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Celebrate!

Celebrate your toddler's rapidly expanding gross motor skills.

If your baby hasn't started walking at twelve months, she will within the next six months. Even if your baby is walking, it will take many more months before she can stand up and propel herself forward in a smooth fashion. At first, instead of walking, she will toddle; that is why children this age are called 'toddlers'.

From 12-18 months you will observe that Toddler:

- Will begin walking
- Will exercise many new physical skills
- Will like to carry, dump, push, pull, pile, knock down, empty, fill

Play!



Follow the Leader

Why this playtime activity is good for your toddler: Toddlers enjoy imitating those they see around them: family, friends, and especially other children. This activity reinforces following direction skills.

What you'll need to play this activity: No special equipment is needed to play this game.

How to play *Follow the Leader*: If your toddler can walk, *Follow the Leader* can be played standing and moving about. If your toddler isn't walking, a crawling or sitting version of the game can be fun too. Some interesting movements to include in the game: over, under, around, up, down, counting, pointing to body parts, front and back. Say one- to three- word commands as you are performing a movement you want baby to imitate. Example: Say, 'round and round' as you spin in a circle or 'up and down' as you hop about.

Share!

You took your first steps on this date: _____

You were this many months old: _____

Here is what happened the first time you walked: _____

Celebrate!

Celebrate your toddler's rapidly expanding fine motor skills.

At twelve months it is probably still very difficult for your toddler to pick up tiny objects between his thumb and forefinger, but by eighteen months this task will seem like a simple one.

Between 12-18 months you will observe that Toddler:

- Is learning to pick up small things like raisins or cereal rings
- Is learning to build towers of three or four blocks
- Is putting small things inside large containers

Play!



Miniature Marshmallow Poke

Why this playtime activity is good for your toddler: As your toddler grows older, he will enjoy activities that are a challenge. Poking miniature marshmallows through a small hole requires a great deal of concentration as well as good finger grasp.

What you'll need to play this activity: coffee can with plastic lid, miniature marshmallows

How to play *Miniature Marshmallow Poke*: Cut a small hole in the plastic lid of a coffee can. Place the lid back on the can. With close supervision (so Toddler won't eat *all* of the marshmallows), let your toddler poke the miniature marshmallows, one at a time, through the hole. Praise success as well as attempts at success.

Variation 1: With an older toddler you can play this game standing in front of the can as in the game 'Drop the Clothespeg In the Bottle'.

Variation 2: If the temptation to put everything into the mouth is too strong for your child, use larger wooden blocks and cut the hole in the plastic lid large enough for the blocks to fit through.

Share!

When you were a toddler, some of your favourite small toys were:
