

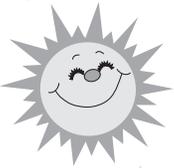
Parents as Partners

Did You Know?

Children have no sense of urgency. They meander and linger and are frustrated by your insistence to hurry. Remember how often you have wished for the luxury of time and try to respect this aspect of their development. They are absorbing everything and trying to make sense of what they are learning.

Try It Out:

Develop routines that lead toward your goal whether it is getting your child to bed, getting her to finish eating, or getting her to follow you out the door in the morning. Routines are a toddler's "clock." Try these tips to help with your morning and evening routines.



Morning

Make morning routines more manageable by giving your toddler a job she can do to contribute to getting out the door, such as gathering everyone's coats, placing things by the door, or feeding the dog. If your child is focused on an activity you choose, she is less likely to get involved in something she discovers and decides to explore.



Evening

Allot a greater quantity and quality of time to special routines so that times when rushing seems inevitable go more smoothly. Start your bedtime routine (bath, quiet play, bedtime story) an hour before bedtime.

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Did You Know?

Your child is developing brain connections for self-control between 16 months and 48 months. Because the brain wires from experiences, it is critical that you set and hold boundaries during this time. If you are wishy-washy, your child will not have any boundary lines in which to develop self-control.

Try It Out:

When you say "no," mean it even if you rethink your decision. Toddlers are too young to understand your rationale for changing a decision. They assume their tantrum has changed your mind and this reinforces the opposite of what you want (self-control).

When your child has a tantrum, follow these simple steps:

1. Use words to describe what you believe to be the cause of the emotional outburst. This will often reduce the intensity of the tantrum because part of the issue is that your child thinks you don't understand what he wants.
2. Then, walk away and let your child cry it out. If you try to reason with a child during this time, it will only extend the length of the fuss.
3. Be consistent. For example, if you don't allow snacks before dinner, make this a consistent rule in all cases. Consistency over time helps children understand boundaries and, believe it or not, your child needs and wants boundaries.

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Did You Know?

Getting toddlers to eat can be a battle. When your child was younger and dependent, feeding time was often a pleasant experience for both you and your child. But now as your child has moved into toddler years, she can be demanding and determined to feed herself. This can create a conflict with your need to keep her neat, get the food in her mouth, or even complete the eating process in less time.

Try It Out

- Recognize that your child will not starve. Don't get into a power struggle. If your child misses a meal, she will most likely eat later.
- Don't worry if your child is not eating a particular food. Providing vitamins for your toddler will ensure she is getting the proper nutrients.
- Make mealtime fun by having your toddler help prepare the meal and then eat together as a family.
- Toddlers often eat smaller portions more frequently. Try offering a nibble tray. Place fun finger foods (banana slices, apple wedges, cheese squares, dry cereal) into a compartmentalized dish, such as an ice cube tray or muffin tin. Place the nibble tray on an easy-to-reach table for your little one to enjoy.



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Did You Know?

A child's understanding of shapes is the foundation for his future reading and math skills. When a child learns to recognize circles and triangles, he is building early skills that will help him recognize numbers and letters. When children start reading, they often learn to recognize words by their shape. Your child has been learning about shapes for the past few weeks. As we continue to review these shapes, you can help your child's knowledge grow by reinforcing learning at home.

Try It Out

- Make play dough shapes. Roll play dough into a snake and then shape the snake into a circle, square, triangle, or heart.
- Bake cookies using different-shaped cookie cutters.
- Have "shape hunts" around the house or neighborhood.
- Read books about shapes.
- Discuss the shapes of toys. For example, a jack-in-the box is square and a top is round.



Looking Ahead

Please bring a hard-boiled egg to school next week to help with our Humpty Dumpty activities. Please donate clean, recycled baby food jars so we can make Purple Cow Milk Shakes next week.