

The logo for Kids Plus Pediatrics features the letters 'k', 'i', 'd', 's', and a plus sign, each in a different colored square (green, red, purple, yellow, blue). Below this, the word 'pediatrics' is written in a lowercase, sans-serif font.

pediatrics

18-Month Handout

18-MONTH DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

1. Does your child walk well?
2. Has your child started to run or climb?
3. Can your child feed herself with a spoon and use a cup?
4. Has your child started to say more than a few (4-10) words?
5. Is your child starting to understand more words when you talk?
6. Will your child follow simple commands?
7. Is your child developing more social interactions?
8. Is your child starting to learn the names of a few body parts?
9. Will your child scribble with a crayon?

FEEDING

Mealtime is an important time for your child. Encourage regular family gatherings and conversation at meals. Your child should be eating three main meals a day (breakfast, lunch, and dinner), and decreasing the amount of snacking between meals. Let your baby feed himself. He should be using a spoon and drinking from a cup by now. He should be completely off bottles and pacifiers as well.

Food likes and dislikes change frequently at this age. 18 month olds are normally picky eaters, and their food requirement is not large. It is your child's job to know how much she needs to eat; it's your job to be sure she eats the right kinds of foods. As long as your child is getting a few fruits and vegetables, some protein and grains, and some milk or breast milk, she should be doing just fine. Don't make mealtime a battle, and don't resort to giving junk food if your child is picky.

DEVELOPMENT & DISCIPLINE

Children at this age should understand language better and better, and should start learning many new words. You can help your child's vocabulary grow by reading with your child, and by showing and naming lots of things. Encourage play, both quiet and active, and discourage television viewing. "Pretend play" is a great activity at this age. Children can be taught simple household chores, such as picking up their toys, at this age. Be sure to praise your child when she behaves well; this will help encourage and promote the behavior.

Toddlers often seem out of control, or overly stubborn or demanding. At this age, children often say

“no” or refuse to do what you want them to do. Here are some good methods for helping children learn about rules and to keep them safe:

Childproof your home.

Go through every room in the house and put anything that is valuable, dangerous, or messy out of reach. Preventive childproofing will stop many possible discipline problems. Don’t expect a child not to get into things just because you say “no.”

Divert and substitute.

If a child is playing with something you don’t want him to have, replace it with another object or toy that he enjoys. This approach avoids a fight and does not place children in a situation where he’ll say “no.”

Teach and lead.

Establish a few simple safety rules and enforce them consistently. . These rules should be straightforward and easy to understand. If a rule is broken, after a short and clear explanation, punish immediately by having the child sit alone for 2 minutes. It is very important that punishment come immediately after a rule is broken.

Be consistent with discipline.

Don’t make threats you can’t or won’t carry out. If you say you’re going to do it, do it.

TOILET TRAINING

At 18 months, most toddlers are not yet showing signs that they are ready for toilet training. When toddlers report to parents that they have wet or soiled their diaper, they are beginning to be aware that they prefer dryness. This is a good sign, and you should praise your child. Toddlers are naturally curious about the use of the bathroom by other people. Let them watch you or other family members use the toilet. It’s important not to put too many demands on a child, or shame the child during toilet training.

SLEEP

Most children will do well with a short ritual (change into pajamas, brush teeth, read a book) before a regular bedtime. Nap patterns may change – some children may take as many as two naps a day, while others won’t take any at all. Occasional nighttime awakenings are normal. It’s OK to comfort a child when he has a bad nightmare or night terror, but most children can learn to put themselves back to sleep on their own without any adult intervention.

For more information, see the **Kids Plus Sleep Handout** available on our web site:

<http://www.kidspluspgh.com/upload/Kids+SleepHandout.pdf>

SCREEN TIME AND MEDIA USE

Your child should not spend a significant amount of time watching TV or playing games on a phone or tablet screen. In fact

SAFETY TIPS

Prevent Fires and Burns

- Check your smoke detector (replace the batteries if necessary) and practice a fire escape plan.
- Put plastic covers in unused electrical outlets.
- Keep hot appliances and cords out of reach.
- Keep all electrical appliances out of the bathroom.
- Don't cook with your child at your feet.
- Use the back burners on the stove, with pan handles out of reach.
- Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees F.
- Use sunscreen if your child will be outside playing. We recommend an SPF of at least 30.

Prevent Drowning

Never leave an infant or toddler alone in a bathtub. Continuously watch your child around any water, including toilets and buckets. Keep toilet seats down and store buckets upside down.

Avoid Choking and Suffocation

Keep dangling cords (drapes, electrical) out of reach.

Tie plastic bags in knots and keep them out of your child's reach. Children can get them around their necks and may choke.

Prevent Poisonings

Keep medicines, vitamins, cleaning supplies, and gardening chemicals locked away. Install safety latches on cabinets. Keep the **Poison Control Center** phone number, **412-681-6669**, on all phones.

Firearm Safety

Keep guns locked, unloaded, and ammunition stored separately.

Passive Smoke Exposure

We also caution against passive smoke exposure of any kind, including vapor from e-cigarettes. Our recommendation for the health of your baby is no smoking. The more smoke your child is exposed to, the higher her chance of developing more colds, lung infections, ear infections, allergies, asthma problems, and cancer. The best thing for your child's health is for you not to smoke at all. Even if you don't smoke near your child, chemicals from smoking stay with you on your clothes and on your body. If you must smoke, smoke outside the house, never inside or in the car. Even if your child is in another room or not in the car at the moment, she will still be exposed to lingering, harmful chemicals later.

WALK-IN HOURS

We now offer no-appointment necessary Walk-In Hours, all offices:

Weekday Mornings, 8:15 to 9:30am at Pleasant Hills and Squirrel Hill/Greenfield

Weekday Evenings, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday at Pleasant Hills

Monday & Thursday at Squirrel Hill/Greenfield

All Day, Every Week Day at Cranberry/Seven Fields

These hours are to address routine health problems such as sore throat, cold symptoms, fever, rash, and ear pain. They are not designed to evaluate chronic problems. If your child is older than 4 months and has had symptoms fewer than 3 days, you can be seen on a first-come, first-served basis.

QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

If you feel you need additional advice between regular check-ups, you can post questions to our Facebook page or telephone us during office hours. Facebook, where we answer questions sometimes as quickly as in a few minutes, is a great place to ask about general, non-pressing issues. For more detailed and pressing health issues, it's best to call. Either way, we're always happy to provide counseling and guidance. (It's both our job and our pleasure!)

When calling after office hours, your call will be answered by an answering machine. If you have a concern that can't wait for regular office hours, please leave your name, your child's name (with spelling), and your phone number, and we'll return your call usually within an hour or so. If you have an emergency that requires an ambulance or paramedics, call 911 *first*. If you have an emergency that can't wait for a call back and need to have the doctor urgently paged (such as seizures, respiratory illness with labored breathing, suspected dehydration, or similar conditions), the recorded message will give you the answering service's phone number, and they can reach the doctor on call for the emergency.



AND REMEMBER...

We have a wonderful, 24/7/365 resource for parents at our **Kids Plus Facebook Page**. Like us on Facebook, and follow along with our great Kids Plus Social Media Community!

We look forward to seeing you at your 2-Year Well Visit!