

Twelve-Month Class Union Avenue Pediatrics

Early childhood begins! Excitement, messiness, frustration and dangers lie ahead as toddlers become mobile and declare independence. Independence and limit testing will lead to tantrums and misbehaviors. Plan for tantrums, “time outs” and “time ins”. Parents need an ability to let go, permit and enjoy their child’s growing independence. Be positive role models physically (eat healthily and wear seat belts) and emotionally (be calm and consistent in setting limits and handling tantrums).

Emotional Development: Toddlers vary between independence and being clingy. You can help develop emotional expression by positive activities such as cuddling, holding, praising and firm enforcement of rules about not biting, hitting and kicking.

Establish Routines around bedtime, meals, playing, family time, teeth brushing and nap times. Reading aloud is a positive way to spend time together and can be worked into routines. Your child wants to be near to you and hear your voice. Your child can choose the book (supports independence). Reading aloud and naming pictures helps your child learn language and about the world around them. Best treat in the world is time with family and special caregivers. Family time could include playing games, storytelling, reading aloud, pointing and naming objects, listening to music, laughing, exercising. Spend time on the floor playing with your child every day. Family time is not TV watching time. No TV watching is recommended under age 2 years.

Communication: Receptive language (understanding you) develops much earlier than expressive language (talking to you). Speak slowly and clearly using simple words and short sentences. Toddlers can often learn to sign words before they can say them. Garcia’s *Signing with Baby* is a good resource.

Feeding and nutrition: Meal times should be relaxed, safe and enjoyable family times. Using a cup or spoon and eating finger foods encourages fine-motor skills. Cover your floors. Don’t worry about messes. Use unbreakable dishes, cups or glasses. Include your toddler in family meals by providing a high chair or booster seat at table height. Encourage conversation at meals. Feeding oneself, holding and drinking from a cup, and biting off small pieces of food are important toddler eating skills. Give your toddler a spoon for eating and a cup for drinking. They need to be small for her hands to hold. Make sure your toddler eats only while seated and supervised by an adult. Toddlers tend to graze. Appetite varies greatly from time to time. Offer three meals and two or three nutritious snacks a day mashed or cut into small readily chewable pieces. Have healthy snacks available such as, fresh fruit cut into small pieces, applesauce, cheese or small pieces of whole grain bread or crackers, homemade popsicles made from 100% fruit juice. Give only moderate amounts of sweets and high-fat or low-nutrient snacks. Make sure caregivers also provide nutritious foods. Let your toddler decide what and how much to eat from the assorted nutritious foods you offer. She will know is she is hungry and full. Accept decisions to stop eating. If she asks for more, provide a small, additional portion. Her diet will balance out over time. Avoid small, hard foods like peanuts or popcorn, seeds, hard candies and chunks of peanut butter, which can be choking hazards. Cut firm, round foods into thin slices (hot dogs, carrots, grapes, cherry tomatoes). Consider giving a multivitamin like Trivisol or Polyvisol with

iron if a picky eater or limited ingestion of vitamin D fortified dairy products. An omega 3 supplement can help promote heart health.

Childhood obesity: Decrease the risk of your child becoming obese by: minimizing or eliminating juice, eating moderate portions of nutritious foods and having an active lifestyle.

Temper Tantrums: Are more frequent when mastering new skills. Tantrums are more common if a child is hungry or tired. Be sure to feed and rest them regularly. You can try to distract with something new or direct them to a new activity. Its okay for your child to scream but don't give them an audience: walk away, ignore them and don't make eye contact.

Discipline means to teach or instruct, not to punish. Eliminate temptations. Be consistent, calm and respond immediately. Use praise and a happy "yes" and smiling to strengthen good behaviors. A firm "No", frowning and turning away for minor misbehaviors. Redirect your child to more appropriate behaviors and activities. Displays of affection and praise should outnumber punishments and criticisms. Try to catch them being good. You can't discipline everything so "choose your battles." Prioritize safety first, then aggressive behaviors, then nuisance behaviors like throwing food or screaming in public. Best way to deal with a misbehaving toddler is **time out**. Isolating briefly with no attention, no toys, and no fun. It is okay to have time out in a crib or playpen at this age. Don't forget **time ins** when the misbehavior ends and to model appropriate behavior. Your child is not deliberately behaving badly, simply acting on impulses of the moment. It will take years of firm but gently guidance before she fully understands what you expect and has self-control. Rules don't stick until three years of age, so don't trust them and check on them if it gets very quiet. Don't use punishment that physically or emotionally hurts your child such as spanking, slapping shaking or screaming. It does more harm than good, leads to more aggression throughout life and can make them angry and resentful of you. If you are losing your temper, count to ten and take a few deep breaths. If possible get someone to watch your child while you leave the room.

