



18 MONTHS

This is the age of independence! Your toddler wants to do things their own way, try things on their own and explore! Provide safe environments to learn and try new things, but also figure out which boundaries are important for your family (such as not throwing food or throwing cups, for example) and begin to introduce consequences (such as a minute or two of time out).

Picky eating is common at this age- continue to provide different foods and know that food preferences are common (they will love blueberries one week and hate them the next- don't worry, they'll like them again!).

Temper tantrums are also common at this age- as they are trying to find words to communicate, they may get frustrated and throw a temper tantrum. Make sure that they're in a safe environment and ignore the temper tantrum.

SUMMER SAFETY: Sunscreen is safe for children 6 months and older. Remember to reapply sunscreen every 2 hours while in the sun or in the pool. You can use bug-spray for kids over 2 months of age. Bug spray with 10-30% DEET is safe for children, per American Academy of Pediatrics.

Pool safety is a huge concern at this age- if you have a pool or have access to a pool, make sure that there are multiple "layers" in place to prevent your child from going to the pool, such as multiple locks on doors, door locks high up on the door out of reach of kids, a screen or gate around the pool, alarms on the doors. Don't assume others are watching your child at a pool party- always watch your child in the pool and have a flotation device on them if they're in the pool. Swimming lessons are a great idea at this age as well.

Expected development for 18 months includes saying 8-10 words, repeating phrases, following a one-step command, walking, climbing onto furniture, scribbling, feeding self with a spoon, mimicking activities, start offering open cup. Many children go through a big verbal "growth spurt" around 18-20 months of age. Keep reading to your child, giving names to objects when they're pointing or indicating a want. First dental visit at 2-3 years of age unless there are concerns.

NEXT CHECK-UP: 2 years

VACCINE(S): Hep A #2 if hasn't had already, Flu (if in Flu season)