



Dear Parent,

Twos are terrific, tender, trying, taxing, and very, very exciting. They've come a long way in two short years, and so have you. As a parent of a two-year-old what do you need?

- *Patience—to help you deal with your child's mood swings, which range from very helpful to very unreasonable.*
- *Vigilance—to help you make your child's world safe.*
- *Loving firmness—to help you gently apply rules in a consistent way.*
- *Humor—to help you laugh at yourself and with your child.*
- *Wonder—to help you see your two-year-old as the creative, special person she really is.*



Professionals are not always in agreement on specific child-rearing and feeding recommendations. Consult your doctor if you receive conflicting information.

HOW I GROW

I run fairly well, but I still may fall.

I stay dry for longer periods, but I may not be ready for toilet learning.

I enjoy jumping off a low step.

I enjoy being pushed on a swing.

I like to scribble.

I am beginning to walk on tiptoe.

I can blow bubbles.

HOW I TALK

I am learning to say a lot of new words, but it will take me a long time to really understand them.

I say two-and three-word sentences such as "me do it" and "two foots."

I talk to my toys or sing and hum when playing by myself.

HOW I UNDERSTAND

I "tell" you what I'm thinking, but it doesn't always make sense to you.

I am beginning to understand "slow" and "fast", "light" and "heavy".

I think of other children as objects. I sometimes poke them or pull their hair to see what they will do.

HOW I RESPOND

In my play, I copy the things I see you do.

I like to take my blanket with me. It makes me feel secure.

I enjoy listening on the telephone, but I probably won't talk.

I like being near other children, but I'm not good at playing with them yet.



HOW YOU HELP ME LEARN

- Show me new things. Name them to help me develop my vocabulary. I like the sound of big words such as “escalator”, “rhinoceros”, and “elephant”. I’ll have fun trying to say them too.
- Sing and play action songs with me. I’ll like “Ring Around the Rosey,” “London Bridge,” and “The Hokey Pokey.”
- Ask me questions when I point to things. This helps me use my words.
- I like to dance to music.
- Let me use a squeeze bottle to water outdoor plants. Think of other ways I could help you outside.
- Take photos of special times, and write the date on the back of the pictures. I’ll like looking at these photos when I’m older.
- Listen with me to sounds around the house. Listen for running water, the refrigerator motor, or a wind chime. Tell me what they are.
- Let me feel different materials. Tell me what is rough, bumpy, sticky, or smooth.
- Let me hold heavy and light objects. Use the words “heavy” and “light” when you tell me about them. Ask me to pick up the heavy or the light object.
- I love to play dress-up. Share your old hats, shoes, or shirts with me.
- Ask me to close my eyes. Ring a bell, shake a rattle, or jingle some coins, and let me guess what is making the sound.
- Play “follow the leader” with me in front of a mirror. I will enjoy seeing how our bodies move. Eyes, teeth, and tongues will be especially interesting for me.
- Read to me. I can point to and name things in books. I know the words in my favorite books and may like to help you tell the story. Keep my books where I can get to them easily.
- Limit my T.V. time. I learn better by doing things than by watching T.V.



We give equal time and space to both sexes in Keiki ‘O Hawai‘i! That’s why we take turns referring to babies as “he” or “she”. (In this issue, we use “she.”) When we refer to “he” or “she,” we are talking about *all* babies.

FEEDING YOUR TODDLER

✨ Picky eaters

Some children like only certain foods at certain times. Respect your child’s right to refuse to eat a food, but don’t feel that you can’t serve that food to the rest of the family.

A picky eater is sometimes willing to take a very small serving of food. A child will be more willing to take a tiny taste if she knows she won’t be forced to eat more. She might also try a bite of a new food from your plate.

You are your child’s first and most important model. Serve a wide range of healthy foods and limit the amount of sodas, chips, and sweets in your own diet.

✧ Preparing for a new baby

It is normal for your toddler to be confused and jealous when a new baby joins the family. Behaviors such as clinging, whining, hitting, crying, or more babyish ways may be a sign of these feelings. You need to reassure her that you will always love her and that she is still very important to you.

If you are planning to move to a new home, change her from a crib to a bed, or start her in preschool, do it well before or after the new baby's arrival. Coping with a new sibling and a new home or school at the same time is a lot to ask of a two-year-old. Remember, she is still a toddler.

Here are some things you can do to help her prepare for the new baby:

- Read books to her about the arrival of a new baby and the feelings involved.
- Let her help pick out some toys, clothes, and other items for the baby.
- Look through her baby pictures with her.
- Give her a doll to “practice” caring for a baby. Visit friends who have a new baby.



