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## SP418-O-Healthy Children: 13-14 Months

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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PARENTS



COMMUNITIES

# Healthy Children Ready to Learn

## 13 and 14 MONTHS

Dear Parents ... CONGRATULATIONS!

You've made it through the first year. You can look back over the last year with pride.

You have many memories of the times you have shared with your baby. Remember when you thought her crying would never stop? Remember the time she giggled with glee and you felt good just enjoying her happiness?

Now you and your baby are ready to move into the exciting second year. She will be growing fast and learning a tremendous amount this next year. This year is a very important time for your child. It is —

- A time when your child moves from babyhood into childhood.
- A time for her to learn new skills such as feeding herself.

- A time when she can do a lot of things but does not always know how these actions could



hurt her or others.

- A time when her curiosity will delight as well as frustrate and tire you.

Guiding and caring for your child this next year will be a challenging and exciting experience. She'll need a lot of attention and encouragement from you. You'll need a sense of humor, some time for yourself, and lots of common sense. Knowing that your child's dramatic and changeable behavior is both normal and temporary can help you during this time.

Enjoy and celebrate your child's second year.

# Q&A

*I am new to this country and I don't speak English well. Should I talk to my son in my own language or in the little bit of English that I know?*

Children learn language best from someone who speaks it well. Since you can speak your native language well, I suggest you speak to your son in your native language. Help him learn it as well as he can. Later, when he has a chance, he can learn English from someone who speaks English well. He will learn to speak English more easily after he has become skilled in your language.

## **NUTRITION:** *Sometimes It's Hard to Give Up the Breast or Bottle*

By the time your child is a year old, you should be noticing some signs that he is losing interest in the breast or bottle. He is eating a lot of food from the table and needs less milk for growth.

**The Breast:** If your child is nursing from your breast and seems reluctant to give up the breast, don't rush to wean. Take it slowly. Remember that nursing is not just a source of food for your child, but also a source of comfort. It also makes you feel close to your child.

When you decide it is time to wean your child from the breast, start by substituting the feedings at mealtimes with cups of milk. The nap time and night feedings will probably be the most difficult. To help your baby through weaning, try the following suggestions:

- Have another family member or friend feed your child from a cup. You may need to stay out of your child's sight.
- Give your child a favorite toy or object to sleep with instead of nursing.
- Give your child plenty of hugs. That way he will know that you provide the comfort, not your breast.

**The Bottle:** If your child is drinking from a bottle, wean him as soon as possible. Be gentle, but firm. Once you decide to wean, do not give the bottle back. Substitute the bottles at mealtimes with a cup of milk. It is best to not give infants bottles when they are in their cribs or beds because drinking from a bottle at bedtime is related to increased ear infections and tooth decay. If your baby refuses to sleep without a bottle, fill the bottle with water.

**Nursing Bottle Mouth:** Sucking on the breast or a bottle with milk, juices and other drinks with sugar will promote tooth decay. The longer your baby sucks, the greater the risk of tooth decay.

In addition to promoting tooth decay, nursing or drinking from the bottle can make your child less hungry for solid foods. These solid foods have iron and other nutrients your baby needs. Cow's milk is not a good source of iron.

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*Remember, HEALTHY CHILDREN describes a typical child at each age. Each child is special and develops at his or her own pace. Perfectly normal children may do things earlier or later than those described. If you are concerned about your child's development, see your doctor or nurse.*

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# COPY PLAY

## An All-Time Favorite

You may have seen how your little one likes to copy what you do. She may try to feed you pieces of food the way you feed her. If you accept the food and show you enjoy it, she will laugh gleefully. This makes her feel important.

You will enjoy seeing your child try to copy the things you do — eating, washing, cooking, cleaning and so forth. Your little one will especially enjoy having you play games in which you copy her. When you do, you are being responsive. She likes that because it shows her that what she does is important to you. This helps build her self-confidence. Try copying her hand movements, her play activities, her body movements, or her language. She'll giggle happily and she'll be learning how her own movements look to you.

