



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### **The Remarkable World of Your Toddler: An Overview of Your Toddler's Development**

The toddler stage is a hugely exciting time, as parents begin to get a real sense of their child's personality, especially with their toddler learning to do so many things. Your child will try to be independent but will still be a bit scared of it all. At this stage, it's common for him to cling to you one minute, afraid you will leave, and then want nothing to do with you the next. These sudden shifts of emotions, tantrums and bouts of helplessness are all part of his becoming his own person.

In the final phase of toddlerhood, your child's mental abilities show dramatic growth. He explores the more abstract concepts of shapes, colours, size and quantity by playing with puzzles, paints, water and sand, and, of course, books. He may be able to match objects, sort clothing, count and tell the difference between "one" and "many." Although he is more sociable now and enjoys playing with other children, he is still not great at sharing or cooperating. These days, your toddler is spending a lot of his time building confidence and self-esteem, ready to enter the world of the preschooler.

### **Your Toddler between 25 to 30 Months**

As she starts into her third year, you will notice some dramatic achievements. For example, your toddler will start to:

- Walk upstairs and downstairs alone, with both feet on one step.
- Scribble, clutching the crayon in her whole hand.
- Show she can be attached to a cuddly or favourite toy.
- Express feelings through language and pretend play.
- Better understand the similarities and differences of shapes and sizes.

### **Your Toddler between 31 to 36 Months**

The last half of your child's third year is full of exciting developmental gains. At this stage you will notice your toddler beginning to:

- Run without falling.
- Remove lids from jars, rotating her wrist.
- Enjoy playing near other children, but he is not yet able to play co-operatively.
- Enjoy looking at books and talking about the pictures.
- Match shapes, pictures, and some colours.



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages - 25 - 36 Months

Knowing your child's **typical skills** and her **emerging skills** can help you provide appropriate experiences to enhance her development. And **Comfort, Play & Teach™** is just the place to start. Remember, the developmental milestones we have outlined are only guidelines. Each child develops at their own pace, with some skills emerging early, and others appearing later. So delight in who your child is, and discover how you can have fun as you go through each stage of this amazing growth together.

If you have any concerns about your child's development, consult your child's physician.

### Six Areas of Child Development

1. Social Development means being able to make friends and get along with others, work as part of a team and be a good leader. These skills are all built on self-confidence, cooperation and trust.
2. Emotional Development means the development of a full range of emotions from sad to happy to angry, and learning to deal with them appropriately. This helps build self-esteem and leads to such deeper qualities as sympathy, caring, resiliency, assertiveness and empathy and the ability to rise to life's challenges.
3. Language Development is the ability to understand and express verbal and non-verbal communication. This is followed by the capacity to use words and sentences in correct grammatical structure in order to communicate wishes, ideas, information and needs.
4. Intellectual Development means being able to think creatively and abstractly, to pay attention, solve problems and develop keen judgement along with a lifelong readiness to learn.
5. Gross Motor Development allows a child to gain balance and bring large muscles under control in order to master physical activities such as sitting, crawling, walking, running, climbing, jumping and generally enjoy all that his body allows him to do.
6. Fine Motor Development means mastering precise and accurate small muscle movements of the fingers and hands in order to reach, grasp and manipulate small objects.



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### SOCIAL SKILLS 25-30 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Establishes self as separate from parents, saying, “No! Me do it!”
- Displays shyness around strangers and in outside situations
- Likes to play near other children but not yet able to play co-operatively
- May pull hair, hit or bite other children when frustrated
- Becomes aware of gender differences

#### Emerging Skills

- Helps put things away
- Approaches new person after you have talked to them
- Begins to show more readiness for co-operative play
- Is more able to wait patiently for needs to be met by others
- Knows own gender, and that of others



#### Comfort

##### If you...

- Praise everyday experiences and encourage positive behaviour
- Provide safe opportunities to assert independence
- Read stories to your toddler about ways people care about each other



##### Your child will...

- Know you notice her and develop a feeling of self worth
- Know she is a separate person but that you are there to help her if needed
- Begin to understand the actions that go with caring and how to get along with others



#### Play

##### If you...

- Provide opportunities to go to the park and play in the sand with other children
- Invite one peer over to play for a short time
- Encourage your toddler to play with his dolls and pour them drinks



##### Your child will...

- Feel a sense of belonging in a group
- Begin to develop social skills and become more able to play with others one on one
- Begin to practice caring for the needs of another



