

# HEALTH TRACKS

A Newsletter From Local Public Health to Improve the Health of Families in NW Minnesota



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

AGE - 18 MONTHS



## GREETINGS!

Hello. Your child is now almost 18 months old. She will soon want to be making most of her own decisions. Her favorite way of testing is to say "no!" This is normal and important for her development. Being flexible will help you deal with this stage.

## YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH CARE



### Well-Child Check-Ups:

Now is time for you to schedule an appointment for your child's 18 month health check-up.

If your child is behind or even if she hasn't received any shots, they can be given (caught up) or started at any time. Don't wait any longer to protect her from these dangerous, preventable diseases. If your child has received all their vaccines you can breathe a sigh of relief and pat yourself on the back for a job well done. The only thing your child should need is their annual flu vaccine.

## ACTIVITY TIP

An easy way for your toddler to learn the names of her clothes is to lay them out before dressing. Then ask her to hand you a shirt, pants, shoes, etc. You can talk about colors and patterns at this time.

## YOUR GROWING CHILD

In the next few months, your child might do the following:

- ✿ Try putting on own shoes
- ✿ Feed self with spoon
- ✿ Point to things when named
- ✿ Build a tower of 3-6 blocks
- ✿ Listen to short stories
- ✿ Turn page of a book
- ✿ Kick and throw a ball
- ✿ Follow simple instructions
- ✿ Scribble
- ✿ Premature infants develop more slowly
- ✿ Please call me if you have any questions or concerns

## BITING

Toddlers often become angry and resort to biting because of frustration. Biting is sometimes noted with teething. If biting occurs with your child:

- ★ Watch him/her closely
- ★ Set firm consistent limits
- ★ Tell him/her firmly that biting is not OK
- ★ Never bite your child back!
- ★ Remove him/her from other child
- ★ Comfort the bitten child

### WAYS TO PREVENT BITING:

- ★ Give him/her a good example with your own behavior
- ★ Watch for situations that upset your child
- ★ Make sure caregivers react consistently with your response

## FEEDING YOUR CHILD

Your child will enjoy feeding herself.

Be sure to cut foods into small pieces to prevent choking.

She needs at least 2 cups of milk, 2 1/2 servings of bread or cereals, 2 ounces of meat, 1 cup of vegetables and 1 cup of fruit each day.

If you have questions or concerns about feeding, contact me or WIC.

If you haven't discontinued the bottle, only give her water at night and nap time. Try to wean your child from the bottle. The older she gets, the harder it will be. All children should be off the bottle by this age.

## Safety Check

To keep your child safe:



- ✓ Use an approved toddler car safety seat every time your child is in the car. Remember to check the height and weight of the child periodically.
- ✓ Always check the temperature of bath water with your elbow.
- ✓ Never leave her, even for a few seconds, in or near any body of water without supervision.
- ✓ Always keep the sides of your child's crib up.
- ✓ Do not offer hard pieces of food or candy.
- ✓ Always keep small objects, such as buttons, wheels, toy parts away from your child.
- ✓ Check toys for small parts that might come off and cause choking.
- ✓ Have poison control number by the phone (1-800-222-1222).
- ✓ Watch where you leave chairs because she may like to climb.
- ✓ Don't let her play with electrical cords or outlets - keep outlets covered.
- ✓ Keep all household chemicals out of reach
- ✓ Keep pot handles turned inward on the stove. She might grab them.
- ✓ Use at least a #15 sunscreen

### ACTIVITY TIP

Toddlers love to play in water. Put sponges or squeeze bottles along with dump and pour toys in the bath tub. Remember to always be with her when she is in the tub.

## POSITIVE PARENTING

Help your child develop a sense of independence.

- ★ Tolerate messy faces, bibs, tables and floors.
- ★ Do not expect her to share toys yet.
- ★ Read at bedtime or any time of the day.
- ★ Encourage "pretend play".
- ★ Praise her when she is behaving well.
- ★ Allow her to make some choices.
- ★ She might want to use a toy, teddy bear, or blanket for security.
- ★ Don't rush to toilet train. Our next newsletter will discuss toilet training in detail.



I hope you are enjoying these letters. and Don't forget to let me know any change of name, address or phone number so I can keep in contact with you. Do feel free to contact me for more information.

If you have friends who are pregnant or have young infants, please tell them to join our program by calling me.



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218-281-3385  
[www.pcphealth.org](http://www.pcphealth.org)

*Codi Jo Lehmann, RN, PHN*  
Email: [codi.lehmann@co.polk.mn.us](mailto:codi.lehmann@co.polk.mn.us)



**Public Health**  
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**Polk County Public Health**  
**PO Box 403**  
**Crookston, MN 56716**

*Address Service Requested*

**TO:**

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