



HELP!! HE'S INTO EVERYTHING TODDLERS' CURIOSITY AT ITS PEAK

Toddlers, children from 12 months to 36 months, are highly active and curious about their world. It seems they want to see and do everything! All this “getting into things” can really frustrate parents. Toddlers can be difficult to keep up with, and hard to keep safe.

Many parents of children this age often wonder if their child is hyperactive. However, most toddlers are on the go and into everything. This curiosity is essential for the development of a child's brain.

What to expect of toddlers...

- Toddlers **cannot** be expected to understand what danger means.
- Toddlers are so busy they cannot remember all the safety rules. Constant supervision and reminders are necessary.
- To a toddler, exploring his world is a stronger need than following his parents' directions.
- Toddlers are often seen as challenging their parents' authority when they disobey their parent's rules. However, their disobedience is driven by two things: (1) an intense need to explore their environment and (2) a push to be their own person.
- Toddlers cannot be expected to control their own actions. When they see something they want to look at or touch, they will “go for it”.
- Some toddlers explore with their mouths.

Tips for Parents.....

- To keep your toddler safe, SUPERVISE CONSTANTLY!
- At this age most rules need to be limited to those that deal with safety.
- Childproof your entire house. Do not rely on your toddler to keep himself out of danger.
- Place your valuable or breakable items out of reach. There is no benefit to having temptations so close to your very curious toddler. This lesson can best be taught when he is older.



- When you want your toddler to stop doing something, go to him and help him find something else to do. It's most effective if you can think of something that will meet the need your toddler is trying to fulfill. For example, when your toddler tries to climb on the bookshelf, take him to a safe place to climb.
- When you want your toddler to stop a certain activity, first say what you want him to do. For example, "Feet stay on the floor. Let me help you get down." This is more helpful than, "No! Get Down".
- Very often toddlers will not respond to verbal direction alone. Parents must help their toddler follow through with direction by gently helping the child move to another area.

Remember.....The toddler stage of intense curiosity and limited impulse control lasts from about the first birthday to about the third birthday. As children move out of the toddler stage and into the preschool stage, they slow down considerably and begin to think more before they act. Enjoy time with your toddler and see the amazing world through his or her eyes.

For more information contact your county health department.



