



Fun Talk: 12-24 Months

Your toddler will be walking between 12 and 24 months. He will learn more new words because he can get around to look more closely at things. He will understand more words than he says. At about 12 months, he may say “mama” and “daddy” and a few other words. Between 18 to 24 months, he should be able to follow simple directions (e.g., “Go get your shoes, please”). More than 80 percent of language learning takes place before your child is three years old, so it’s very important to talk to your child and help him learn new words. You will want to give him a hug to make him feel special when he tries a new word.

Things to try:

- Show him objects in the house (such as the television, window, bed) and tell him their names slowly, one at a time. Ask him where each item is after you tell him. If he does not point to the object, put his finger on the object and say its name. Soon, he will learn to point to an object and then he will begin to say its name.
- Teach him parts of his body.
Example: Hold his foot and say “foot.” Then say, “Where is your foot?” If he doesn’t touch it, put his hand on it.
Do this with other body parts.
- When your toddler says a word like “puppy” repeat then word and then say something else about it – “Puppy, pet the puppy.”
- Name clothes (shirt, pants, shoes) while dressing and undressing your toddler. “Let’s out on your shoes.”
- Buy or make simple picture books. Point to pictures in the book and name them for the child or name the pictures the child points to. (you can make your own picture books using pictures from old magazines glued to plain paper or cardboard.)
- Play “please” and “thank you” games. Give the child a small toy and then say “please” as you put your hand out to show him you want it. When he gives it to you, say “thank you.” Do it a few times. He will think this is fun and will later learn to use these words.
- Teach “more” and “all gone.” When the child’s cup is empty, say “all gone.” Encourage him to say the words. Ask him “Where is your milk?” when you give the child more food or drink, tell him you’re giving him “more.”
- Teach the meaning of “up” and “down.” Times to talk about “up” and “down”;
 - when lifting the child up and down in the air
 - when lifting lid of washing machine up and down
 - when walking up and down stairs
 - when lifting a toy airplane up and down in the air

For more information contact Guilford County Department of Public Health at 336-641-7777 or www.myguilford.com