Here are some things you can do after the baby arrives.

- Let her help with the baby if she wishes. She could help with dressing, bathing, and changing a diaper.
- Schedule time during the day to be alone with her and to do an activity she especially likes.
- Before you feed the baby, involve your toddler in an activity. She can listen to music or stories, build with blocks, or “read” to herself.
- Let her kiss, hug, pat, hold, and talk to the baby with you close by.
- Avoid giving her responsibility for the baby or saying, “You’re a big girl now”.



✧ Immunizations

By age 2, your child should have had all her baby shots. Check with your doctor or public health nurse.

SAFETY

✧ Burns

There are several things you can do to prevent burns:

- Adjust the setting on your water heater to under 120 degrees. This will prevent scalding if your child turns on the faucet. Never leave your child alone in the tub.
- Be sure that an adult is present when using the barbecue grill, hibachi, or kamado. Children are fascinated by fire.
- Turn pot handles to the back of the stove while cooking. Use the back burners whenever possible.
- Keep ashtrays, lighters and matches out of reach.
- Do not let cords hang down from toasters, coffee pots, rice cookers, or curling irons.

If your child is burned, put the burned area into cold running water right away. Do not use butter or any ointment. For serious burns, call your doctor or 911.

✧ Using “no” appropriately

Keep asking yourself how you can tell your child what you want her to do instead of always telling her “No!”.

Here are some ideas.

- Tell your child what to do instead of what not to do. “Stay away from the stove; it’s hot,” warns your child without using “no.” You can also suggest, “Come and cook over here with your own pots and pans.” When your child picks up a package, you can say, “Put it down carefully,” instead of, “No! Don’t touch that.”
- Offer suggestions instead of using “No”. “I wonder if there is another truck for Billy?” rather than “No don’t do that. Give it back.”

The use of “no” should be saved for times when your child is in danger of hurting herself, other people, or your possessions. For example, if your child is climbing on bookshelves that could fall over and hurt her, say “No, stay on the floor” or “No! The shelves could fall over and hurt you.” Move her to a safe spot and get her interested in a different activity or toy.

Every time she tries to climb the shelves, warn her again, “Stay on the floor. You could fall if you climb on the shelves.” Move her away from the shelves. Talk to her firmly, without yelling.

When your child repeatedly tries to do something you don’t want her to, try to figure out why. Is she climbing the shelves because there is something she wants that is out of reach? If it’s something she can play with, move it down for her. If it’s something she can’t have, put it away where she can’t see it. Maybe she’s climbing because she enjoys the challenge. Take her to a playground or place where she can climb safely.



✧ Bedtime

Toddlers may not want to go to bed or may wake up several times during the night. Here are some ideas parents have found to be helpful at these times:

- Resign yourself to the fact that you cannot force your child to sleep.
- Recognize that sleep needs differ. Some toddlers sleep as little as 9 hours a day, others sleep up to 13 hours a day.
- Relax with your toddler rather than playing roughly right before bedtime.
- Keep a consistent bedtime routine (bath, story time, lights out).
- Use a safety gate to keep her safe in her room. She may be scared if you close the door or lock her in the room. Be sure she can’t lock herself in.
- If she can’t sleep right away, let her look at books or play with stuffed animals quietly in bed.



A PARENT ASKS

Q - *My son is two and a half and still sucks his thumb. Is this okay?*

A - Yes. Thumbsucking is a very common behavior in children under six and helps some children feel secure and happy. It usually disappears on its own, especially if a child is not pressured or shamed into giving it up.

Dental problems caused by vigorous thumbsucking do not usually occur until the child's permanent teeth start to come in at five or six years of age. Even then, there may be no ill effects from thumbsucking as long as it isn't constant. If you are worried about your child's thumbsucking, check with your child's doctor or dentist.



- Trust your common sense.
- Take time for yourself.
- Keep your sense of humor.
- Be a good model for your child.

For more information about Keiki 'O Hawai'i and its contents or to receive additional copies call The Parent Line at 526-1222 or 1-800-816-1222 toll free.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

In Hawai'i about 18% of families with children under 18 years of age are one-parent families. Single-parent homes are as different from one another as are two-parent homes. Both can produce well-adjusted children.

If you are a single parent, you may have some special concerns or needs. Call The Parent Line for information about community resources, your parenting questions, or support for the challenging task of single parenting.