing)
  - shows signs that their throat is sore (like crying when they swallow), and that their joints are sore (like crying when they move). Some germs in skin sores can get into a child's blood and make them very sick (such as rheumatic heart disease).

#### **i** Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Your doctor
- Healthdirect
- Raising Children Network

## Nappies and toileting

### Is my toddler's poo normal?

Now your toddler is eating lots of different things, their poo will vary a lot in colour, consistency and frequency.

### Is my toddler constipated?

Constipation is when the poo is so hard and dry that it is difficult to pass, and your toddler may become upset.

Make sure your toddler is drinking lots of water, especially in the summer.

If the poo looks like pebbles or you notice a streak of blood on the poo from a small tear in the anus, talk to your doctor or child health nurse.

### Does my toddler have diarrhoea?

- ★ It may be diarrhoea if the poos become more runny (even watery) and frequent than normal for your toddler. This may mean they have a gut infection, especially if your toddler's vomiting too. In this situation, see your doctor immediately or call [healthdirect](http://healthdirect) on 1800 022 222.

### How many wet nappies will there be?

Now your toddler is older, there will be fewer wet nappies, but still at least 6 to 8 wet nappies each day. Plenty of wee is good because it shows that your toddler is getting enough to drink.

When will my toddler be ready to toilet train? Most children are NOT ready to control their poo and wee until they are 2 or even 3 years old.



#### Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Raising Children Network







## Your toddler's teeth

It's important to start looking after your toddler's teeth and gums as early as possible to set up good habits for life. Help your toddler to brush, and check their brushing.

- Clean your toddler's teeth for them until they learn how to do it properly. Children can't brush properly on their own until around 8 or 9 years.
- Let your toddler have a go first and then you can finish off.

## Baby teeth

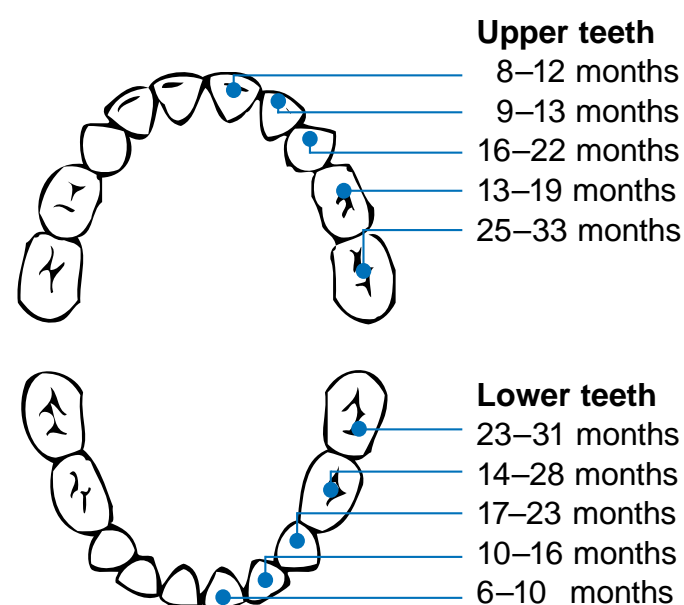
'Baby teeth' are important. Toddlers need their baby teeth to eat and grow, speak, keep space for their adult teeth – and to smile and feel good.

So take care of your toddler's teeth.

## When do teeth come through?

- Baby teeth can arrive in any order – but the middle bottom teeth are generally first.
- Your toddler should have all 20 baby teeth by 3 years.
- They'll probably start losing baby teeth at around 6 years.

**\* Talk to your dentist if your toddler has no teeth by 18 months.**



Original concept produced by SA Dental Service.

## Caring for toddlers' teeth

### How to clean your toddler's teeth and gums

#### Brush teeth twice a day – morning and night

- Use a soft toothbrush designed for under 2 year olds.
- Only use water until 18 months – no toothpaste.
- From 18 months, use a small, pea-sized amount of low-fluoride children's toothpaste.
- Let your toddler be involved with brushing their teeth.
- Talk to your dentist if you have any concerns, and about how to brush your toddler's teeth.

### Healthy teeth



Keep up with regular dental checks

### Early signs of tooth decay



Can be reversed, visit dentist now

### Tooth decay



Severe and may be painful. Visit dentist urgently.

### Toothpaste



### Cleaning tips:

- Brush in front of a mirror so your toddler can watch.
- Stand or sit behind your toddler so that they feel safe and can lean against you.
- Use your free hand to hold your toddler's chin.
- Using small circular motions, brush all sides of each tooth and the gums.
- Use a back-and-forth motion to brush the chewing surfaces of the teeth.
- Get your toddler to brush without swallowing and to spit out toothpaste.
- You don't need to rinse because the fluoride toothpaste left behind protects your toddler's teeth.
- Keep it fun, and make sure your toddler feels involved so they'll keep looking after their own teeth when they're older.

### **i** Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Raising Children Network
- Dental Health Services ([dental.wa.gov.au](http://dental.wa.gov.au))

## Healthy eating for healthy smiles

Healthy food and drinks are important for healthy teeth (see page 25).

### Sugar

Sugary food and drinks can damage your toddler's teeth and lead to tooth decay.

This happens because germs on the teeth feed on this sugar and make an acid which attacks the tooth. Over time this can cause holes or 'cavities'.

It's hard to avoid all sugar. It's often added to food and drink without you even knowing. Check food and drink labels – other names for sugar include sucrose and fructose, honey, treacle and fruit concentrate.

**Water and milk are the best drinks.**

### Check every month

Every month, have a good look inside your toddler's mouth to check for changes with their teeth, cheeks, lips gums or tongue.

### Changes might include:

- excessive plaque
- white spots on teeth or gums
- brown or yellow spots on the teeth.
- red and swollen gums.

See your dentist if you notice any of these changes.

Even if you have no concerns about their teeth, you should take your toddler to see a dentist before they are 2 years old, and then for regular check-ups.





## Your toddler's safety

Accidents are the biggest cause of children being admitted to hospital in Australia. Most accidents can be prevented, especially at home where toddlers spend most of their time. One of your most important jobs is to keep your toddler safe.

Your toddler is curious and learning to do new things like walking, running, climbing and opening things. They can now reach new places and get hold of new things, but your toddler doesn't understand about danger yet.

**Always supervise your toddler, and do safety checks of:**

- your home – inside and outside
- other homes and places you visit
- the car.

**Discuss safety with everyone** who looks after your toddler, and don't expect older children to keep your toddler safe, especially around water.

**Learn CPR (First Aid)** and update your training regularly.

Kidsafe WA has a lot of child safety information including advice based on your child's age.

## Beds and bedrooms

Most parents begin to start thinking about moving their toddler into a bed after they're 2 years old.

Until that age, a cot is generally the safest place for your toddler to sleep.

However, you should move your toddler to a bed if they are climbing out of their cot and might hurt themselves. This usually occurs after children are 2, but can happen as young as 18 months.

### Thinking of moving your toddler to a bed?

- Your toddler's first bed could be a toddler bed or single bed, or a mattress on the floor.
  - Don't give your toddler a pillow until they are at least 2 years old, and never while they're still using a cot.
  - There is a high risk of young children being injured from falling out of the bed.
  - Make sure the mattress is away from walls as there is a risk of toddlers becoming trapped between the bed and bedrails or the wall.
  - Keep the bed or cot free of pillows, toys or anything else that could help your toddler climb out.
  - Bean bags, sofas, large cushions and air mattresses are not safe places for babies and young children to sleep.

- Keep the area around the bed clear of soft toys, bean bags, plastic bags or similar objects that could become a suffocation risk.
- Avoid having weighted blankets in the cot, bed or bedroom.
- Take the legs off the bed, or use another mattress or other soft flooring material and keep the area around the bed free from hard toys or furniture to reduce injury from falls.
- If you use portable rails, make sure they are fitted properly, with no gaps between the rail and mattress, and nothing that could suffocate your toddler, like pillows or soft toys.
- Bunk beds are not recommended for children under 9.

### Make the bedroom a safe environment

- **Don't put the bed:**
  - underneath a window they could climb out of
  - against shelves, ledges or appliances that they could climb on or pull over themselves
  - under heavy pictures or mirrors.
- Secure TVs and top-heavy furniture such as chests of drawers and bookcases to the wall, if possible, so they can't be pulled over. Don't leave drawers open that a toddler might climb.
- Secure any dangling cords from lamps or window blinds.
- Use socket covers in all plug sockets.
- Make sure windows can't open more than 10 centimetres – or install safety latches. Make sure any door-type windows are kept locked.
- Make sure the rest of the house is safe in case your toddler gets up during the night. Use a safety gate in your toddler's room's doorway or shut the door at night – though make sure you can still hear your toddler.

