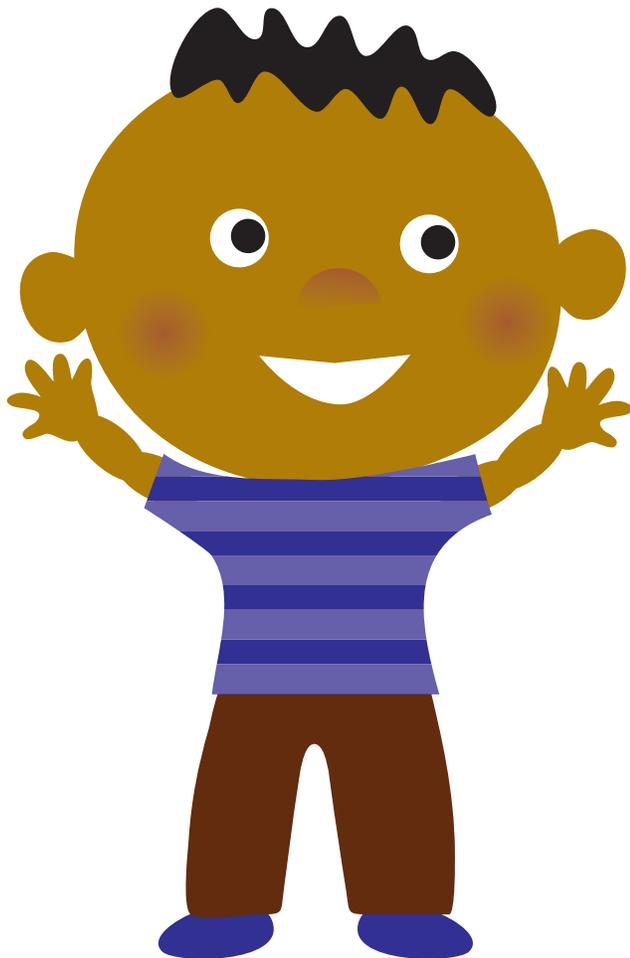




**School Readiness Program**  
Provided by the WIC Program and First 5 LA

## Here I Come!



**I LOVE TO TALK!** Most children say 1 to 50 words by the time they are 17 months old. Your child probably understands 75 to 300 words.

**I CAN WALK!** Your 15-17 month-old is walking more smoothly. Children first walk with their legs wide apart and arms spread to help them balance. With more practice, children walk with their legs closer together and arms closer to their bodies. Some 15-17 month-old children can **run**.

**I AM WATCHING YOU!** Your child watches and copies you. You can help your child learn new skills and accept new experiences. **HINT: Put down your phone, your child is watching everything you do.**

**TANTRUMS!** Many children have had a screaming tantrum by now. Tantrums are part of normal development, but that doesn't make them easy for parents. Tantrums show that your child wants to be independent.

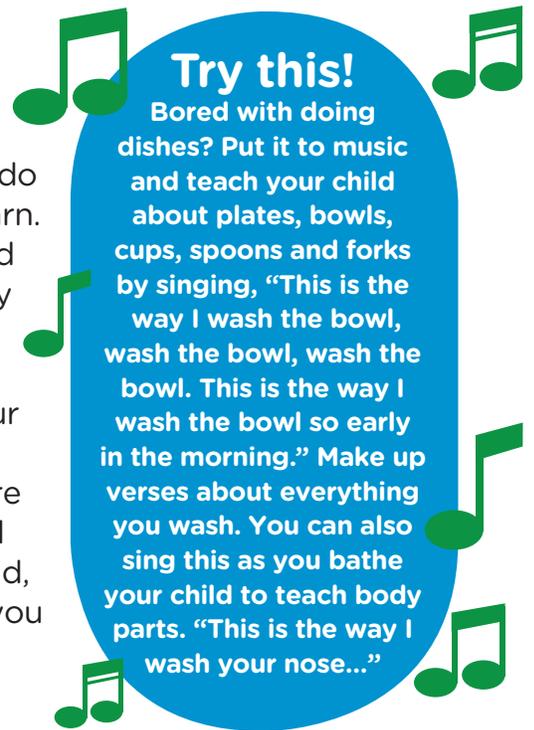
**LEARNING takes time.** Your child will learn right from wrong with your help. This kind of teaching is called **discipline**. There are many ways to help your child learn to behave appropriately.

**READING is even more fun.** Your child can enjoy books. Talk to your child about what is in the pictures. "Where's the doggy? Point to the tree! Where are the shoes?" Ask your child to point to the pictures. The more you read and talk with your child, the easier it will be for your child to learn to talk and read and be ready for Kindergarten.



**QUESTION: What is my 15-17 month-old learning about TALKING? My child says a lot of words in baby talk. How can I teach my child how to say the words correctly?**

**ANSWER:** When children are first learning to talk, the words do not sound like adult words. Some sounds are very hard to learn. Even many five-year-olds still have trouble with the “R” sound and “L” sound. Usually, mothers and fathers understand many of the words that their children say, even if the words sound very different from how an adult says them. You can repeat the word to your child, saying it correctly. For example, if your child says, “Dah,” for DOG, you can say, “Yes, that’s a DOG!” This way, you are teaching your child two things. First, you are teaching your child that you understand. The more your child feels understood, the more your child will want to talk. Second, you are showing your child the right way to say the word. If you tell your child that the word is wrong, your child may be less willing to try new words.



I ♥ You = Te Quiero



**QUESTION: What language should I speak to my child?**

**ANSWER:** Learning more than one language will help your child throughout their life. If you speak more than one language, talk to your child in all of the languages you know. Or, you can speak one language and someone else can speak another language. Also, sing to your child in all of the languages you know. Talk, talk, talk!

