



Toddler Handout

By: Marshall J. Benbow, M.D.

More than a year has passed since birth and your baby is now about to walk, is walking, or perhaps already running. There is lots of variety in this developmental milestone as with all the other developmental evolution children experience.

In the second year of life, the most amazing change will likely be language acquisition. Receptive language understanding will precede expressive language skills through this process and forevermore. There is a normal distribution curve among babies/children for this process as well.

Some expectations that are reasonable include:

Two word phrases by age two

Three word phrases by age three

Early attempts at humor by age three

You can influence this process by being involved. Talk and sing to your baby on a very regular basis. Reading is another excellent activity to encourage language skills. If there were one skill that is a litmus test for future academic success, it would be reading. Reading awareness and interest, and early skills are parent-taught. By the time your youngster reaches kindergarten, letter and word recognition should already be in place to some degree. Especially precocious children will make more progress than even that. Whatever the inherent skill any child has, the family's interest and participation in reading will have an enormous influence on this life skill. School will further foster these skills, but the passion for it is put in place long before by parents in the home. Leave the television off as much as possible and don't buy a gaming device or console. Let your child learn that your individual time and interest in him is most easily received through a book indoors or activities that create sweating outdoors and you're well on your way to healthy life habits.



Forks and spoons will begin to meaningfully replace hands starting at about eighteen months. Transition to a toddler bed is usually around the second birthday or at any time before that, if the baby is making meaningful efforts to get out of the crib and be injured in the process.