For more information visit [rednose.org.au/article/transitioning-from-a-cot-to-bed](http://rednose.org.au/article/transitioning-from-a-cot-to-bed)

## Burns and Scalds

- Never hold your toddler when making or drinking hot drinks or cooking.
- Keep appliance cords out of reach, and make sure your toddler can't reach hot appliances like toasters, kettles and irons.
- Install guards around fires and heaters, and teach your toddler why they are there.
- Keep your toddler out of the kitchen while preparing meals. When cooking, use the back rings first and turn pot handles to the back of the stove.
- Make sure your house has smoke alarms – test your smoke alarms every month. Change the batteries every year on 1 April if your alarm is not wired in.
- Make sure your hot water is 50°C or under. (A licensed plumber can install a 'tempering' device that controls the maximum temperature of your tap water.)
  - Always test the bath water temperature before a bath – your toddler's bathwater should be around 38°C.
  - Always run the cold water first and last when filling up a bath, and never leave a hot running bath unattended.
- ★ If a toddler is scalded or burned, put the burnt area under cool running tap water for 20 minutes, and call your doctor – or 000 if you are concerned.

Falls are the main cause of injury for toddlers.







Image: Britax Australia

## Car safety

### Heat

#### Never leave your toddler alone in a car.

- If you have to leave your car, always take your toddler with you.
- It can quickly get very hot inside a car, even on a cloudy day or if the car is in the shade.

### Restraints

Your toddler must travel in an approved, properly fitted car restraint that is adjusted to fit.

Use a restraint appropriate for your child's size rather than their age.

- Never let your child travel in a car without a restraint.
- It's safest to keep your child rearward facing as long as possible. Keep the restraint rearward facing until your toddler outgrows the height markers on the restraint.
- Once your child has outgrown their rearward facing child restraint, use a forward facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness until at least 4 years of age.

### Driveway

- Never let your toddler play in a driveway area, and always walk around the car before moving it.
- If you're alone with your toddler and need to move a vehicle, put them in their car restraint while you move it.
- Make sure everyone who cares for your toddler is aware of this information.

### Road safety

- Make sure doors, fences and gates are self-closing, never left open, and that your toddler can't climb or open them.
- Always hold your toddler's hand near traffic – toddlers don't understand about danger at this age.
- If possible, use the left hand passenger door, away from traffic, when you get your child out of their seat.

For more information on car safety, including hiring and fitting restraints, visit Kidsafe WA ([kidsafewa.com.au](http://kidsafewa.com.au)).

## Choking

Choking on food and small objects is a risk for children under 5 years old because their throats are small, and they also tend to put things into their mouths.

Children can choke on anything smaller than a 20-cent coin. Regularly check for and remove all small objects around the house, garden and car.

Learn what to do if a child is choking.

### Food

- Make sure your toddler is sitting, always stay with them when they are eating. Encourage them to chew well and not to put too much in their mouth.
- Avoid nuts, popcorn, seeds, hard lollies and corn chips. Cook hard fruit and vegetables such as beans, carrots and apple.
- Remove small bones, skin and tough parts from meat, fish or chicken.

### Toys/objects

- Regularly check for and remove all small objects, such as coins.
- Look for toys designed for your toddler's age. Keep older children's toys out of reach, especially if they are small or have small parts.
- Be particularly careful with 'button batteries', as these can cause severe burning if swallowed. Check that button batteries are secure in things such as remote controls and toys.



- Avoid anything around the neck such as necklaces, beads and amber amulets, and never tie a dummy around your toddler's neck.
- Make sure there are no cords and strings on your toddler's clothes that could catch on playground equipment.

## Drowning

Drowning is a top cause of death in children under 5 in Australia.

A toddler can drown in silence in 20 seconds, and in only a few centimetres of water.

