

I am getting more active and interested in exploring the world around me. What was safe one day may not be safe the next

day. I need you to make sure I am safe and protected, both inside and outside my home.

Most childhood injuries can be predicted and prevented.

Here are some **simple guidelines** to help keep me safe between 12 and 18 months old...and beyond.

Falls are the leading cause of hospital visits for childhood injuries

- If I can climb out of my crib, it's time to move me into a low bed.
- I can stack pillows, stuffed animals and other toys to climb out of my crib. Keep my crib free of things I can stack and climb on.
- Don't leave "stepping stones," like chairs or stools, next to a kitchen counter or other high place where I can climb.
- Motorized riding toys look like a lot of fun, but I am not ready for these kinds of toys.
- If we have a balcony, don't leave furniture on it that I can use to climb over the railing.
- Make sure all of our windows have screens I can't push out.
- Put baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Check furniture for sharp corners. If possible, move this furniture out of the way or use corner and edge protectors.
- Always strap me in with the safety straps when you put me in a high chair. Stay with me when I am in a high chair.
- Use a high chair that has a wide base so it cannot be tipped over if someone bumps into it.
- Strap me securely into my stroller or carriage.

Car Safety

- One of the most important things you can do to keep me safe is to put me in an approved child safety seat **every time** we travel by car.

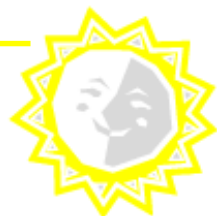
- Move me into a forward facing child safety seat when I have reached my first birthday and I weigh at least 20 pounds. Until then, I am safest rear-facing.
- When installing my child safety seat, always read your instruction manual for the seat and the owner manual for your vehicle.
- I might fight to get out of my child safety seat but do not let me win. My seat is the safest place for me to be if we stop suddenly or are in a collision.
- I am safest when you put my child safety seat in the back seat. **Never** put me in the front seat if our car has a passenger-side air bag.
- Don't forget to use the tether on the back of my seat.
- If we have a used child safety seat, it's best to have it inspected. Discuss this with our community health nurse.
- Talk to our community health nurse if you have any questions about installing and using my car safety seat.
- I should not eat or drink by myself while travelling in a vehicle. I could choke while you are driving and you may not be able to help me.
- Never leave me alone in a vehicle. What you think will take 5 minutes may take much longer. I can become too hot in a vehicle in the summer and too cold during the winter.

Sun Safety

- Keep me out of the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. This is when the sun's rays are the strongest.
- Put sunscreen on me when I am in the sun. I should also wear light clothing, hats and sunglasses for protection from the sun.

House and Neighborhood

- Make sure purses or suitcases containing medicine for our visitors are out of reach.
- Hold onto me whenever we are



near traffic.

- Don't dress me in clothes with drawstrings. The string can catch on playground equipment or furniture and choke me.
- Lock up or put out of reach all poisons, medicines, household cleaners and alcoholic beverages.
- Know the first aid for poisoning and keep the phone number for the Poison Control Centre close to the phone. The phone number in Alberta is **1-800-332-1414**.
- Keep knives, forks, scissors and other sharp utensils in a latched drawer.
- Turn all pot handles and spouts to the back of the stove.
- Make sure there is a safety cover on every electrical wall outlet and a light bulb in every socket.
- Keep the cords from venetian blinds well out of reach. I can strangle myself with a blind cord.
- Check that bath water is not too hot and use a non-skid mat in the bathtub.
- If you haven't already, set our hot water heater to below 50 °C.
- Keep cords for things like kettles and irons out of reach.
- Unplug electrical appliances that aren't being used, especially in the bathroom.
- Lock up garbage containers or use containers that have child-resistant lids.
- If we have an automatic garage door closer, make sure I am with you and away from the door before closing it.
- If we have a swing set or other climbing toys in our yard, make sure they are on a soft surface like grass, sand or wood chips. Stay with me whenever I am playing outside.
- Please put a helmet on me when you take me for a ride in a bicycle seat or pull-along trailer.

Fire Safety

- Keep lighters and matches far out of my reach.
- Make sure our house has smoke detectors that work.

- Plan and practice how our family will get out of the house if there is a fire.

Water Safety

- Never leave me alone in or near a bathtub or swimming pool – even a baby swimming pool. I can drown in just a few inches of water.

Choking

- Do not give me hard, small and round, smooth or sticky solid foods like hard candies, cough drops, gum, raisins, nuts or grapes. They may block my airway and I could choke.
- If you put me in a playpen, check the top rails for tears or holes. I might bite off chunks of vinyl or plastic and choke.
- Choose toys and equipment appropriate for my age.

Animals and Children

- Animals, even the family pet, can hurt me. Stay with me when animals are around, inside or outside.
- My siblings and other children can hurt me. Stay with me when other children are around.

Questions?

If you have any questions concerning your child's healthy growth and development, please contact your community health nurse at your local health region office.

12 to 18 months

Growth and Development Series

All About Me



Hi. I am your 12- to 18-month-old toddler.

I am developing my own identity and becoming more independent everyday. I have my own way of doing things. I might do some things before other children and I may do some things later than them. Be patient. I will get there in my own time.

The most important thing you can do is to be warm, loving and responsive to me. This will help my brain develop and shape the way I learn, think and behave for the rest of my life. I also need you to take care of yourself. If you feel unhappy or have negative feelings, please talk to family, friends or your doctor.