#### Teach

##### If you...

- Share a quiet activity together, such as reading a book
- When conflicts occur, explain how her behaviour makes the other person feel
- Encourage taking turns adding ingredients when making playdough together



##### Your child will...

- Feel valued because you made time for her
- Begin to learn positive ways to interact with other children and to problem-solve
- Develop important social skills while doing a soothing and enjoyable activity



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### EMOTIONAL SKILLS 25-30 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Moves back and forth between wanting independence and needing security of parents
- Can still be attached to a cuddly or favourite toy
- Demands his own way much of the time
- Needs an ordered, predictable routine (e.g., when saying good-bye to parent in the morning)
- Expresses feelings through language and pretend play (e.g., roaring like an angry lion)

#### Emerging Skills

- Separates more easily from parents
- Responds to other children's feelings and begins to show empathy
- May develop sudden fears
- Displays frustration and tantrums if he is not understood
- Becomes less upset by limits and discipline



#### Comfort

##### If you...

- Model coping with emotions, such as talking through frustrating problems with your toddler, using words like, "This makes me feel sad/happy"
- Move your toddler to a quieter place when he is having difficulty coping with his emotions

##### Your child will...

- Feel comfortable expressing his feelings
- Be more likely to recognize emotions in other children and adults
- Learn strategies for dealing with emotions
- Learn more acceptable coping skills



#### Play

##### If you...

- Provide the chance for pretend play with dolls and teddies in order to experiment with emotions
- Give your toddler many opportunities to "do it myself;" offer times to practice getting dressed or helping with household tasks
- Read books that illustrate how children or animals experience a range of emotions like jealousy, anger, affection

##### Your child will...

- Express different emotions through toys
- Begin to understand that he is a separate person from you
- Develop the ability to understand another person's emotions and what might have caused them



#### Teach

##### If you...

- Encourage your toddler to understand how others may feel in situations
- Help her understand how her behaviour may have an impact on others
- Watch education programs on television and point out the kinds of emotions characters are feeling

##### Your child will...

- Begin to develop empathy and sympathy
- Begin to be aware of the feelings others may have
- Begin to understand how other children might feel in certain situations
- Enjoy being with you and talking about an imaginary character



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### LANGUAGE SKILLS 25-30 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Uses “self-centred” pronouns like ‘I’, ‘me’, ‘mine’, ‘you’
- Puts together simple, two-word sentences
- Answers simple questions like, “What’s your name?”, and performs simple tasks when asked to
- Enjoys looking at books and talking about the pictures
- Sings parts of songs

#### Emerging Skills

- Is able to use words that describe things, e.g., big, dirty, wet, hot
- Participates more in conversations and stories
- Is able to provide more information about self (e.g., name, gender, age) and understands two-step directions
- Can recite a few simple nursery rhymes
- Using plurals in a general way (e.g., foots not feet)



#### Comfort

If you...



Your child will...

- Provide opportunities for your toddler to talk about things that he finds interesting

- Know that you are interested in what he has to say and will want to converse with you



#### Play

If you...



Your child will...

- Let your toddler fill in the blanks while singing a song

- Enjoy singing important words on her own



#### Teach

If you...



Your child will...

- Keep expanding language by adding more new words and descriptions about events in your toddler’s day

- Develop confidence in the use of many words and feel secure enough to try new words



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### INTELLECTUAL SKILLS 25-30 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Engages in simple pretend play with others
- Matches shapes, pictures, some colours
- Can better understand the similarities and differences of shapes and sizes
- Becomes aware of verbal sequence of numbers
- Shows increased attention span, staying with activities longer

#### Emerging Skills

- Sorts groups of objects into sets
- Completes simple puzzles
- Combines toys and games in more complex ways (e.g., uses playdough in dramatic play)
- Begins to understand the concept of future time, e.g., 'soon', 'in a long time', but not past, e.g., 'yesterday'
- Begins to understand one-to-one actions, e.g., one plate per person



#### Comfort

If you...

- Incorporate numbers and counting into daily routines, such as tidying up toys or putting away tin cans
- Make playdough with your toddler



Your child will...

- Begin to understand that numbers are a part of his everyday environment
- Observe how dry ingredients change in texture through the process of cooking



#### Play

If you...

- Incorporate counting into child-initiated activities, such as block building, for example, "Let's count how many blocks you used in your tower"
- Provide different sized jars and lids and, together, find out which ones match



Your child will...

- Begin to recognize and correctly repeat numbers; may only count to 4 with confidence
- Enjoy working with you to solve problems



#### Teach

If you...

