

What are you looking forward to during your child's time of being two?

Bearable Twos by John Bush



Splash! Parent Pages



YOUR DEVELOPING CHILD

Welcome to the Twos!

Well, here it is . . . the stage everyone has warned you about: the “terrible twos.” While the name is an apt description of certain moments of this age, it doesn’t tell the whole story. This is the kickoff to some seriously intense brain development, shaping everything from a child’s verbal skills to their sense of identity and security. That makes for some frustrating challenges, to be sure. But amazing changes that can be a delight to witness are also happening—increasing independence, a budding personality, and growth in language development, to name a few. As you begin this new year in your toddler’s life, practice seeing the flip side of the tantrums, stubbornness, and boundary testing:

- When your child throws a tantrum, take a deep breath and help them build their emotional intelligence. Name the emotions you see. Offer strategies like finding a quiet place to calm down or using words to express feelings.
- When your child insists on getting dressed on their own, remember that they’re proud of their ability to put on clothes. The physical coordination involved is a big deal! Give praise as you gently offer help.
- When your child shouts, “Mine!” and refuses to share, try to see it as one way they’re beginning to express a newfound sense of self. Encourage sharing as a general rule, but allow your little one to have some say in which toys are shareable.

Loving, guiding, and teaching your child through the difficult moments of the coming year will help you both experience this huge developmental leap as the wonder-filled stage it is.

GROWING IN FAITH

Getting There

The year ahead will be filled with moments of tremendous joy—and change—for you and your two-year-old. As toddlers begin to assert their independence and explore boundaries, it’s essential that caregivers offer patience, flexibility, and understanding as they help young children navigate this time of intense growth.

This is a season that also holds tremendous potential for faith formation. Your toddler is developing a sense of self-worth: Are they loved even when they break the rules? Can they show you their feelings of anger or sadness and still be accepted? The love, care, and compassion parents show their fussy, challenging toddlers tell them a lot about the way God loves them. That doesn’t mean you will derail your child’s faith if you lose your cool or show your frustration. But it does mean thinking carefully about how you will approach this season of toddlerhood. So take some time now to develop your strategy for guiding your two-year-old through the highs and lows of the year to come. Talk to friends you trust, read up on effective discipline, and keep forging the bonds of love and trust that are at the heart of the parent/child relationship.

We are all God’s imperfect children, yet we are always met with God’s perfect and unfailing love. This is the season to help your child understand that you—and God—will love and care for them, no matter what.

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

—Philippians 1:6

SHINOW 25 MONTHS

Parent Pages Birth to Three Faith Formation **Splash!**





Out of the ground the LORD God

made to grow every tree

that is pleasant

to the sight and

good for food.

—Genesis 2:9

PLAY

I CAN BE ANYTHING!

Pretending to be someone else is fun! Use clothing, scarves, hats, and other accessories to play dress-up. Pretend to be different people, characters, or animals together. Invite your child to be as creative as possible, imagining who and what you will be, where you will go, and what you will do there. Pretend to go to the store or the beach, imagine that you are animals in the zoo or the woods, or make believe you are a favorite character from a book you enjoy reading together. Pretend play is a great starting point for young creativity!

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

BECOMING FRIENDS

Brothers and sisters play a major role in toddlers' lives. Because siblings share the same adults and environments, they may feel the need to compete for affection and attention. Doing things together such as sharing family meals, attending worship, or reading books encourages siblings to enjoy each other's company. If your little one does not have siblings but does have cousins, find ways to start building these family friendships through fun, cooperative activities.

MEALTIME

FAMILY PLACEMATS

Make every mealtime special by guiding your child to make placemats for the table. Cut pieces of poster board to 12" x 18" (30 cm x 45 cm). Then try one or more of these ideas, laminating the finished product with clear adhesive paper for easy cleaning after mealtime messes.

- Your child can draw a family member or glue a picture of each person onto the placemat. Print each person's name by their picture.
- Trace your child's handprints on the placemat for your child to color with crayons or markers.
- Help your child trace around a dinner plate, cup, and silverware. These images can guide future table-setting efforts.

PRAY

A MUSICAL PRAYER

Prayers don't have to be said while seated with folded hands. A prayer can be joyfully expressed with music and dancing! Explore this new prayer practice with your toddler. Find a lively song of praise or some instrumental dance music. Move together to the music as you call out, "Thank you for your creation, God!" and then name a part of creation. Offer this musical prayer during the length of the song. Finish with a big hug and an "Amen!"

WORSHIP

ONE BIG FAMILY

In a world that segregates people by ages, time spent together in Christian fellowship during worship is an amazing thing! Because children are naturally inquisitive, they want to know what is going on around them. And toddlers rarely hesitate during worship to ask their questions or make their comments! Prepare your child ahead of time with explanations of what will take place. Involve them as much as possible in the worship experience. Talk about your church family throughout the week. Not only will your child benefit, but those around you will experience what Jesus meant when he said that children reflect God's kingdom.

BIBLE

GOD'S WORLD,
MY WORLD

Genesis 2:4b-23

Before reading the Creation story together from your child's favorite story Bible, draw or download pictures of people, a tree or two, and some animals, or cut out magazine or coloring book pictures. Glue each figure to cardstock and add texture with fake fur, feathers, leaves, and other touchable items. Attach each to a small piece of flexible magnetic strip. Sit in front of your refrigerator and spread the figures in a circle on the floor. Then read the story and invite your child to place the figures on the fridge as they are mentioned. Leave the figures on the fridge for more play, or carry them with you on a baking sheet for on-the-go storytelling.