

Baby's First Wish

Cooperative Extension Service
New Mexico State University

A happy & healthy life

Dear Parents: 13 & 14 Months

Congratulations!

You've made it through the first year. You can look back over the last year with pride. You have many memories of the times you have shared with your baby. Remember when you thought her crying would never stop? Remember the time she giggled with glee and you felt good just enjoying her happiness?

Now you and your baby are ready to move into the exciting second year. She will be growing fast and learning a lot this next year. This year is a very important time for your child. It is :

- A time when your child moves from babyhood into childhood.
- A time for her to learn new skills, such as feeding herself.
- A time when she can do a lot of things but does not always know how these actions could hurt her or others.
- A time when her curiosity will make you happy as well as make you tired.

Guiding and caring for your child this next year will be a challenging and exciting job. She'll need a lot of attention and help from you. You'll need a sense of humor, some time for yourself, and lots of common sense. Knowing that your child's changing behavior is both normal and temporary can help you during this time.

Enjoy and celebrate your child's second year.

Questions Parents Ask

I Don't Speak English Well

Q. I am new to this country and I don't speak English well. Should I talk to my son in my own language or in the little bit of English that I know?

A. Children learn language best from someone who speaks it well. Since you can speak your native language well, I suggest you speak to your son in your native language. Help him learn it as well as he can. Later, when he has a chance, he can learn English from



someone who speaks English well. He will learn to speak English more easily after he has become skilled in your language.

He or She? Him or Her?

Baby's First Wish gives equal time and space to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." Please note: when we use he or she, we include all children.

Nutrition

Sometimes It's Hard to Give Up the Bottle or Breast

Weaning your child from bottle or breast should be done slowly. Most babies aren't ready to give up the bottle or breast one day and begin drinking from a cup the next.

By now, your child has probably been drinking from a cup for a while. If you've also been giving milk in a bottle or from the breast, now is the time to give milk in a cup at mealtimes. Your child will be drinking less milk because she will be eating more solid food. As your child eats more and more solid food, there will be less need for the bottle or breast.

Some children may still want the bottle or breast when they wake up, or when they go to sleep. It's OK to give it as long as your baby doesn't go to sleep sucking on a bottle. Sucking on a bottle all night can hurt your baby's teeth.

After a while, your child will forget about the bottle or breast. Don't offer it. Let your child ask for it and then give it only if she really seems to need it. See if your baby won't settle for something else to drink instead. Limit the time the child has the bottle or breast. If you let your little one carry a bottle around during the day, it will be harder for her to give it up.

Don't put fruit drinks, soft drinks, fruit punches, or beverages other than milk in a bottle for your child. These drinks are not nutritious. They are mostly sugar and water. When your child is thirsty,



offer tap water, milk, or real fruit juice in a cup. Some toddlers drink from a bottle longer than others. Be patient. Don't force your child to give up the bottle or breast before she seems ready.

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Living With The 12 to 18 Month Old

There's a lot of talk about the 2-year-old and the 3-year-old, but sometimes we forget what happens between 12 and 18 months. This period will truly test your understanding and sense of humor. Why? Because there's no simple way to make a baby this age explore safely or obey your requests.

Your child loves to explore and he needs to explore to learn, but he can so easily get into trouble. You'll need to watch him every minute and protect him and your belongings from harm. This is not easy.

Baby-proof your home by removing anything he can hurt himself

with and anything he can damage. This may mean storing the coffee table and removing the plants for a while. With a child this age, it's hard to keep a home neat and clean. When accidents do happen, understand that your baby is not trying to be mean. He may be very curious, but he is not trying to act mean. Consider what you give up today as a way to help in your child's growth and happiness tomorrow. Believe it or not, he will learn to be responsible.

Welcome this curious little person to your life. When you need some peace of mind and quiet, beg or borrow someone to watch your child, put your little one in a playpen for a short time, or take him for a walk or a ride. Use your child's nap time to get some rest for yourself.



Copy Play

An All-Time Favorite

You may have seen how your little one likes to copy what you do. She may try to feed you pieces of food the way you feed her. If you accept the food and show you enjoy it, she will laugh. This makes her feel important.

You will enjoy seeing your child try to copy the things you do—eating, washing, cooking, cleaning, and so forth. Your little one will really enjoy having you play games in which you copy her. She likes that because it shows her that what she does is important to you. This helps build her self-esteem. Try copying her hand movements, her play activities, her body movements, or her language. She'll laugh, and she'll be learning how her own movements look to you.

Mirror play is fun for your little one at this age. She likes to watch you in the mirror while you copy her. She'll also enjoy just watching

herself in the mirror. She'll laugh at her smile in the mirror and may pat or kiss it.

You can use copying to help your little one learn. When she is learning to drink from a cup, you can drink to show her how. When you want her to pick up toys, pick up toys yourself.

Other Copy Games

You can have your child build with cans, boxes, or other objects. You can have him build things by copying what you do. You can build houses, trains, or bridges.

Playing

Play is the way children learn. They love to play with their parents and other caring adults. Play with them in ways that don't take away their pleasure or their chances to learn. Here are some simple rules of play for you:

- Watch your child and observe his interests and his skill levels. You are learning about how he plays.

- Join in and play at your child's level, letting him lead. If you try to teach too much too fast, your child might get upset.
- Ask your child to tell you about what he's doing, and say something good about it.
- After playing the same games many times, you might show him something harder to play. For example, if your child can put together a two-piece puzzle, try one with three pieces. If your child likes building with blocks, you might show him how to combine block play with toy animals.
- Every now and then, stop playing yourself and just watch your child play. Watch how he explores his new activity. After your child learns to do something new by himself, you can join in and suggest another new activity.
- Remember, your child's attention span is very short. When he decides to stop playing, let him.

What's It Like To Be 13 and 14 Months Old?



How I Grow

- I can climb up a step.
- I don't like to be held back.
- I want to explore everything.
- I poke, bang, turn, and twist everything I can reach.
- I can probably stand alone and walk pretty well.
- I can probably stoop and stand up again.
- I'm very interested in small things like crumbs, bugs, and little rocks.
- I spend a lot of time just staring at things; this is one way I learn.
- I may be afraid of the dark.

How I Talk

- I am learning simple words.
- I can look in the right direction when you ask where's daddy, where's the ball, where's the cat.
- I will answer to my name.

- I will wave bye-bye if you ask.
- I have begun to understand the names of some people, animals, and things that are important to me.
- I can let you know when I want something like a glass of milk.
- I like putting sounds together.
- I really try hard to make you understand me.
- I like to repeat words you say.
- Sometimes I like you to tell me the names of things in books, but I don't really like stories yet.

What I Have Learned

- I am learning what you will let me do and what you won't let me do.
- I will empty anything I can get to—dresser drawers, kitchen cabinets, trash cans, laundry baskets.
- Sometimes I like to put things back in containers.
- I like to copy your actions.
- I have learned how to get you and other adults to help me do things.
- I have not yet learned what is dangerous for me to do.
- I may scream just to show you how powerful I am.
- I have learned pat-a-cake and like to show it off to anyone who will watch.
- Sometimes, not often, I will respond to a firm "no-no."

How I Get Along With Others

- I love to have people watch me and I like to hear them clap for me; I'm beginning to do cute things just to get your attention.
- I show I love you with hugs and kisses ... sometimes.
- I still like to keep my mother and father in sight when I'm exploring.
- I'm beginning to get used to babysitters, but I'm still shy with strangers.
- I like to have you play with me.
- Sometimes I drop things just to get you to pick them up for me.
- I don't like playing in a room by myself.
- I may have tantrums and throw things when I'm angry.

Play I Like

- I like to push a rolling toy and put things in piles.
- I can play alone, but mostly I like to play with you: especially chase-me, catch-me, find-me games and tickling.
- I like putting little things in big things.
- I like to listen to music and dance to it.
- I'm beginning pretend play like driving a pretend car.

Games for Growing



Pop Goes the Weasel

Purpose of the Game

To help your child listen for a special sign and act on it. Your child will learn to listen for the POP and jump up without help when she hears it.

How to Play

- Sit facing your child on the floor or on low chairs.
- Sing to your child: "All around the carpenter's bench the monkey chased the weasel. The monkey thought 'twas all in good fun! POP, goes the weasel."

- As you sing POP, take your child's hands and pull the child up. Then sit your child back down as you complete "goes the weasel."
- Soon your child will listen for the word POP and have fun jumping up without your help.

Building a Tower

Purpose of the Game

To help your child build a tower by himself so that he can understand that things can be combined to make other things.

How to Play

- Sit on the floor or at the table by your child.
- Place blocks in a pile in front of



you and your child.

- Build a tower with two or three of the blocks.
- Don't knock down the tower. Take it down, one block at a time.
- Ask your child to make another tower.
- If your child doesn't start to make a tower, hand the child a block and say, "See, we can put one on top of the other."
- When your child puts one block on top of another say, "You can do it."

(Note: If the tower falls, don't make a big thing out of it.)

Some children cannot do this until they are older. Don't worry if your child needs more time or more practice. Be patient and helpful. Stop the game before your child gets bored.

What We Know

The First Three Years Are Important

Your child's first three years of life are his most important. Studies of children, done by many scientists, have clearly shown that the positive growth in these first three years is far more important than anyone thought before. In their simple, everyday activities, infants and toddlers form the building blocks of all later development.

The way your child develops during these first three years depends mostly on how you care for him and encourage his development. Parents are children's first and most important teachers.

Homemade Toys That Teach

Toys don't have to come from stores. Some of the best toys for your child can be those you make from things you have around the house.

Each issue of *Baby's First Wish* will include a section on homemade toys that can be fun and can teach. Homemade toys are almost free, and they give you and your child a chance to make things together. Let your child help you decide how to make the toy and let him help you put it together. This will help him be creative and learn new skills. Even very young children can help by picking colors and supplies.

