

# 15 Month Visit

## Talking and Feeling

- ★ Try to give choices. Allow your child to choose between 2 good options, such as a banana or an apple, or 2 favorite books.
- ★ Know that it is normal for your child to be anxious around new people. Be sure to comfort your child.
- ★ Some children skip separation anxiety as infants and see it ramp up around 15-18 months. To help:
  - Create *quick* good-bye rituals. If you linger, the transition time & anxiety will too!
  - Be consistent. Try to do the same drop-off with the same ritual at the same time.
  - Give your child your full attention when separating, giving loving affection, before saying your quick good-bye.
  - Keep your promises! When you say you are leaving and will return later, stick to it. Try not to “pop-in” to visit before you’re back for good, as it will extend the separation anxiety and restart the transition (and likely tears when you leave a second time!).
  - Be specific, child style – give details of your return in terms your child can understand in the 15–18-month age range. “I’ll be back after nap time and before snack time!”
- ★ Take time for yourself and your partner.
- ★ Get support from other parents.
- ★ Show your child how to use words:
  - Use simple, clear phrases to talk to your child. Instead of using “baby talk” and high-pitched voices, speak slowly and clearly.
  - Teach correct names of objects and body parts (“toes” instead of “piggies”). You’ll help them learn to talk with less confusion!
  - Use simple words to talk about a book’s pictures when reading.
  - Use words to describe your child’s feelings.
  - Describe your child’s gestures with words.

## Tantrums and Discipline

- ★ Use distraction to stop tantrums when you can.
- ★ Praise your child when they do what you ask them to do and for what they can accomplish.
- ★ Set limits and use discipline to teach and protect your child, not to punish them.
- ★ Limit the need to say “No!” by making your home and yard safe for play.
- ★ Teach your child not to hit, bite, or hurt other people.
- ★ Be a role model.

## A Good Night's Sleep

- ★ Put your child to bed at the same time every night. Early is better.
- ★ Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- ★ Have a simple bedtime routine that includes a book. When reading with your 15–17-month-old, you can:
  - Name and say a few words about the pictures your child is pointing to or looking at.

- Imitate the sound or words your child says while looking at a picture. Then add a few more words like: *“Yes, eyes. The girl has pretty eyes.”*
  - Make up games, while looking at pictures, like: *“Where’s the girl’s nose? Where’s Mommy’s nose? Where’s your nose?”*
  - Name and then demonstrate actions in a book, such as *“Laughing. Look at the boy laughing.”* Then laugh with your child!
- ★ Try to tuck in your child when they are drowsy but still awake.
  - ★ Don’t give your child a bottle in bed.
  - ★ Don’t put a TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone in your child’s bedroom.
  - ★ Avoid giving your child enjoyable attention if they wake during the night. Use words to reassure and give a blanket or toy to hold for comfort.

### Healthy Teeth

- ★ Take your child for a first dental visit if you have not done so.
- ★ Brush your child’s teeth twice each day with a small smear of fluoridated toothpaste, no more than a grain of rice.
- ★ Wean your child from the bottle.

### Safety

- ★ Make sure your child’s car safety seat is rear facing until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the car safety seat’s manufacturer. In most cases, this will be well past the second birthday.
- ★ Never put your child in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger airbag. The back seat is the safest.
- ★ Everyone should wear a seat belt in the car.
- ★ Keep poisons, medicines, and lawn and cleaning supplies in locked cabinets, out of your child’s sight and reach.
- ★ Put the Poison Help number into all phones, including cell phones. Call if you are worried your child has swallowed something harmful. Don’t make your child vomit.
- ★ Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Install operable window guards on windows at the second story and higher. Keep furniture away from windows.
- ★ Turn pan handles toward the back of the stove.
- ★ Don’t leave hot liquids on tables with tablecloths that your child might pull down.
- ★ When you go out, put a hat on your child, have them wear sun protection clothing, and apply sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher on their exposed skin. Limit time outside when the sun is strongest (11:00 am–3:00 pm).
- ★ Have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on every floor. Test them every month and change the batteries every year. Make a family escape plan in case of fire in your home.

### What vaccines will be due at the 18 Month Visit?

- ★ Hepatitis A (dose 2 of 2)

### Helpful Resources:

- Poison Help Line: 800-222-1222
- Information About Car Safety Seats: [www.nhtsa.gov/parents-and-caregivers](http://www.nhtsa.gov/parents-and-caregivers)
- Toll-free Auto Safety Hotline: 888-327-4236

**Sources:**

<https://brightfutures.aap.org>

<https://healthychildren.org>