Mirror play is fun for your little one at this age. She likes to watch you in the mirror while you copy her. She'll also enjoy just watching herself in the mirror. She'll laugh at her smiling reflection and may pat or kiss it.

You can use imitation to help your little one learn. When she is learning to drink from a cup, you can drink to show her how. When you want her to pick up toys, you can set an example.

### Other Imitation Games

You can have your child build with cans, boxes or other similar objects. You can have him build

designs by imitating what you do. You can build pyramids, trains or two towers together.

### Playing Responsively

Play is the way children learn. They love to play with their parents and other caring adults. Play with them in ways that don't take away their pleasure or their opportunities to learn. Here are some simple rules of play for you:

- Watch your child without interrupting, observing his interests and his skill levels. You are learning about how he plays.
- Join in and play at the child's level, letting the child lead. If you try to teach complicated ideas too quickly, your child might be confused and disappointed.
- Ask your child to tell you about what he's doing, but don't pass judgment.
- After playing for a while at your child's pace, you might introduce a slightly more difficult stage of play. For example, if your child can put together a two-piece puzzle, try one with three pieces. If your child likes building with blocks, you might show him how to combine block play with toy animals.
- Every now and then, stop playing yourself and just watch your child play. Watch how he explores his new activity. After your child learns to do something new by himself, you can join in and suggest another new activity.

Remember, your child's attention span is very short. When he decides to stop playing, let him do so.

# WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE 13 AND



## How I Grow

- I can climb onto a low ledge or step.
- I don't like any kind of restraint; I want to explore everything.
- I poke, bang, turn and twist everything I can reach.
- I can probably stand alone and walk pretty well.
- I can probably stoop and stand up again.
- I'm very interested in small things like crumbs, bugs and pebbles.
- I spend a lot of time just staring at things; this is one way I learn.
- I may be afraid of the dark.

## How I Talk

- I am learning simple words.
- I can look in the right direction when you ask where's daddy, where's the ball, where's the kitty.
- I will respond to my name.
- I will wave bye-bye if you ask.
- I have begun to understand the names of some

people, animals and things that are important to me.

- I can let you know when I want something like a glass of milk.
- I like putting sounds together.
- I really try hard to make you understand me.
- I like to repeat words you say.
- Sometimes I like you to tell me the names of things pictured in a book, but I don't much like stories yet.

## What I Have Learned

- I am learning what you will let me do and what you won't let me do.
- I will empty anything I can get to — dresser drawers, kitchen cabinets, trash cans, laundry baskets.
- Sometimes I like to put things back in containers.
- I like to imitate your actions.
- I have learned how to get you and other adults to help me do things.
- I have not yet learned what is dangerous for me to do.
- I may scream just to show you how powerful I am.
- I have learned pat-a-cake and like to show it off to appreciative audiences.
- Sometimes, not often, I will respond to a firm "no-no."

## How I Get Along with Others

- I love to have people watch me and I like to hear them clap for me; I'm beginning to do cute things just to get your attention.

# 14 MONTHS OLD?

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- I show I love you with hugs and kisses — sometimes.
- I still like to keep my mother and father in sight when I'm exploring.
- I'm beginning to adjust to baby sitters, but I'm still shy with strangers.
- I like to have you play with me.
- Sometimes I drop things just to get you to pick them up for me.
- I don't much like playing in a room by myself.
- I may have tantrums and throw things when I'm angry.

## What I Can Do for Myself

- If you help me, I can hold a cup and drink from it.
- I like taking off my hat, shoes, socks and pants, but I can't put them back on.
- I can hold a spoon, but I probably can't eat with it yet.
- I like to feed myself with my hands and smear food on my face and everything I can reach.
- I can open and close doors.

## Play I Enjoy

- I like to push a rolling toy and put things in piles.
- I can play alone, but mostly I like to play with you: especially chase-me, catch-me, find-me games and gentle rough-housing.
- I like putting little things in big things.
- I like to listen to music and dance to it.
- I'm beginning pretend play like driving a pretend car.