- Never leave any child alone around water, including the bathroom, pools and dams.
- Always supervise your toddler around water, even if they can swim.
- Restrict your toddler's access to water.
- Always take your toddler with you if you need to leave the bath or pool.
- Don't let older children supervise your toddler. They may not know how to keep your toddler safe.
- Empty the bath and other items, such as paddling pools and buckets, straight after use. Remove the plug if possible.
- Cover ponds and water features with a strong mesh that can hold a child's weight.
- If you have a swimming pool or spa, make sure that swimming pool fences and gates are working properly and clear of anything that a child could climb.
- Learn what to do if there is an emergency.

## Falls

Falls are the main cause of injury in toddlers and young children.

- Don't leave toddlers alone on beds, sofas and other furniture, and keep furniture away from windows and balconies.
- Install safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs and other dangerous places.
- Teach your toddler to safely climb up and down stairs, sofas, playground equipment and trees under supervision.
- Lock windows and doors that access balconies, and make sure windows can't open more than 10 centimetres – fly screens won't stop a child from falling.
- Secure TVs, drawers and bookcases to the wall, if possible, so they can't be pulled over. In most cases you can do this if you rent, but talk to your landlord first.
- Always use the harness whenever your toddler is in the highchair or stroller, even if it's for a short time.





## Farm safety

Farms are dangerous places for children as they are both a workplace and home.

- Have a secure, fenced play area for your toddler.
- Make sure all water areas are fenced off or covered.
- Keep chemicals locked away.
- Never leave toddlers alone with farm animals, including dogs.
- Don't let toddlers ride farm machinery, quad bikes, or in the back of utes.

## Heat and sun safety

Toddlers are very sensitive to over-heating and sunburn.

- UV (Ultraviolet) radiation levels show when the sun is most likely to cause skin damage. In summer, levels are highest between 9 am and 4 pm. You can check the UV levels for your area using the SunSmart app ([myuv.com.au](https://myuv.com.au)).
- Keep your toddler out of direct sunlight, especially when the UV radiation level is 3 or above.

- Children can still get burnt and overheated in the shade:
  - Use wide brimmed hats and sunglasses, and teach your toddler that they need to keep their hats and sunglasses on if they want to stay outside.
  - Use broad spectrum SPF30 or higher.
  - Use window shades in your car.
  - Set a good example by being sun smart yourself.

## Pet safety

Never leave your toddler alone with animals – even a much loved and gentle cat or dog can behave differently around children.

- Most dog attacks are by dogs that children know.
- Teach your toddler never to touch other people's dogs without asking first.
- In particular, keep children away from dogs that are feeding, unwell, pregnant or with puppies.
- Teach your toddler to always wash their hands after handling any pets.

## Poisoning

- Keep all medicines, essential oils, cleaning products, alcohol, cigarettes, liquid nicotine, and other poisons locked away, preferably 1.5 metres high.
  - Always keep poisons in their original containers, and clearly labelled.
  - Always put poisons back immediately after use.
- Never store poisons near food. If you need to store medicines in the fridge, store them in a lockable container out of reach.
- Keep handbags (including visitors') out of reach as they may contain medicines.
- Never call medicines or vitamins 'lollies'.
- ★ Put the Poisons Information Centre number (13 11 26) in your phone.

## Smoking and vaping

**Cigarette smoke and e-cigarette vapour are bad for everyone, especially babies and children.**

- If you smoke or vape, one of the best things you can do for you and your toddler's health is to quit.
- If anyone smokes or vapes around your toddler, your toddler is smoking too.
- Smoking and vaping increase the risk of:
  - Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI)
  - ear and chest infections
  - asthma, coughing and wheezing
  - long-term damage to lungs, brain and blood.
- In Western Australia it is against the law to smoke:
  - in a car carrying children
  - within 10 metres of children's playground equipment.

E-cigarettes and vapes can contain nicotine and other harmful chemicals, so do not leave or use them around babies or other children.

If you need help to stop smoking or vaping, talk to your doctor or pharmacist, or call the Quitline on 13 78 48.

## Alcohol and other drugs

If you're affected by alcohol or other drugs, you may not be able to properly care for your toddler.

Alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs are toxic to babies and children – even a small amount can lead to death. Treat alcohol and other drugs the same way you treat other poisons.

If you're still breastfeeding, it's safest for your toddler if you don't drink alcohol, smoke or use other drugs as these are passed on to them through the breastmilk.

## In an emergency

- They don't happen every day, but accidents do happen.
- It's a good idea to take a first aid course and learn how to do CPR. (CPR is first aid for when someone isn't breathing properly, or their heart has stopped.)
  - Raising Children Network has information on CPR for babies under 12 months.
- Keep a list of emergency phone numbers in your phone or in a handy place.
- In an emergency **call 000**.

### **i** Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Your doctor
- Kidsafe WA
- Raising Children Network
- Healthdirect (1800 022 222)





## Parenting

Parenting a toddler can be a mixture of highs and lows. The baby who totally depended on you is probably sleeping better and showing their independence, but still needs full-time care.

One of the best things you can do for your toddler is to take care of yourself.

- Get some exercise and fresh air. Take your toddler for a walk every day, if possible.
- Do something nice for yourself every day. Even a quiet coffee or a few minutes calling a friend helps.

### If you have a partner:

- remember to give yourself and each other lots of encouragement and praise as well. Caring for each other is important for you and your toddler – and sets a good role model for your toddler when they grow up.
- take turns to have one-on-one time with your toddler – and give your partner some time to themselves
- try and have time together as a couple if you can – even if it's just a few minutes talking about something other than your toddler.

If you or your partner have any questions about parenting, please speak to your child health nurse. You don't have to wait for a Purple Book appointment. Your child health nurse will be able to refer you to other appropriate support.

★ If caring for your toddler is getting you down, or you are feeling tearful and depressed, talk to your child health nurse or doctor.

### *i* Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Dads WA ([ngala.com.au/dadswa](http://ngala.com.au/dadswa))
- Diverse families ([raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups](http://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups))

## A new baby

A new baby brings big changes for everyone in the family, especially young children.

It can be stressful for toddlers who haven't yet developed a strong sense of security. Your toddler may not be able to tell you how they feel – instead, they show their feelings through their behaviour. This is normal and is not 'naughty'.

Keep your relationship with your toddler positive. Give them lots of love and special attention to help to build self-esteem, and let them know they are loved and important. This will help them adjust as well as develop a good relationship with their new baby brother or sister.

## Before baby arrives

Use simple words to tell your toddler a baby is coming. Do this several months before the baby is due. As toddlers don't understand time, try linking it to other events such as a family member's birthday.

- Talk about babies to your toddler. Look at photos of them as a baby, read stories about babies, and try and spend time with friends and their new babies.
- Talk about what to expect, and repeat this often over the next few weeks.
- Talk to your toddler about their feelings, and give them lots of love and cuddles. Make it positive by reminding them that they'll soon have a new baby to love.
- Let your toddler 'help' get ready for the new baby – choosing some baby clothes or helping prepare at home.

If you're making changes such as moving your toddler to a new bed or starting them at childcare, do it well before baby is due, and make them feel it's just for them, not because of the new baby.

If your toddler will be staying with someone else during the birth, get them used to this before the baby is due.

## When baby comes home

Give your toddler lots of cuddles and love just before introducing them to the new baby.

Ask friends and family to give small presents to your toddler, as well as the baby (even if you supply them), and give your toddler a present 'from the new baby', too. Some toddlers enjoy having their own baby doll to look after.

Expect some change in your toddler's behaviour, no matter how well prepared they are. It takes time to adjust, especially as this new person will be getting more attention.

Your toddler may go back to younger behaviour such as wanting a breastfeed or bottle, wanting you to dress them, or wanting to be carried.

- Be patient and let your toddler act younger for a while. It will help them settle into the new family situation more quickly.

Your toddler may also show signs of stress like tantrums, especially when you're feeding your baby.

- Show your toddler that you understand their feelings.
- For example, tell them, 'I know you feel cross when I am feeding the baby and you want to play. I wish I could play with you too. We will play (their favourite game) soon.'
- Arrange special activities for your toddler while you feed the baby – a teddy, a special toy, or telling a story.
- Read stories about new babies, which show the older child feeling both happy and sad about the new baby.

## Aggression

Teach your toddler to touch the baby gently, but always be there to make sure your baby is safe.

- If your toddler hits the baby, remove them, and let your toddler know that hitting is not allowed. 'I know you're feeling very cross, but we don't hit. We touch babies very gently.'
- Don't let your toddler hit you either – teach them that hitting is not the way to show angry feelings.

## Special time

Show your toddler that you enjoy being with them.

- Make a special time just for your toddler every day, no matter how small.
- Go out with them and get someone else to mind the baby when you can.

### *i* Need more information or help?

- Child health nurse
- Raising Children Network





## Family and domestic violence

### What is family violence?

Family violence is when a family member threatens, harms, controls or abuses another family member.

Intimate Partner Violence is when this type of abuse occurs within an intimate relationship.

Family violence is sometimes also called domestic violence, intimate partner violence or domestic abuse.

★ If family violence is happening in your home, you need to get help.

### Your relationship will affect your toddler's growth and development

To grow, develop and thrive, babies and children need to feel loved, safe and secure. If they don't feel this way, it can affect their growth and development in many ways, now and in the future.

If you're a parent experiencing family violence, it can also affect your relationship with your toddler. It can make it difficult for you to care for your toddler's everyday needs, and to give your toddler the love and attention they need.

If this is your situation, it's important to know that family violence is never your fault. The person using family violence is responsible for it and the way it affects your family.

★ It is important to get help as soon as possible if this is happening.

### Do you and your partner have a good relationship?

- **I feel safe.** I don't worry that my partner will hurt my body or my feelings.
- I can say 'no' for sex.
- **My partner respects me.** My partner feels what I say, how I feel, what I think is important.
- My partner is happy if I want to **see my family and friends.**
- I can honestly say what I think. If I don't want something, **I can say 'no'.**
- My partner and I **decide things together.** I feel I have the **same power as my partner** in my relationship.

**This good feeling is for everyone.**

**Everyone has the right to a healthy relationship.**

**Maybe your partner does not make you feel good like this.**

### The partner who is abused

You and your child have a right to be safe. You are not responsible for this violence and abuse.

★ If you're scared or living in fear of your partner, think about your safety and the safety of your child. You may need to make a safety plan. You can find services to help you with this safely and in confidence, as well as provide support, on page 50.

#### **i** Need more information or help?

1800RESPECT  
(24 hours, 7 days)  
1800 737 732

**Support for people experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, violence and abuse, their friends and family.**

### The partner who abuses

If you bully or abuse your partner, or find it hard to control your anger, you can learn nonviolent ways to deal with your feelings. Being a good parent includes being a good non-abusive role model for your children.

If you think you could be a danger to your family, leave until you have calmed down.

★ **Talk to someone who understands the problem of family violence or phone a family violence helpline. There's lots of support if you need it – see page 50.**

#### **i** Need more information or help?

MensLine Australia  
(24 hours, 7 days)  
1300 789 978  
mensline.org.au

**Free counselling service offering support for Australian men anywhere, anytime.**

If you or your child are in immediate danger, call the police on 000.



## Notes

## Notes



Contact	How we can help
<b>Emergency</b>	
<b>Ambulance, Fire, Police</b>	<b>000</b> <b>For emergency and life-threatening situations</b>
Poisons Information Centre	13 11 26 If you think someone's been poisoned, including medicines, drugs, chemicals, plants, bites and stings
<b>Parenting information</b>	
Raising Children Network	raisingchildren.net.au Information for raising healthy, happy children
Ngala Parenting Line (8am–8pm 7 days)	ngala.com.au 9368 9368 or *1800 111 546 Counselling, information and support for families
<b>Support for parents and carers</b>	
Diverse families	raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups Information for all kinds of families, including single parents, LGBTQI+, co-parents, and much more
Playgroup WA	playgroupwa.com.au 9228 8088 or *1800 171 882 Find and join a playgroup near you
Multiple Birth Association	mbawa.org.au / 6458 1536 For families raising multiple birth children
Grandcare	wanslea.org.au *1800 794 909 For grandparents raising grandchildren
<b>Crisis and other support (24 hours, 7 days)</b>	
Crisis Care Helpline	*1800 199 008 For people in crisis, needing urgent help
1800RESPECT	*1800 737 732 For anyone experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, violence and abuse
MensLine Australia	1300 789 978 mensline.org.au Free counselling service offering support for Australian men anywhere, anytime
Men's Domestic Violence Helpline	*1800 000 599 For men concerned about violent and abusive behaviours AND/OR who have experienced family and domestic violence
Women's Domestic Violence Helpline	*1800 007 339 For women and children experiencing family and domestic violence, including safe accommodation
DVassist	dvassist.org.au Family and domestic violence help in regional Western Australia
Alcohol and Drug Support Line	9442 5000 or *1800 198 024 For anyone concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or other drug use
<b>Mental Health/Postnatal depression</b>	
PANDA - Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia	panda.org.au For anyone affected by anxiety and depression during pregnancy and early childhood
ForWhen Helpline	forwhenhelpline.org.au 1300 242 322 Access the help you need to better manage mental health challenges as they occur
beyondblue (24 hours, 7 days)	beyondblue.org.au 1300 224 636 Crisis counselling and information on mental health, depression, anxiety, postnatal depression
Lifeline (24 hours, 7 days)	lifeline.org.au 13 11 14 Crisis support if you are experiencing a personal crisis or thinking about suicide
<b>Breastfeeding</b>	
Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline (24 hours, 7 days)	breastfeeding.asn.au *1800 686 268 Breastfeeding support from trained counsellors. Information on breastfeeding including local support groups, breast pump hire.
Breastfeeding Centre of WA	6458 1844 kemh.health.wa.gov.au If you are having problems with breastfeeding
Obstetric Medicines Information	6458 2723 Safe use of medicines in pregnancy/breastfeeding

Contact	How we can help
<b>Child health and safety</b>	
Purple book appointments (8.30am–4pm Mon–Fri)	cahs.health.wa.gov.au/ PurpleBook 1300 749 869 Book your Purple Book appointments by phone or register online (Perth metropolitan only)
Child Health Centre (you may need an appointment)	healthywa.wa.gov.au/ service-search Find your nearest Child Health Centre
Child Development Service (appointment/referral required)	cahs.health.wa.gov.au/ ChildDevelopment (metro) wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/ ChildDevelopment (non-metro) Services for children with, or at risk of developmental difficulties and delay
Immunisation clinic (you may need an appointment)	healthywa.wa.gov.au/ immunisation Find your nearest Immunisation Clinic for free childhood vaccinations
Kidsafe WA	kidsafewa.com.au 6244 4880 Help keep babies and children safe at home, on the road and at play
Red Nose Australia	rednose.org.au Safe sleeping, tummy time and safe wrapping information
Bright Tomorrows	brighttomorrows.org.au <b>Free App</b> to help build young brains
<b>Health and medical services</b>	
healthdirect (24 hours, 7 days)	healthdirect.gov.au *1800 022 222 Health advice with a registered nurse. Online health information
Quitline (8am–8pm Mon–Fri)	13 78 48 Help to quit smoking and vaping
Sexual Health Quarters	shq.org.au 9227 6178 or *1800 198 205 Information and services on contraception, pap smears, planned and unplanned pregnancy, period problems and sexual difficulties
<b>Child care</b>	
Starting Blocks	startingblocks.gov.au Finding the right child care for you
Child Care Subsidy	servicesaustralia.gov.au/ child-care-subsidy Child Care Subsidy and how to claim it
<b>Translation/communication (24 hours, 7 days)</b>	
Translating and Interpreting Service (24 hours, 7 days)	13 14 50 Phone if you need an interpreter. You need the name and phone number of the agency that you want to contact
National Relay Service (24 hours, 7 days)	accesshub.gov.au TTY: 133 677 Voice Relay: 1300 555 727 The National Relay Service (NRS) can help you if you're d/Deaf or find it hard to hear or speak to hearing people on the phone
*Freecall: Calls made from a mobile may be charged at a timed rate.	

**i Find this information online:**





Has your child had their  
2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday?

Are they due for their  
2-year-old Purple Book  
appointment?



Register for a **free**  
appointment today.

See page 4 for more information.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability. Please contact: [childcommunity@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:childcommunity@health.wa.gov.au)

This publication is provided for general education and information purposes. Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed.

Special thanks to Beyond Blue, Kidsafe WA, Ngala, Parenting SA, Raising Children Network, Red Nose Australia.

Produced by Child and Adolescent Health Service – Community Health ©State of Western Australia 2024 CAH-001372