

***Your Growing Child
From 12 to 15 Months***

As a parent, you want to do all you can to help your child grow and develop normally. The Denver Developmental Activities on this page answer the question you've asked, "What can I do to help?" This is one of a number of brochures to help you, help your child develop normally at different ages. The activities help your child from 12 to 15 months of age, develop in four important areas: **Language skills and understanding; personal and social skills; control of large muscles; and control of small muscles and how to solve problems.** When you let your child set the pace for which activities he or she enjoys and is ready for, you'll both have fun. And you'll be helping your child develop trust in you and in the world. No two children grow exactly at the same rate, so some of these activities may be too easy for your child and some too difficult. I'm interested in discussing your child's development with you. And remember---as much as you can, talk to your child, play with your child and really enjoy your child.

Developing language skills and understanding:

Activities to continue---

- Talk with your child a lot and try to get him or her to talk with you.
- Provide some quiet time when the radio and TV are not on.
- Look at and read picture books together, giving your child a chance to point to the pictures as you name them.

Imitating words---

- As you naturally talk to your child, say key words that he or she knows (milk, table, a pet's name). Encourage your child to say the words back.

Developing rhythm---

- Make noisemakers for your child with a pie tin and wooden spoon. Help your child "make music" by hitting these together.

Talking---

- Help your child learn to talk by having him or her name things you see as you take walks or go on drives. Have your child ask for things with words instead of pointing to them.

Naming body parts---

- As you bathe and dress your child, point to body parts, name them and ask your child to say the words.

Developing control of small muscles and solving problems:

Activities to continue---

- Encourage drawing and playing with bathtub toys and stacking toys.

Playing games with blocks---

- Buy blocks or make them from pieces of cardboard. Show your child how to stack blocks, line them up and play with them.

Putting in and out---

- Show your child how to put things into containers such as pots, boxes and milk cartons. Then have him or her dump the items out and start over again.

Developing personal and social skills:

Activities to continue---

- Soothe and calm your child when he or she is fussy.
- Hug, Cuddle, smile and talk to your child often.
- Play social games such as "Pat-a-Cake" and "How Big is the Baby?"

Imitating housework---

- While you are dusting, sweeping or doing other housework, show your child how to do it too.

Undressing---

- Show your child how to pull off his or her clothes. At first, you may have to unbutton buttons and loosen shoelaces.

Feeding self---

- Show your child how to use a spoon.

Caring for a doll---

- Give your child a washable plastic or rubber doll. Show him or her to feed, love and take care of the doll.

Going on outings---

- Take your child to places such as the zoo, museum, airport and playground often. Talk about things you see and do.

Developing control of large muscles:**Activities to continue---**

- Encourage your child to walk without help.

Pulling toys---

- When your child is able to walk without holding on to anything, give him or her a toy to pull while he or she walks.

Walking backward---

- Show your child how to take steps backward. Pull toys and encourage your child to take backward steps while watching the toy.

Walking up and down steps---

- Carefully, help your child learn to crawl up and down steps. Then help him or her walk up and down, using the stair rail or wall. Always protect unguarded stairs with safe childproof gates.

Walking on tiptoes---

- Show your child how to walk on tiptoes.

Catching and throwing---

- Show your child how to catch a large ball and how to throw it back to you. Then, show your child how to throw a smaller ball or beanbag overhand.

Your Healthy Child

Since your child's growth rate decreases as this age, he or she won't eat as much as before. You can expect your child to become an unpredictable, picky eater. Try not to get into battles about what your child will or will not eat---it's an argument you won't be able to win!

Most children grow well if they eat as much or as little as they want from a balanced selection of food offered at three meals and two snacks a day.

Children drinking cow's milk can be offered whole cow's milk. Low-fat or skim milk may not provide enough calories for proper growth during this second year of life.

Also, cow's milk, in any form, has almost no iron. Depending your child's diet, I may suggest supplement iron drops or daily multivitamin with iron.

Here's how to reduce hassles at mealtime:

- Keep a sheet of plastic over carpeting under your child's chair.
- Offer small amounts of liquid at a time to prevent large spills.
- Use a large bib and have a sponge ready for the spills that are bound to happen.