

2 Years Relationship builders

Relationship Builder activities help your child develop a positive view of themselves and learn to play with others.



Happy, Sad, Surprised

- ✓ Toddler learns the words for different emotions
- ✓ Toddler learns what different feelings look like

Stand in front of a mirror with your child or give your child a mirror to look in. Let your child see you make an expression with your face and body. You can say,

I am happy.

I am sad and crying.

I am angry.

You surprised me!

This tastes sour!

That is so funny, I can't stop laughing!

Have your child copy your expression. When you make the expression, talk about what feeling you are pretending to have. For example,

Your face tells me you are happy!

Oh, now I see you are sad.

As your child gets older, have them guess what feeling you are showing with your face and body. Then guess what feelings they are pretending to have. Put the mirror away when you're not with your child to keep your child safe.

When a real-life event happens and your child is feeling an emotion like sadness or happiness, use words to describe these feelings. For example,

I can see you are very excited to go to the park!

I can see you are upset that you are not able to go outside right now.



Speak to the future

- ✓ Toddler learns what certain qualities mean and how to show them
- ✓ Toddler learns positive actions are important

Think of a quality that you want your child to have, like being kind or helpful. When you see your child doing this action – even in the smallest way, let them know you noticed it.

For example, if you see your child being kind to another child who is sad, say,

You were such a kind friend when you helped Isaiah when he was sad.

Encourage these positive behaviors. Your child will learn them in time.

Here's What We Did Today

- ✓ Builds toddler's words
- ✓ Helps your child feel important and loved
- ✓ Builds toddler's memory

At the end of the day, talk with your child about all the things you did that day. Give as much detail as you can. If you spent a lot of time apart, try to learn a few things your child did, so you can talk about them together.

Start with the morning. Say,

This morning we woke up early. You had cereal with milk for breakfast. Mommy had coffee. Then, we got dressed. You wore shorts and a shirt. I wore a skirt and a sweater. We both wore shoes!

Continue this kind of "story-telling" for the day, ending with bedtime.

Now we are going to bed. You are wearing green pajamas. You have your favorite blanket. We did a lot today!

Let your toddler join in the talk. They may talk about activities that didn't really happen. That's okay! Your child is using their imagination!



A Story About You

- ✓ Helps toddler feel good about themselves
- ✓ Builds a positive relationship with your child

Make up a story about your child. Use their name as often as you can. Have good things happen to your child in this make-believe story. For example,

Once upon a time there was a child named deven (use your child's name). Deven loved dogs. Every time deven saw a dog, she would pet it. One day deven went on a walk with her mommy and met a new dog. This was a special dog because it could talk! The dog said, deven, you are so nice to all the dogs in the neighborhood. We are having a special party just for you tomorrow. Come to the park. We will all be there. The next day, deven went to the park and all the dogs came to play.



Important Routines

- ✓ Toddler learns self-control
- ✓ Toddler learns what to expect
- ✓ Routines help them feel safe, secure, and confident

Routines are important for your two year old! Make a habit of doing some of the same things every day. Think of the things you already do each day that are the same.

- Does your child get up about the same time each morning?
- Do you greet them the same way when you see them in the morning?
- Do you sit at the table for breakfast, lunch or dinner each day?
- Do you walk or drive the same way each morning?
- Do you read together before bedtime?
- Do you have a routine for putting on pajamas?
- Do you say goodnight and give kisses?

Talk with your child about your routine as you are doing it. If you don't have many routines, make some! They can be simple like a good morning hug, eating at the same spot, or a goodnight kiss.

