

Toddlers on the move

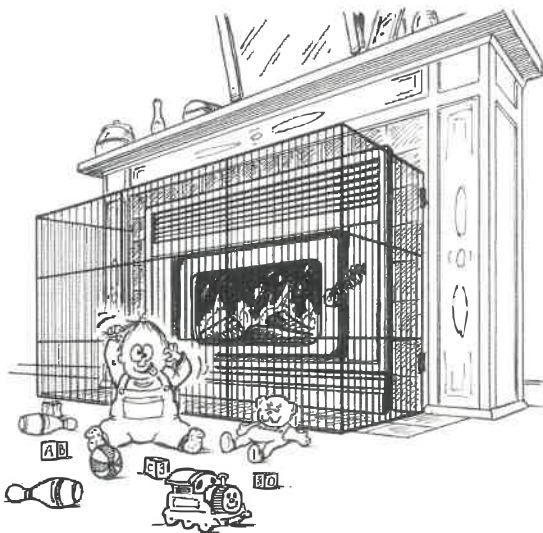
9-18 months

Skills Your Toddler is Learning

Your toddler will become increasingly mobile now and start to walk. They will also become very curious; trying to open cupboards, turn switches on and off and seek out items they know exist even if they are hidden from view. At this age your toddler will want to "test" everything by putting it in their mouth. Toddlers will imitate the actions of adults, so it is important for parents to model safe behaviour.

Common Causes of Injury

- Falling out of bed, off chairs, high chairs, prams, strollers, playground equipment and shopping trolleys, or falling down stairs and steps, and off verandahs, decks and patios. A child's body is top heavy which can cause them to over balance easily.
- Choking on food or small toy items.
- Burns caused by the toddler turning on the hot tap in the bath, pulling saucepans down from the stove, touching hot objects such as ovens and irons, and spilling hot water and drinks over themselves.
- Touching and/or drinking medicines and household chemicals including dishwasher powders and detergents, which were previously out of reach.
- Cuts from glass, knives, cans and other sharp objects.
- Door finger jams and finger injuries from treadmills and exercise bikes.
- Being hit by vehicles in driveways.



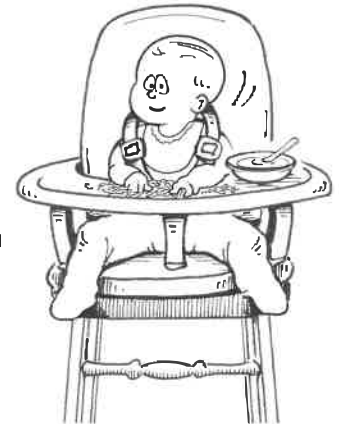
Bathing

- The bathroom hot water should be a maximum of 50°C at the outlet. Consult your licensed plumber or the Master Plumbers Association for advice. Install a temperature controlled hot water system.
- When filling the bath, run the cold water first, then hot, then cold again and mix well, to keep the tap cold to touch and the water temperature even.
- Always check the temperature of the water before bathing your child. Remember, your child will model their behaviour from you. The water should be no more than 38°C.
- Always stay with your child when bathing. When household distractions occur, like the telephone or doorbell ringing, take your child with you. Never leave an older child to supervise a toddler in the bath.



Eating

- Always harness your child in the high chair with a 5-point harness with shoulder, waist and crotch straps.
- Grate or cook hard foods. Remember that children can choke on all foods.
- Never pick up and hold your child while you are holding a hot drink. A spill can seriously burn your child.



First Aid For Burns

- The correct first aid for a burn is cooling immediately with cool running tap water for a minimum of 20 minutes. Do not use iced water, ice, butter or oil.

Sleeping

- Choose clothing that has low fire danger. Look for the LOW FIRE DANGER label on children's nightwear.
- Remove any objects that would allow your toddler to climb out of the cot.
- Always have the side of the cot raised when the child is inside.
- Remove the bib and the dummy (pacifier) cord or ribbon before putting your child down to sleep.
- Adjust the cot mattress so it is at the lowest level to prevent your child climbing and falling.

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At Play

- Avoid direct exposure to the sun between 11.00 am and 3.00pm when the risk of sun burn is the highest.
- Use sunscreen and dress your child in lightweight long sleeves and a hat.
- Create a safe shady play area separated from the pool, any water features, driveways and any other hazards. Supervise your child on play equipment and choose equipment that is appropriate for their size and level of development.
- Install playground equipment or cubbies away from hazards with hard surfaces such as concrete paths, garden edging and stakes. Place soft impact absorbing material underneath all equipment. Slides, climbing frames, horizontal and vertical ladders etc. should be less than 1 metre above the ground.
- Identify any poisonous plants that may be growing in your garden and remove them or place them in a hanging basket out of reach (www.austin.org.au/poisons).
- Place a wire net over water ornaments like fishponds.
- Lock up and keep pesticides, herbicides, mower and other fuels, solvents and paints out of the reach of children.
- Erect a pool fence with a self-closing gate latch that complies with Australian Standards. Safety barriers are required for all pools and spas with a depth greater than 30cm. Your local Council can provide advice.
- Check the pool fence and gate regularly and remove objects near the fence that might allow a toddler to climb over and access the pool.
- Empty wading pools after every use and store them upright or deflated, away from children. Be aware of potential drowning risks such as nappy buckets and buckets, bins and containers left outside that may fill with water.



- Install gates or other barriers to stop your toddler from getting onto the driveway and road. Always ensure that gates are properly closed and fastened.
- Supervise your children around cars. Driveways should not be used as play areas.
- Never allow your child to play unsupervised with animals.

Out and about

- Never leave your child alone in the car; take them with you even for small errands.
- Use a properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward-facing or forward-facing child restraint with inbuilt harness that is suitable for children up to a maximum weight of 18kgs.
- Always ensure the in-built child restraint harness is correctly fitted.
- Get your child in and out of the car on the kerb side.
- Be aware of potential risks such as unguarded pools or buckets which can be full of water.
- Watch for fingers which can become trapped in hinges of prams and strollers.
- Young children often get medicines out of handbags. Keep all handbags out of reach, including visitors' handbags.

General Tips on Safety

1. Enroll in a CPR course and if you have a pool, attach a CPR instruction card to your pool fence.
2. Check with your local council to ensure your pool fence and gate meet building regulations.
3. Establish family rules when in or around your pool.
4. Ensure your child car restraint suits the toddler's size, age and weight. Have the installation checked by a restraint fitting professional.
5. Fence off a safe play area that is shaded and separated from the driveway.
6. Buy or build a lockable cupboard to store your hazardous chemicals.
7. Always closely supervise your toddler when animals are around, especially the family pets. Dog's feeding and sleeping areas should be out of reach to toddlers.
8. Only buy toys that are suitable for the age and development of your toddler.
9. Install finger jam protective devices on doors.
10. Install stairguards, stoveguards, fire and heater guards, power point covers and furniture corner covers. Fit smoke alarms outside bedroom areas, test them each month and replace batteries annually.

For more information

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| Kidsafe Victoria | 9251 7725 |
| Maternal and Child Health Line 24 hours | 13 22 29 |
| Royal Children's Hospital Safety | 9345 5085 |
| Centre for safety products | |
| VicRoads for advice on choosing and using car restraints | 1300 360 745 |
| Consumer Affairs Victoria Toy and Nursery Safety Line | 1300 364 894 |
| Poisons Information Centre | 13 11 26 |
| St John Ambulance for First Aid courses | 1300 360 455 |
| Raising Children Network | www.raisingchildren.net.au |
| Parenting Hotline Vic | 132 289 |

www.kidsafevic.com.au

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