

# LET'S READ AT 18 MONTHS!

**This is what it looks like when we read:**

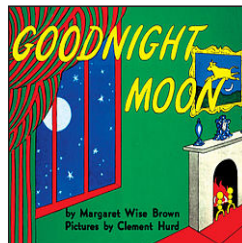
- While we read, I can point to pictures that show parts of the story.
- Reading can be so exciting that I want to move and jump around. I'm still listening!
- I'm so excited for story time that I'll reach for books on my own and hand them to you!

**I learn from books when you:**

- Read signs and labels to me. Words are everywhere!
- Use rhymes and fun words when we talk about our stories. They don't have to make sense.
- Relate what's in the story to my own experiences.

**Let's read these books together, too!**

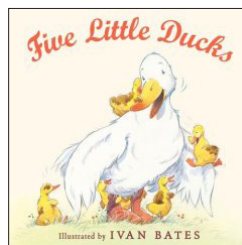
Books can teach me about different parts of the day, like play time or bedtime. I can see familiar events and characters in the stories we read.



## **Goodnight Moon**

by Margaret Wise Brown

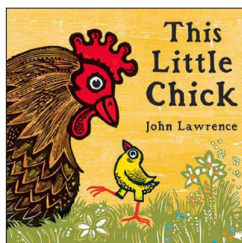
Send your baby off to sleep with this classic book that gently bids goodnight to all the things in a child's room.



## **Five Little Ducks**

by Ivan Bates

One by one, five little ducks wander away from their mother until her lonely quack brings them all waddling back.



## **This Little Chick**

by John Lawrence

Rhyme and make the sounds of all the barnyard critters in the little chick's farm.

**You can check out these and other great books in the Monroe County Public Library's Children's area!**

# your child @<sup>TM</sup>

highlights of what's happening  
at this stage of your child's development...

## 12 to 18 months

Your child at 12 to 18 months is developing a real personality. She is still growing rapidly, but not as dramatically as in the first year. As she begins to walk, run and climb, she gains confidence and a greater sense of independence. At this stage, your child needs encouragement and freedom to explore, as well as clear boundaries and limits to feel safe.

### your child's health

#### take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, at 12 months, let your doctor know if your baby:

- Does not crawl.
- Drags one side of body while crawling for over one month.
- Cannot stand while supported.
- Doesn't search for objects that are hidden while he watches.
- Says no single words.
- Does not point to objects or pictures.
- Does not use gestures such as waving or shaking head.

#### The Well Visit

At your child's one-year check-up, you should expect your doctor to:

- Give certain vaccinations, listed below, which will keep your child healthy and growing strong.

Your next visit may be at 15 or 18 months.

#### Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- Polio • Hepatitis B • MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- Chicken Pox • Hib • Prevnar (pneumococcal)
- DTaP or DTP

#### Sleep

At around 12 to 18 months, your child needs about 14 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. At this time, most children start giving up their morning nap and instead take one longer afternoon nap per day. As your child begins to lose the second nap, you may notice he is ready for bed a little earlier while he adjusts to the change — anytime between 6 and 8 pm.

#### Nutrition

*Eating.* At 12 months, a baby should eat a balanced diet of healthy foods, such as: squash (vegetable), bananas (fruit), cheese (dairy), or chicken (meat).

All foods should be cut into small pieces so that the child can feed independently without the risk of choking. Foods you should AVOID include:

- Raw carrots
- Popcorn
- Nuts
- Hot dogs
- Hard candy
- Whole grapes

Because your baby is still exploring most foods, she probably won't eat a lot at a single sitting. So, try to provide five or six small meals a day instead of three larger ones.

*Drinking.* By 12 months, your baby is ready to stop drinking formula and begin drinking up to 24 ounces of whole milk a day. He should be drinking from a cup rather than a bottle. Don't forget to offer water throughout the day.

#### keep in mind...

Now that your child has teeth, you should brush them daily with a baby toothbrush and water.

### your child's growth and development

Between 12 and 18 months, your child might be able to:

#### Physically

- Walk without help.
- Enjoy holding objects while walking — often one in each hand.
- Hold a crayon and scribble (but with little control).
- Gesture or point to indicate what she wants.
- Turn pages in a book.
- Like to push, pull and dump things.

#### Intellectually

- Understand and follow simple, one step directions.
- Say about 8 to 20 understandable words, including "hi" and "bye" if reminded.
- Identify objects in a book, if prompted.
- Pay attention to conversations.

#### Socially and Emotionally

- Enjoy being held and read to.
- Imitate others with sounds and facial expressions.
- Play alone with toys.

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Reviewed and approved by the  
American Academy of Pediatrics

Sources: *Your Baby's First Year* and *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shelov, MD, FAAP, editor in chief; *Understanding Children*, Civitas and Richard Saul Wurman; *KidBasics*, Civitas; *Healthy Sleep, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD.