Separation anxiety peaks between 10 and 18 months. Practicing at home can help. Leaving room briefly after announcing where you are going and that you'll be back. Then give a big smile when you return. It is more common when hungry or tired. It's easier if you are leaving when they are full and dry. Don't make a fuss over leaving. Her outbursts are for your benefit, to persuade you to stay. Tears will subside shortly after leaving.

Sleep You need sleep. Establish a nightly bedtime routine that begins with quiet time for your child to relax before bed and ends with your child soothing himself in his own crib. Reading and singing to your child will help him get to sleep. A favorite toy or a night-light can help. Make sure to space nap times for that your child is tired at bedtime. Toddlers should continue to have at least one nap during the day. It is important to establish a regular naptime routine. Make sure your child is not hungry before bed. Be sure to wipe or brush teeth if eating before bed. If crying it is okay to be sympathetic. If trouble falling asleep don't pick up, do be brief calming, and repetitive until your child falls asleep. Use a timer; come in with a bright and cheerful face. Walk out, wait 3 minutes. Repeat, repeat, repeat. A strong message works (4 minutes-same message, 5 minutes... etc.). Message is a smile, short and sweet, 30 seconds, bye-bye, nighty-night, keep

your presence brief. Baby should sleep in his own bed (don't give in; try 3 nights or more... don't give in). Your child will tire out before you.

Dental Health: Establish a dental home. A dentist can help you keep your child's teeth healthy and be available for emergencies such as a broken tooth or severe pain. Brush teeth with a rice sized amount of fluoride toothpaste twice each day, after breakfast and before bed using a soft toothbrush. If still using a bottle, offer only water in the bottle. Give your child a fluoride supplement if your water is not fluoridated.

Safety: Lock away medications and all cleaning, automotive, laundry and lawn products out of sight and out of reach. Climbing toddlers can reach even high shelves. Keep your toddler out of rooms where there are hot objects that may be touched or put a barrier around them. Get down on the floor yourself and check for hazards. Keep plastic bags, latex balloons, or small objects, like marbles and coins away from your toddler. Make sure there are no dangling telephone, electrical, blind or drapery cords. Make sure televisions, furniture and heavy items are secure. Keep sharp objects out of reach. Never leave young siblings in charge of their baby sister or brother. Allow them to help with daily tasks, like feeding, under the supervision of an adult. Use gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Watch closely while on stairs. Keep furniture away from windows and install window guards on second and higher story windows. Be sure that the crib mattress is on the lowest rung and crib sides are up when she is in the crib. Be sure your child's safety seat is properly installed in the back seat. Never place a rear-facing safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger air bag. The back seat is the safest place for children to ride. The rear-facing position provides the best protection for your child's neck and head in the event of a crash. For optimal protection your child should be rear facing until she reaches the highest weight or height allowed for your approved rear facing seat (30lbs and 32 inches for infant only seat, and 35 lbs and at least 36 inches for convertible seats). Do not switch to a forward-facing car seat until your child is at least one year old and weighs at least 20 pounds. Watch your toddler constantly whenever he is near water. Your child can drown in even a few inches, including water in bathtubs, play pools, hot tubs, buckets and toilets. A supervising adult should be within arm's reach. Empty buckets, tubs, or small pools immediately after you use them. Pools should have a 4-sided fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate. Children should always wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket when on a boat or other watercraft. The best way to keep your child safe from injury or death from guns is to never have a gun in the home. If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, it should be stored unloaded and locked, with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.

Other caregivers: Be sure to discuss your feelings on healthy diet, discipline, oral health and safety with daycare providers, grandparents and other family members that care for your child

Dr Plonsky's A, B, C's

A- No anger, be available, pay attention. (No anger- love must be unconditional.

Your child has to feel safe and loved no matter what)

B- Extra bonding, be quick and alert.

C- Be consistent.

D- Distract, redirect behavior/attention, be creative.

E- No expectations until three years of age.

F- Have a lot of fun, be firm but not angry.

G- Be gentle