## HOMEMADE TOYS THAT TEACH

Toys don't have to come from stores. Some of the best toys for your child can be those you make from things you have around the house. Each of the next 11 issues of HEALTHY CHILDREN will include a section on homemade toys that can be both fun and educational. Homemade toys are almost free, and they give you and your child a chance to create something together. Let your child help you decide how to make the toy and let him help you put it together. This will encourage his creativity and help him learn new skills. Even very young children can help by suggesting colors and choosing supplies; older toddlers can paste and color.

Your child gets other special benefits from homemade toys. He gets more toy variety because when he breaks the toy or gets tired of it, you and he can change it or toss it out and make another. He is also learning that he can make things for himself, that he doesn't need to buy all his fun from a store. This increases his sense of self-reliance while it helps him build his imagination and skill. There is no end to the kinds of toys you can make — we give you just a few examples. Watch your child and make toys that will fit his interests and skills. Remember to be careful about safety. Watch out for sharp edges, or other things that could choke or hurt your child.

# IN BRIEF

## The First 3 Years Are Crucial

Your child's first three years of life are very important to her future development. Dr. Burton White, noted author, writes, "After 17 years of research on how human beings acquire their abilities, I have become convinced that it is to the first three years of life that we should now turn most of our attention. My own studies, as well as the work of many others, have clearly indicated that the experiences of these first three years are far more important than we had previously thought. In their simple, everyday activities, infants and toddlers form the foundations of all later development." (White 1985, *The First Three Years of Life*, preface to the first edition)

The way your child develops during these important first three years depends to a large extent on how you care for him and encourage his development. Parents are children's first and most important teachers.

## Be Good to Yourself

Raising a toddler can make you feel really uptight sometimes. Your child is becoming more and more of a challenge every month. It's hard to be the one who is always responsible. Your body may get tense and you may feel like screaming or hitting something. When you think you just can't stand it one more second, STOP. Take "time out." Here are a few "time out" relaxers to try:

- Close your eyes and take long, deep breaths.
- Make sure your child is in a safe place, then close yourself in a room for just a few minutes until you calm down.
- Tell those around you that you've reached your limit and you need to end the argument right now.

- Ask a friend or relative to watch your child for a short time.
- Call the Parent Helpline at 1-800-356-6767. Keep it posted near your telephone with other emergency numbers.

When you take time out to handle your stress, you're doing yourself **AND** your baby a big, big favor. Besides saving your child from painful words and actions, you'll be showing your child a good way to handle stress.

## Television and Toddlers

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under the age of 2 years not watch any television. Instead, they suggest that you talk, play, sing and read with your child.

Toddlers enjoy learning by being active and exploring. Children who spend lots of time watching television are not as active as children who do not watch TV. Researchers found that children who watch lots of TV are more likely to be overweight than children who watch little or no television.

Infants and toddlers learn to talk and listen when someone responds to their sounds and movements. Characters on TV cannot respond to the child's attempts to communicate. Children who watch lots of television when they are young tend to do more poorly in school than children whose TV time is limited. However, older toddlers and preschoolers who watch educational TV can learn new words. This helps them be more ready for school than those who watch non-educational programs.

When you need time to do things around the house, you can give your toddler books or safe toys to play with while you work. Let him or her watch you work and talk about what you are doing. You can sing fun songs while you work.

Here are some ways to reduce the amount of TV your child watches:

- Don't put a TV in his or her room;
- Limit the amount and type of shows your child watches;

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- When your child does view TV, watch with him or her, and talk about what you see.

### Watch Out for Poisoning!

Did you know that children between the ages of 10 and 20 months are far more likely than children of other ages to be victims of accidental poisoning? Poisoning most often happens when children have learned to crawl. They get into things and are curious about the world around them, but they have not yet learned what kinds of things are dangerous. Many things can poison children, including:

- Garden and house plants.
- Colognes, perfumes, hair products and cosmetics.
- Tobacco, food flavorings and spices.
- Gasoline, insecticides, roach sprays and powders.