To help you know what to expect, here are some common milestones most children reach between 12 and 18 months old.

Growth

Body

- My weight has tripled since I was born. I will not grow this quickly again.
- I am about 75 centimetres tall (30 inches).
- My stomach still sticks out.
- The small of my back is forming (the curve just above my hips) as my spine gets stronger.
- The soft spot on the top of my head is getting smaller and will probably close by the time I am 18 months old.

Teeth

- I am still teething and will continue to get new teeth until I am 2 to 3 years old.
- Some of my back teeth might come in by the time I am 18 months old. These are my first primary molars. My second primary molars usually come in when I am around 2 years old, although they might not come in until I am closer to 3 years old.

- Clean my teeth with a child’s soft toothbrush every day. Fluoride toothpaste will help prevent cavities. I will swallow most of the toothpaste so use only a small amount. Use a smear of toothpaste when I am a baby and a pea-size drop of toothpaste when I am a toddler. Teach me to spit out the toothpaste as soon as I can learn this skill.

Development

Movement

- I can scribble with a large crayon.
- I can put things into a container.
- I like to take things out of drawers and cupboards.
- I can help dress myself and can take off my shoes and socks.
- I can crawl quickly.
- I can crawl upstairs but might need you to show me how to get down by crawling backwards.
- I can get to my feet without any help and can easily stand alone.
- When I start walking, I will totter at first with my feet wide apart. By the time I am 18 months old, I should be able to walk alone across a large room without falling.
- I can bend over, squat and pick up objects.
- I might climb on chairs and other furniture to reach things.

Language

- I understand more words than I can say.
- When you ask me to, I might point to objects I know.
- I like it when you tell me the names of things around me or in picture books.
- I recognize the names of different toys and might bring them to you if you ask me.
- I can understand simple questions and directions, such as, “Where is your nose?”
- I like to listen to rhymes and songs and might even try to

sing or dance to music.

- I like to make animal sounds and to make sounds “vroom” when I play with toy cars and trucks.
- I can make most vowel sounds (a, e, i, o, u) and many consonant sounds (p, m, h, n, w).
- I might use one word and a gesture to ask for a cookie or a toy or to tell you something. For example, I might wave and say “bye-bye.”
- You can help me develop my language by talking to me all day long about the things we are doing.
- By the time I am 18 months old, I might use two word sentences such as, “What’s that?” or “All gone.”
- If I do not play with sounds or talk at all, take me to a speech-pathologist.

Sexual Health

Children learn about sexuality daily and continue learning throughout their lives. Sexuality is an awareness of our entire self as a male or female. This is basic to healthy sexual development.

- I am continuing to explore my body including my sexual parts.
- Your words and actions help me to develop positive, healthy feelings about myself and my sexuality.

Behavior and Emotions

Thinking, Feeling and Doing

- I am usually happy and friendly.
- I am developing strong emotional ties to you and other people I care about. I might cry when you leave.
- I am becoming my own person, with my own identity that is separate from you and my family.
- I can tell the difference between “you” and “me.”
- I am getting more independent every day and like to do things for myself.
- I can be very demanding and can be easily frustrated.

I might even have temper tantrums.

- I can feel fear, anger, sympathy, anxiety and jealousy.
- I know how to get your attention.
- I am starting to know my family’s schedule and how I fit into it.
- I recognize places and things I have seen before.
- I can play alone but I like it if you or another adult is near by.
- I enjoy music and love to dance.
- I can be very affectionate or cranky when I am tired, or have done something wrong.
- I might tell you when my diaper needs to be changed.
- **Never** shake me if I cry or am unhappy. Shaking can cause brain damage, blindness, paralysis or even death.

Sleeping

- I might be sleeping longer at night now that I am so active during the day.

Playing

- I like toys I can push or pull behind me when I walk.
- Other toys I might like are books with large pictures and simple stories, blocks, nesting toys, shape sorters, pegboards, digging toys, dolls, cars, trucks, trains, bath toys, large crayons, toy telephones, stuffed animals and other toys made for my age.
- I might also like things from around the house like wooden spoons, old magazines, baskets, cardboard boxes, paper tubes, and pots and pans.
- I love playing peek-a-boo.

Eating

I am not growing as fast as I was during my first year and do not need to eat as much food.

- I might be fussy or picky with my food. My appetite will go up and down. I might eat a lot one day and then just pick at my food the next day. I might only want to eat one type of food for two or three days and then refuse to eat it the next time you give it to me.
- I still need breast milk or about 16 to 20 ounces of milk or milk products (like cheese and yogurt) every day. If you are not sure how much milk to give me, talk to our community health nurse.
- I can hold a spoon and can drink from a cup.
- It’s a good time to start weaning me from the bottle. Start by giving me a cup at one meal a day and gradually increase to every time I have milk.
- I will probably make a mess when I try to feed myself. Please be patient with me. I am learning skills that I need to feed myself. A plastic cup with a lid and a mat under my highchair can help you manage the mess.
- I probably need a snack between meals. Try giving me small pieces of soft-cooked vegetables, cheese, whole grain muffins, plain crackers or yogurt.
- My food should be finely chopped or mashed. Don’t give me hard foods, like nuts or seeds. These foods can make me choke.

Child Care

- If I need child care, talk to our community health nurse who can tell you what to look for in a child care setting.

Immunization

- Protect me from disease. I need two more appointments for immunizations, one at 12 months and the other at 18 months.



Keeping Me Safe