- Offer experiences for your toddler to sort objects, for example, all the puzzles in this box, crayons in this tin
- Play with playdough using different tools, cookie cutters, rollers and so on



Your child will...

- Experiment with sorting, such as the big blocks in one pile, little blocks in another
- Compare the different sizes and shapes of objects he creates



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### FINE MOTOR 25-30 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Scribbles, holding the crayon in whole hand
- Imitates drawing vertical and horizontal lines
- Builds a tower of 5 or more blocks
- Strings beads, picking them up with thumb and forefinger
- Removes lids from jars, rotating wrist

#### Emerging Skills

- Begins to use thumb and fingertips when holding crayon
- Imitates drawing a cross, copies a circle
- Folds paper
- Uses small scissors to snip paper
- Removes clothing already unbuttoned; pulls up zipper



#### Comfort

##### If you...

- Praise your toddler's drawing efforts and describe the markings you see
- Provide your toddler with chances to practice dressing skills, helping with buttons and zippers
- Make playdough with your toddler and create different shapes together



##### Your child will...

- Know you are interested in his creations and feel encouraged to draw more
- Develop confidence in his ability to dress himself
- Enjoy the soothing feeling as he squeezes, pinches, rolls, pats and shapes the dough



#### Play

##### If you...

- Make necklaces together using beads, cut up straws, bits of paper with holes punched in them
- Supply your toddler with costumes for pretend play including hats, shoes, coats, pants
- Provide many art materials including markers, crayons, paint and chalk



##### Your child will...

- Strengthen her ability to pick things up using thumb and forefingers (pincer grasp)
- Practice dressing skills as she engages in an imaginative activity
- Become more able to control these materials as she scribbles and copies lines and shapes



#### Teach

##### If you...

- Provide your child with tongs and various items to sort onto different plates
- Provide puzzles of different sizes and colours, and different numbers of pieces
- Invite your toddler to help with simple cooking jobs like ripping lettuce or stirring with a spoon



##### Your child will...

- Practice the grasp he will be using to cut with scissors
- Learn to use his grasping skills, problem-solve and complete tasks he started
- See how his growing skills can be used to help other people



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### GROSS MOTOR 25-30 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Walks backward and sideways
- Walks upstairs and downstairs alone, both feet on one step
- Runs without falling
- Jumps in place, both feet off the floor
- Climbs on a riding toy and makes it go using both feet at the same time

#### Emerging Skills

- Walks on narrow balance beam
- Walks upstairs and downstairs, alternating feet, holding the handrail
- Runs, avoiding obstacles
- Jumps forward
- Pedals a tricycle



#### Comfort

##### If you...



##### Your child will...

- Join in pretend play and move with your toddler, jumping like mother and baby frogs, slithering like daddy and baby snakes
- Praise your toddler's efforts when she runs at the park or goes down the slide
- Do knee bounces like "To Market, To Market"

- Know that you enjoy playing with her and will be able to practice different actions by using his imagination
- Develop confidence in her ability to test her physical abilities
- Enjoy being cuddled while you bounce and giggle together



#### Play

##### If you...



##### Your child will...

- Play different music and encourage your toddler to explore different movements like jumping, rolling, stretching, marching and walking
- Set up some plastic bottles for bowling pins so your toddler can knock them down with a ball
- Play "Sleeping bunnies," substituting different actions and creatures like birds, horses and elephants

- Make comparisons between each movement and learn to match them to different music styles, speeds
- Be able to practice coordinating arm movements and aiming a ball
- Be able to explore different movements like flying, galloping and stomping



#### Teach

##### If you...



##### Your child will...

- Play simple movement games where your toddler can stop and go, change directions, move quickly or slowly
- Sing songs like "If you're happy and you know it," naming body parts and doing different actions
- Demonstrate different movements like marching, bending, stretching and

- Learn several concepts through movement like stop/go, fast/slow, backward/forward, up/down
- Be able to label his body parts and learn that shoulders shrug, feet stomp, hands clap, knees bend and hips twist
- Feel encouraged to explore new physical skills by following your example



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### SOCIAL SKILLS 30-36 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Expresses affection openly
- Uses social conventions like 'please', 'thank you' and greetings
- Plays alongside others comfortably
- Is more able to play co-operatively and take turns
- Plays make-believe games

#### Emerging Skills

- Imitates adult behaviours, for example, shopping in make-believe grocery store; creates an imaginary friend to talk to
- Is comfortable around new adults
- Helps other children to do things
- Develops pro-social skills like turn-taking, sharing, using words to resolve conflicts



#### Comfort

##### If you...

- Introduce your toddler to familiar neighbours and community workers
- Demonstrate affection with hugs and loving words
- Acknowledge his positive behaviours, for example, "The way you shared was so polite"



##### Your child will...

- Learn to recognize people and feel safe with them
- Learn how to show affection appropriately
- Know his behaviour was appropriate and be motivated to repeat it



#### Play

##### If you...

- Provide many dramatic play props like food containers, play money, a basket
- Invite two of your child's friends over for a cooking or craft activity
- Encourage your child to wash plastic dolls by providing a small basin of water and cloths



##### Your child will...

- Recreate her experiences in pretend play situations (e.g., shopping)
- Be able to practice his social skills as she shares art materials or takes turns adding ingredients
- Practice caregiving and nurturing skills with others



#### Teach

##### If you...

- Plan shopping excursions with your toddler, including list-making, looking at flyers
- Provide puppets and dolls for dramatic play
- Play simple turn-taking games like "I Spy With My Little Eye"



##### Your child will...

- Model these actions in his pretend play
- Learn about language skills and imagination
- Practice waiting his turn while developing his observation skills



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### EMOTIONAL SKILLS 30-36 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Objects to major changes in routines
- Recognizes and responds to other children's feelings
- Becomes more comfortable with new people
- Wants independence but may fear new experiences
- Desires approval and needs praise

#### Emerging Skills

- Explains feelings when asked about them
- Is more able to understand the feelings of other children, and talk about them
- Gets excited about activities she may have done, e.g., baking cookies
- May stamp feet when frustrated
- May request certain stories to help resolve fears, e.g., of monsters



#### Comfort

##### If you...

- Try to maintain regular routines and let your toddler know when a change is coming
- Praise your child's emerging abilities and independent efforts
- Acknowledge his feelings and talk about them



##### Your child will...

- Feel a sense of security and predictability
- Become more self-assured and feel more encouraged to try things
- Learn to understand his own feelings and respond appropriately to those of others



#### Play

##### If you...

- Sing the song "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands," substituting different feelings and actions (grumpy/stamp feet)
- Find people pictures showing different emotions; talk about the person's feelings and why they might feel that way
- Encourage your child to do small excursions with other familiar caregivers, e.g., going to the park



##### Your child will...

- Learn to label different emotions and explore how people express their feelings
- Begin to think about what causes people to have different feelings and recognize words that match emotions
- Become more comfortable being away from her parents



#### Teach

##### If you...

- Read books with your child about different feelings
- Create a picture chart of his day (e.g., showing breakfast time, nap time)
- Do his favourite activities with him



##### Your child will...

- Have a chance to ask about emotions and learn about his own
- Have a comforting reminder of his routine and learn about the sequence of events
- Feel proud to demonstrate his abilities



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### LANGUAGE SKILLS 30-36 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Uses “self-centred” pronouns like ‘I’, ‘me’, ‘mine’, ‘you’
- Puts together simple, two-word sentences
- Answers simple questions like, “What’s your name?”, and performs simple tasks when asked to
- Enjoys looking at books and talking about the pictures
- Sings parts of songs

#### Emerging Skills

- Is able to use words that describe things, e.g., big, dirty, wet, hot
- Participates more in conversations and stories
- Is able to provide more information about self (e.g., name, gender, age) and understands two-step directions
- Can recite a few simple nursery rhymes
- Using plurals in a general way (e.g., foots not feet)



#### Comfort

If you...



Your child will...

- Provide opportunities for your toddler to talk about things that he finds interesting

- Know that you are interested in what he has to say and will want to converse with you



#### Play

If you...



Your child will...

- Let your toddler fill in the blanks while singing a song

- Enjoy singing important words on her own



#### Teach

If you...



Your child will...

- Keep expanding language by adding more new words and descriptions about events in your toddler’s day

- Develop confidence in the use of many words and feel secure enough to try new words



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages - 25-36 Months

### INTELLECTUAL SKILLS – 30-36 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Develops size comparisons, using language like 'bigger', 'smaller', 'really little'
- Tries to dramatize thoughts and ideas (e.g., pretends to be a dinosaur)
- Counts three objects
- Matches similar pictures and objects, sorts different ones
- Enjoys creative movement

#### Emerging Skills

- Separates small objects from large ones
- Understands different forms of measurement for weight, height and length
- Makes a plan before taking action (e.g., searches for needed felt board pieces)
- Notices changes in nature (e.g., when a seed he planted sprouts)
- Uses words associated with an understanding of time (e.g. sleep time)
- Pretends to be community helpers



#### Comfort

If you...



