

# TODDLERS ON THE MOVE

## 9-18 MONTHS

### SKILLS YOUR TODDLER IS LEARNING

Your toddler will become increasingly mobile 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.

### BATHING TIPS

- Have the hot water delivery temperature in your bathroom set to a maximum of 50°C. Consult a licensed plumber or the Master Plumbers Association for advice.
- 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. 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 TIPS

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

### COMMON CAUSES OF INJURY

- Falling out of bed, off high chairs, prams, strollers, playground equipment and shopping trolleys, or falling down stairs and off verandas, decks and patios.
- Choking on food or small items such as toys.
- 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.
- Accessing medicines and household chemicals including dishwasher powders and detergents.
- 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.

### SLEEPING TIPS

- Choose clothing that has the low fire danger label.
- Remove bibs and dummy ribbons 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

- Use sunscreen and dress your child in lightweight long sleeves and a hat.
- Create a safe, shady play area separated from hazards including the pool, any water features and driveways. Supervise your child on play equipment and choose equipment that is appropriate for their age 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 such as tanbark underneath all equipment. Slides, climbing frames, horizontal and vertical ladders etc. should be less than one 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.
- Place a net or grate over water ornaments like fishponds
- Keep pesticides, herbicides, mower and other fuels, solvents and paints out of reach of children.
- Safety barriers are required for all pools and spas with a depth greater than 30cm.
- Regularly check and maintain your pool barrier and gate to ensure they are in proper working order.
- Empty wading pools after every use and store them upright or deflated, away from children. Be aware of other potential drowning hazards including nappy buckets, bins, baths and containers left outside that may fill with water.
- Supervise your children around cars. Driveways should not be used as play areas.
- Never allow your child to play unsupervised with animals.

### GENERAL TIPS ON SAFETY

1. Ensure you have current CPR/first aid skills
2. Ensure you adjust your child's car restraint to fit them as they grow. Have the installation checked by a restraint fitting professional.
3. Ensure that poisons including cleaning products, pesticides and medications are stored out of reach, preferably in a cupboard with a child resistant lock that is 1.5m above the floor.
4. Always closely supervise your toddler when animals are around, especially the family pets.
5. Only buy toys that are suitable to for the age and development of your toddler.
6. Install finger jam protective devices on doors.
7. Install stair guards, stove guards, 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.

### OUT AND ABOUT

- Never leave your child alone in the car; take them with you even for small errands.
- Use an approved, properly fastened and adjusted rearward-facing or forward-facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness that is correctly fitted to the vehicle. Your baby should remain in a rear-facing restraint until they no longer fit their restraint's size limit. Restraints with extended rear facing capabilities (rear facing until approximately 2-3 years of age) are available to purchase and use in Australia.
- Place your child in and out of the car on the kerb side.
- Watch for fingers that can become trapped in hinges of prams and strollers.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kidsafe Victoria

9036 2306

Poisons Information Centre

13 11 26

Maternal and Child Health Line

13 22 29

Raising Children Network

Consumer Affairs Victoria Toy  
and Nursery Safety Line

1300 364 894

[www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)

Parenting Hotline Vic

132 289

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