Many kinds of garden and house plants are poisonous if eaten; oleander and castor bean are especially dangerous and can be fatal. Some plants cause vomiting, others cause changes in children's heart rate, body temperature or bowel movements. Know the plants in and around your house. Be careful of plants that have hairy leaves, milky juice or sap, or thorny leaves, fruit or seed pods.

Young children explore by putting things in their mouths. To young children, colored liquid looks like juice and white powder looks like

## GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Do you know that by the time your baby is a year old, you have done many things already to help him behave well? Babies who are loved, protected and comforted during their first year feel safe and trusting. They have a close, loving bond with their parents. During their second year they will want to follow their parents' simple requests. They will also come to imitate their parents' caring behavior. As a result, they will be more likely to accept limits, guidance and discipline during the sometimes rocky months ahead.

Remember that discipline means helping children grow into responsible adults. Discipline may be the most difficult and the most important part of parenting. It is one way to show love.

Until his first birthday, you limited your baby's activities by distracting him, holding him and putting harmful and breakable things out of his reach. Within the next couple of months, he will probably begin to understand "no" but don't expect him to respond to it very often yet. You can begin now using words to guide and limit him. Set a few reasonable rules and stick to them. If he disobeys, stop him, tell him in simple words the rules again and why you have them. Do not punish him. He will learn more quickly and easily with teaching and guidance than he will with criticism and punishment. Be patient with him now; it will pay off later.

sugar. Your children may eat cigarettes or cigarette butts they find in ashtrays or purses. Your curious explorer needs to be protected from these things.

Give your house regular safety checks. Get down to floor level to inspect your house. You may be surprised at the interesting things you can see from your child's eye level. Make sure everything dangerous is locked up or out of reach. Cover electrical outlets. As toddlers learn to climb, they can open cabinets that they could not reach before.

Keep the telephone number for the poison control center (1-800-222-1222) by your phone. Also keep your doctor's number and other emergency numbers posted close to your telephone. If your child eats any part of a plant or other poisonous substance, call the emergency number. Have syrup of ipecac on hand, but don't use it unless the doctor or poison control center tells you to use it. If your child must have emergency treatment, bring a piece of the substance your child has swallowed or the container to the doctor or hospital.



If you have any questions or comments, please contact your Extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent at your county UT Extension office.



*HEALTHY CHILDREN READY TO LEARN* was originally developed as the **Parent Express** series by the University of California Cooperative Extension Service. The material was adapted for use in Tennessee by Janie Burney, Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences and others. Contact Denise Brandon, Associate Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences, for information about this publication.

COMING  
NEXT

In ... HEALTHY CHILDREN  
READY TO LEARN

- Your Curious Child
- Toddler Talk

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## RESOURCES

### From a Bookstore or Library:

*Raising a Happy Unspoiled Child* by Burton L. White, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1994.

*Touchpoints: Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development* by T. Berry Brazelton, Perseus Publishing, New York, 1992.

*What to Expect the First Year*, by Arlene Eisenberg, et al., Workman Publishing Co., New York, 1989.

*Child of Mine: Feeding With Love and Good Sense* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) by Elyn Satter, Bull Publishing Co., Palo Alto, CA, 2000.

*Your Child's Weight: Helping Without Harming* by Elyn Satter, Kelsey Press, Madison, WI, 2005.

### From the Extension Office:

*What You Should Know About Lead and Children*, SP421, by Janie Burney, University of Tennessee Extension, 2004

*Learning About Young Children*, PB 1412, by Anna Mae Kobbe, University of Tennessee Extension, 1993.

*Child Guidance Techniques*, PB1161, by Denise J. Brandon and Clint E. Cummings, University of Tennessee Extension, 2002.

### From the Internet:

[www.utextension.utk.edu](http://www.utextension.utk.edu)

[fcs.tennessee.edu](http://fcs.tennessee.edu)

[www.cyfernet.org](http://www.cyfernet.org)

[www.civitas.org](http://www.civitas.org)

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

[www.k-12.state.tn.us/smart/index.htm](http://www.k-12.state.tn.us/smart/index.htm)

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