Your child gets many things from homemade toys. He gets more toy variety because when he breaks

the toy or gets tired of it, you and he can change it or toss it out and make another.

He is also learning that he can make things for himself; that he doesn't need to buy all his fun from a store. This increases his sense of self-esteem, while it helps him build his creativity and skill. There is no end to the kinds of toys you can make—we give you just a few examples. Watch your child and make toys that will fit his interests and skills. Remember to be careful about safety. Watch out for sharp edges, or other things that could choke or hurt your child if they are broken or go into his mouth.

Television and Toddlers

Television is not a good babysitter. Most young children could be doing other things at this age. Watching television can be educational, but does not give your child the exercise he needs. It may not give him a chance to explore or to play. Unless you're watching television too, it's also lonely.

Some parents try to have their children watch television to keep them quiet. If you need some time for yourself, or to talk on the phone, put your child next to you with some toys. Too much TV can keep them from playing and making friends. The television makes it hard for your little one to talk to you and hear you. This can delay the very important development of language skills. Do your toddler a favor and turn off the television except for very special, occasional programs. When he does watch television, talk to your little one about what he is seeing. This talking may be the best part of the program for him.

Be Good to Yourself When You Feel Like Screaming

Raising a toddler can make you feel really uptight sometimes. Your child is becoming more and more of a challenge every month. It's hard to be the one who is always responsible. Your body may get tense and you may feel like screaming or hitting something. When you think you just can't stand it one more second, STOP. Take "time out." Here are a few "time out" relaxers to try:

- Close your eyes and take long, deep breaths.
- Make, sure your child is in a safe place, then take a few minutes until you calm down.
- Tell those around you that you've reached your limit and you need help right now.
- Ask a friend or relative to watch your child for a short time.
- Call: Child Help USA at 1-800-422-4453 to talk to someone. Keep it posted near your telephone with other emergency numbers.

When you take time out to handle your stress, you're doing yourself AND your baby a big, big favor. Besides saving your child from painful words and actions, you'll be showing your child a good way to handle stress.

Safety

Watch Out for Poisoning

Did you know that children between the ages of 10 and 20 months are far more likely than children of other ages to be victims of accidental poisoning?

Poisoning most often happens when children have learned to crawl. They get into things and are curious about the world around them, but they have not yet learned what kinds of things are dangerous.

Many things can poison children, including:

- Garden and house plants.
- Colognes, perfumes, hair products, and cosmetics.
- Tobacco, food flavorings, and spices.
- Gasoline, insecticides, roach sprays, and powders.

Many kinds of garden and house plants are poisonous if eaten; oleander and castor bean are especially dangerous and can be fatal. Some plants cause vomiting, others cause changes in children's heart rate, body temperature, or bowel movements. Know the plants in and around your house. Be careful of plants that have hairy leaves, milky juice or sap, or thorny leaves, fruit or seed pods.

If a child eats one cigarette, it can kill him. To young children, all colored liquid looks like juice and all white powder looks like sugar. Your child needs to be protected from these things.

Give your house regular safety checks. Make sure everything dangerous is locked up or out of reach. Cover electrical outlets. As toddlers

learn to climb, they can open cabinets that they could not reach before. Keep the telephone number of the poison control center, your doctor's number, and other emergency numbers posted close to your telephone. If your child eats any part of a plant or other poisonous substance, call the New Mexico Poison Information Center at 1-800-432-6866.

Have syrup of ipecac on hand, but don't use it unless the doctor or poison control center tells you to use it. If your child must have emergency treatment, bring a piece of the substance your child has swallowed or the container to the doctor or hospital with you.



Guidance and Discipline

Foundation of Cooperation

Do you know that by the time your baby is a year old, you have done many things already to help him behave well? Babies who are loved, protected, and comforted during their first year feel safe and trusting. They have a close, loving bond with their parents.

During their second year, they will want to follow their parents' simple requests. They will also come to copy their parents' caring behavior. As a result, they will be more likely to accept limits, guidance, and discipline during the sometimes rocky months ahead.

Remember that discipline means helping children grow into responsible adults. Discipline may be the most difficult and the most important part of parenting. It is one

way to show love.

Until his first birthday, you limited your baby's activities by distracting him, holding him, and putting harmful things out of his reach. Within the next few months, he will probably begin to understand "no," but don't expect him to respond to it very often yet. You can begin now using words to guide and limit him. Set a few reasonable rules like "No biting" or "No hitting" and stick to them.

If he tests you, stop him, tell him the rules again and why you have them—in simple words like "Hitting hurts people." Do not hit him because this is what you want him to stop. He will learn more quickly and easily with teaching and guidance than he will with yelling and hitting as a way to teach him. Be patient with him now; it will pay off later.

More about how to do this in our next issues of *Baby's First Wish*.

Coming Next:

- **Mealtime and Snack time Routines**
- **Self-Esteem Starts Early**

NMSU COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE OFFICES

Baby's First Wish

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Another 4-H Prevention Program

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