Civitas thanks **Parents as Teachers**, an international early childhood parent education and family support program, for their ongoing support.

### nurturing your child

#### Literacy

As your child's vocabulary grows, his interest in books and songs will grow, too. Take advantage of his interests by reading, singing and talking all the time.

- Make reading interactive by asking questions while looking at pictures and reading stories. Even though your child cannot yet answer fully, pay attention to his verbal and non-verbal responses.
- Provide your child with books that can easily be carried by little hands and which offer flaps and textures he can explore.
- Teach new songs and incorporate hand movements such as "Pat-a-Cake" and "Itsy-Bitsy Spider."

#### Discipline

Your child's growing sense of independence will push her to test her behavior with you. This is the right time to set a few limits. Your child's first rules should help protect her safety and be enforced clearly and consistently. You can also try these age-appropriate discipline techniques:

- Stay one step ahead. Distract or redirect your child from unsafe objects or activities.
- Save "no" primarily for safety issues. If your child hears "no" too often, she will start to tune it out.
- Use non-verbal communication. Give a stern or firm look for minor incidents.

#### Play

Your child's desire and ability to do things on her own will extend to her play. So, allow your child to use toys in any way she wants. When your child is able to explore freely, she learns to imagine, invent and problem solve. Other considerations:

- Plan play dates. Consider your child's nap time so she won't be too tired to spend time with her new friend. Remember, children at this age are too young to be expected to share.
- Allow time for your child to play alone. Independent play allows him to choose and direct the activity, and helps build confidence.
- Try new ways to play games like peek-a-boo and introduce new toys she can push and pull, or items she can stack such as boxes or cups.



#### take note...

Never use spanking or other physical punishment. Spanking is never an effective form of discipline.

### your child's safety

As your child becomes increasingly mobile and curious, you must make "child-proofing" your home a priority.

#### In the Car

- When your child is at least 12 months old and weighs at least 20 pounds, she can ride in a forward facing car seat (although the AAP recommends that babies remain rear-facing as long as possible) in the backseat of the car.
- For more information, go to [www.fitforakid.org](http://www.fitforakid.org).

#### take note...

Now is the time make sure the mattress on the crib is lowered all the way. It is also important to keep the side rail up when your child is in bed.

#### Around Your House

- Block staircases and the kitchen with gates, install safety latches on toilets, drawers, and cabinets or anyplace where cleaning materials are kept.
- Cover sharp edges, electric outlets and fireplaces.
- Keep hot liquids out of reach.
- Make sure window treatments are not strangling hazards and install window guards to prevent your child from falling out.
- Call Poison Control immediately if you think your child has eaten or drunk something poisonous:  
**1-800-222-1222.**

*Born Learning*<sup>SM</sup> is a public engagement campaign helping parents, caregivers and communities create early learning opportunities for young children. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child's first teacher, *Born Learning* educational materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6 and Civitas. For more information, visit us online at [www.bornlearning.org](http://www.bornlearning.org).





# TIPS | for parents of Toddlers

Being a toddler is all about ACTION. Encourage continued language development and interest in books and reading by keeping things lively and engaging. Everyday experiences are full of opportunities to engage in conversation and develop language skills. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

## ■ Don't expect your toddler to sit still for a book

Toddlers need to MOVE, so don't worry if they act out stories or just skip, romp, or tumble as you read to them. They may be moving, but they are listening.

## ■ Recite rhymes, sing songs, and make mistakes!

Pause to let your toddler finish a phrase or chant a refrain. Once your toddler is familiar with the rhyme or pattern, make mistakes on purpose and get caught.

## ■ Choose engaging books

Books featuring animals or machines invite movement and making sounds. Books with flaps or different textures to touch keep hands busy. Books with detailed illustrations or recurring items hidden in the pictures are great for exploring and discussing.

## ■ Keep reading short, simple, and often

Toddlers frequently have shorter attention spans than babies. Look for text that is short and simple. Read a little bit, several times a day.

## ■ Encourage play that involves naming, describing, and communicating

Set up a zoo with all the stuffed animals. Stage a race with the toy cars. Put your toddler in charge and ask lots of questions.

## ■ Every day is an adventure when you're a toddler

Choose books about everyday experiences and feelings. Your child will identify with the characters as they dress, eat, visit, nap, and play.

## ■ Ask questions

Take time to listen to your toddler's answers. Toddlers have strong opinions and interesting ideas about the world. Encourage your toddler to tell you what he or she thinks. You'll build language skills and learn what makes your toddler tick at the same time.

## ■ Play to their favorites

Read favorite stories again and again. Seek out books about things your toddler especially likes—trains, animals, the moon. These books may extend a toddler's attention span and build enthusiasm for reading.

## ■ Not having fun?

Try a different story or a different time during the day. Reading with a very young child is primarily about building positive experiences with books, not finishing every book you start.

Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.