Your child will...

- Use laundry routines as an opportunity to describe and sort family members' clothing
- Learn number concepts and counting in a playful way



#### Play

If you...



Your child will...

- Introduce the concept of first, second, third in simple games, asking, "Who is first? Who comes second?"
- Provide simple puzzles with three to six pieces
- Begin to recognize that numbers are used in different ways
- Gain confidence in his ability to put things together



#### Teach

If you...



Your child will...

- Keep expanding language by adding more new words and descriptions about events in your toddler's day
- Develop confidence in the use of many words and feel secure enough to try new words



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### FINE MOTOR 30-36 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Holds pencil in writing position
- Imitates drawing a cross, circles, dots, small lines, swirls
- Cuts paper with scissors, but may not be able to cut along straight lines
- Turns pages of book one at a time
- Turns rotating handles, doorknobs

#### Emerging Skills

- Experiments with pencils, crayons and markers, using an adult-like grasp
- Draws squiggles and says that's her name
- Participates in songs and finger plays
- Plays with different manipulative toys, e.g., connecting straws and snap blocks
- Puts on and takes off clothes



#### Comfort

##### If you...

- Do simple finger plays like "This Little Piggy" with your child
- Compliment your child's drawing skills, and comment on how "grown up" he is
- Read your child's favourite book to him and put him in charge of turning the pages

##### Your child will...

- Enjoy having his fingers played with as he pretends they are "piggies"
- Feel proud of his abilities and creations and want to make more and show them off
- Learn to love looking at books because of the time spent reading with you



#### Play

##### If you...

- Provide different things to write and draw with (e.g., pencils, markers, crayons, chalk)
- Supply your child with board books to read to her dolls and teddy bears
- Help your child cut out small pieces of paper to use as tickets for a puppet show

##### Your child will...

- Be encouraged to use different things to colour with and express herself
- Use page turning skills as she develops her early literacy skills
- Learn that cutting paper helps with other projects she is doing



#### Teach

##### If you...

- Provide different kinds of dress up clothes with snaps, buttons, zippers
- Make greeting cards with your child, and together, print special messages
- Role model reading and writing in front of your child

##### Your child will...

- Practice self-help skills at his own pace through creative play
- Use skills like cutting, folding and drawing to express his ideas and feelings
- See reading and writing as useful and want to do them too



# Comfort Play & Teach



## Ages and Stages 25-36 Months

### GROSS MOTOR 30-36 Months

#### Typical Skills

- Participates in group activities that include running, galloping, crawling, rolling over and twirling around
- Walks on balance beam, alternating feet a few steps
- Runs, avoiding obstacles
- Climbs up the ladder of a slide or other play equipment
- Pedals a tricycle

#### Emerging Skills

- Walks on balance beam a few steps, going forward and backward
- Rides tricycle, steering well and using pedals
- Kicks ball with increasing accuracy
- Throws ball overhand with fairly accurate aim
- Participates in circle games involving many players, such as 'The Hokey Pokey'



#### Comfort

##### If you...



##### Your child will...

- Encourage your child as she attempts more challenging skills
- Count out loud how many stairs she manages independently and offer praise
- Set up a big target for your child to throw a ball at or a big box to kick a ball into

- Develop confidence in her physical abilities and be open to trying new activities
- Know you are noticing her and gain self-confidence
- Feel successful every time she hits the target or gets the ball in



#### Play

##### If you...



##### Your child will...

- Participate in physical activities with your toddler by playing tag or rolling down a hill
- Play music and provide him with colourful scarves to move and dance with
- Demonstrate movements like galloping and twirling by playing "Follow the Leader"

- Enjoy the interaction and know that it is fun to exercise because of your example
- Explore the different actions he can do with his body and be inspired by the music
- Learn different possibilities for movement by observing and trying them out



#### Teach

##### If you...



##### Your child will...

- Show your child pictures of different animals, e.g., birds, turtles, fish, and say, "Show me how you move like a fish!"
- Talk about safety rules and explain how to use playground equipment carefully
- Create a simple obstacle course with blocks and hoops

- Demonstrate her understanding of how animals move through her own creative movement
- Practice Learn to take her time and be cautious when playing at the park
- Begin to understand concepts like going over and around, in and out