**Try this!**

Dressing can be a lot of fun. As you dress your child, ask about the parts of the body that are hidden. When you put pants on your child, you can ask, “Where’s your foot? Oh! There it is.” Putting a shirt over your child’s head is more fun if you are saying, “Where’s your hair? I see hair! Eyes? I see eyes! Nose, where are you? I see a nose!”

**QUESTION: What if my child is not talking yet?**

**ANSWER:** Some children do not start talking until they are 18 months old. If your child is not talking yet, watch and see how your child responds to you. When you smile, does your child smile back at you? Does your child give you a toy, then wait for you to give it back? Does your child hear you come into the room? If your child seems not to respond to you, ask your doctor. If your child needs extra help, it is best to get the help as early as possible. There are special programs for helping children, even little children.

**QUESTION: What are 15-17 month-olds’ MOVEMENTS like?**

**ANSWER:** Your 15-17 month-old is walking more smoothly. Some 15-17 month-olds can walk backwards. Some 15-17 month-olds can **run!** Your child may want to practice going up and down stairs. Even though your child may seem to have better balance now, make sure that your child can’t get to the stairs without an adult close by.



## Try this!

You can tell how many months a child has been walking. A child who is learning to walk stands with his or her legs wide apart and arms spread out for balance. A child who can carry a toy while walking has been walking for at least one month. A child who can look up while walking has been walking for at least two or three months.

Your 15-17 month-old is getting better at using fingers and hands too. Children this age love to eat small pieces of food that are easy to pick up with their fingers. Pieces of cheese, peas, and cereal are food and toys. Children like to fit objects inside of each other (stacking cups, shape-sorters). Scribbling with a crayon helps a child's fingers grow strong. Scribbles will not look like letters, but scribbling will help your child write when they go to Kindergarten!

## This dough is fun!

Stir together:

1/4 cup salt

1 cup flour

1/4 cup water

Have your child mix the flour and salt in a bowl then add water. Knead and squeeze the dough to make a clay consistency. You may need to add more water.

**Ideas:** Divide into sections, then knead in food coloring (liquid or paste). Kids love making the white play dough change colors. Use unsweetened Kool-Aid for color and scent. Add glitter for sparkly playdough.

**Remember:** Children less than one year of age should not play with this dough. Always be nearby when your child plays with the dough to make sure they don't choke on small pieces.

## Try this!

This is a great age to give your child playdough to play with. You can make your own. Then play with your child. Show your child how to make snakes and balls. Show your child how to push a ball flat into a pancake or tortilla. Let your child cut it with cookie cutters or cups.



## Try this!

Your child is watching you. When you are at your child's doctor appointment, ask the doctor to pretend to check you first. Show your child that it does not hurt. Then your child may want a turn.

**QUESTION: My child throws screaming TANTRUMS in stores. What can I do?**

**ANSWER:** Tantrums are part of normal development, but they are not a fun part of parenting. First, try to prevent the tantrum by making sure that your child is not too hungry or tired when you go shopping. 15-17 month-olds are not patient. They want things NOW. Second, you can pick up your child to try to comfort him. Third, you can take your child out of the store to give your child a chance to calm down.

**QUESTION: My child gets into everything! Sometimes I feel like all I do is say, “NO” all day long. How can I teach my child right from wrong?**

**ANSWER:** Your child is not trying to disobey. Your child is not trying to make you mad. Your child will learn, but it takes a long time. Here are some ideas to help your child learn. Try to say “yes” as much as possible, and save “no” for safety. Saying, “no” tells your child to stop, but does not tell your child what to do instead.

**Make** a safe play area where your child can play safely. Put things that your child can play with in that area.

**Ignore.** Sometimes your child wants your attention and will stop the behavior if you ignore it. Of course, you cannot ignore dangerous behavior.

**Distract** your child. When your child reaches for something breakable, give your child something safe to play with.

**Move** your child away from things you don’t want touched. Tell your child why you are moving her. You can combine these ways of helping your child learn. For example, say, “Please don’t touch the stove. The stove is hot. You can play here.”

**QUESTION: What are the best TOYS for 15-17 month-old children?**

**ANSWER: You** are more important than any toy. **READ** to your child every day. **Play** on the floor with your child every day. **Cuddle** your child every day. **Talk** and **sing** in every language you know!

Your child will enjoy fitting things into each other. Stacking cups, shape-sorters, and simple puzzles are great toys for this age. Crayons, playdough, finger paints, and other art supplies give your child a chance to practice new finger skills and see how they can create!



Screen time is not recommended for children under 18 months. Any media use should be very limited and only when an adult is standing by to co-view, talk, and teach. Remember, screen time includes TV, cell phones, computers, tablets, and other hand-held games and devices.



## Safety Corner



Children can get hurt in the blink of an eye. The first step in providing a safe environment for your child is to prepare your home properly.

### Toddler safety in the KITCHEN:

- Place safety latches on all doors and cabinets, especially where cleaning products and medicines are located.
- Use the back burners on the stove and turn all pot handles towards the back of the stove.
- Never hold or pass hot liquids over your child.

### Toddler safety in the BEDROOM:

- If possible, don’t place the crib near or under a window. If the crib is placed near the window, be sure that all windows are securely latched or use a window guard. A toddler can climb out of the crib, and through the window.
- Remove curtains and blind cords from around the crib. These can lead to strangulation deaths.



#### First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a child advocacy and grant making organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in programs for improving the lives of children from prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA champions health, education and safety causes concerning young children and families. For more information, please visit [www.first5la.org](http://www.first5la.org).



#### The WIC Program

WIC provides nutrition and health education services, breastfeeding support, referrals to community agencies and healthy food to eligible women, infants and children under age five. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For more information, please visit [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov).