

The 5 Areas of Child Development

During the toddler years, your child will grow in 5 important areas:

1. physical – how they use their body
2. social – how they interact with others
3. emotional – how they recognize, express and manage their feelings
4. cognitive – how they think and reason
5. language – how they communicate

How your child develops depends on many things, including their natural genetic makeup, the support they receive and the things they experience.



BRAIN BUILDER

You can help your child develop in all 5 areas with “serve and return” interactions. Pay attention to them and show an interest in what they’re interested in. By “returning” what they “serve,” you’ll encourage their curiosity and spark their enthusiasm for practising things like speech and social skills (see [Brain Development](#)).



DID YOU KNOW?

By continuing to breastfeed or chestfeed, you’ll support your child’s development in all 5 areas.

Physical Development

Your toddler will improve their **gross motor skills** (controlling the large muscles they need to sit, crawl, walk and run) and their **fine motor skills** (controlling their hands and fingers and getting the hand-eye coordination to reach for things and pick them up).



HOW TO

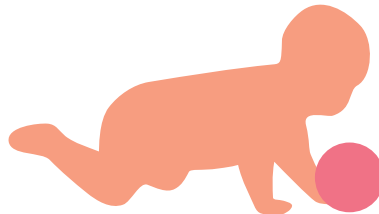
Support your toddler’s physical development

- ✓ Create safe, interesting activities and places for them to explore and be active in.
- ✓ Use screen time in a healthy way. (See [Screen Time](#))
- ✓ Hug and cuddle them.
- ✓ Provide healthy foods. (See [Eating Well](#))



DID YOU KNOW?

When you cuddle your child, their brain releases hormones that they need to grow.



Social Development

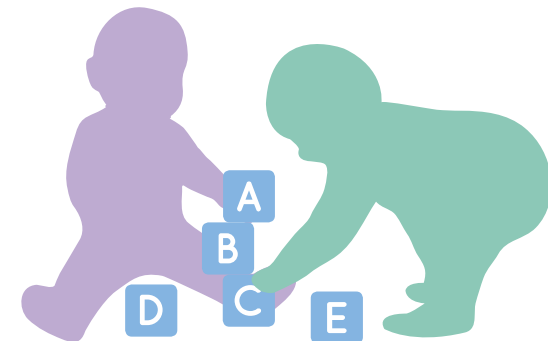
Your toddler will learn to make friends and get along with others.



HOW TO

Support your toddler’s social development

- ✓ Help them learn to cooperate, trust and be confident with others.
- ✓ Respond to their behaviour in warm and consistent ways. (See [Positive Discipline](#))
- ✓ Give them ideas on how to interact with other toddlers.
- ✓ Point out what other children are doing or what others may be thinking or feeling.



Emotional Development

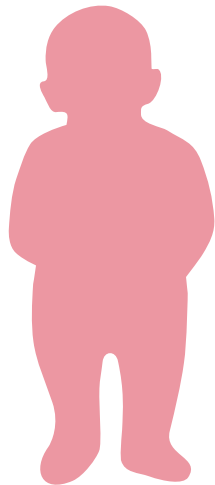
Your toddler will learn to recognize, show and manage their feelings.



HOW TO

Support your toddler's emotional development

- ✓ Help them learn to recognize and name their emotions.
- ✓ Help them learn to show their feelings in a healthy way.
- ✓ Let them know it's okay to have feelings – even big ones.
- ✓ Comfort them and stay present until big feelings have passed.



Cognitive Development

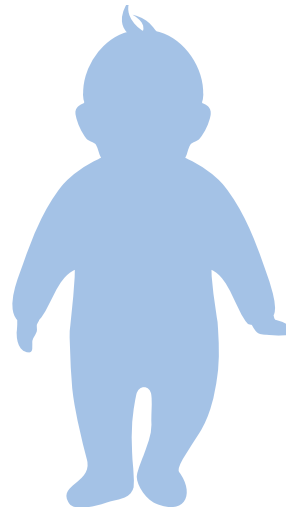
Your toddler will learn to think, remember, imagine, gather and organize information, solve problems and use judgment.



HOW TO

Support your toddler's cognitive development

- ✓ Set up safe and interesting play opportunities.
- ✓ Play with them.
- ✓ Praise them.
- ✓ Talk to them.
- ✓ Speak aloud when you're solving a problem.



Language Development

Your toddler will learn to listen and talk – and can learn multiple languages if you speak more than one at home.



HOW TO

Support your toddler's language development

- ✓ Talk to them.
- ✓ Listen to them.
- ✓ Read to them. (See [Reading to Your Toddler](#))
- ✓ Tell them stories.
- ✓ Sing with them.



BRAIN BUILDER

Talk to your child all the time. By asking them questions, chatting about what you're doing, and sharing rhymes, songs and stories, you'll stimulate their brain and help them learn to speak and read.

