

Growth and development of a 2-year-old child

2-vuotiaan lapsen kasvu ja kehitys (englanti)



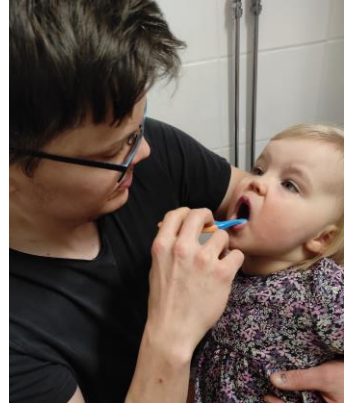
A 2-year-old begins to express their own opinions and will strongly. The child enjoys playing independently but occasionally seeks comfort and security from a parent. Their speech is developing, and their independence is increasing.

Eating and oral health

The regular mealtimes and a varied diet help the child stay energized and active throughout the day, and supports the child's health.

The child does not eat a lot at once and the appetite can vary. Offer food regularly, 4 to 5 meals a day. Shared family mealtimes support the development of healthy eating habits. The child follows the example of other family members.

Brushing teeth with children's fluoride toothpaste in the morning and evening is an important routine. The child can be given a xylitol lozenge after every meal.



Offer food regularly, 4 to 5 meals a day.

Brush the child's teeth every morning and evening with the children's fluoride toothpaste.

Give the xylitol lozenge after every meal.

Sleeping

A 2-year-old usually takes one nap a day. Every child has different sleep needs. It's common for naps to become shorter. Closer to the age of three, naps may stop altogether. In daycare, children either nap or have a short rest in the middle of the day.

Familiar and consistent bedtime routines help the child to calm down and fall asleep. You can help the child practice falling asleep by themselves. Some children still need the support of a parent to fall asleep.

Toilet skills

Children learn to stay dry at their own individual pace. Some children learn to stay dry between the ages of 2 and 3, while others may still need diapers for a longer time. It's helpful to practice using the potty or toilet with the child, as well as washing hands. A child may not always recognize the need to go to the toilet, so patience is important. Praise and encourage your child for every success – even small steps matter.



Physical activity and hand skills

A 2-year-old's movement skills develop rapidly. Some of the children bravely practice new skills, while others are more cautious. Motor skills improve in a variety of environments, both indoors and outdoors. For example, playgrounds and forest areas are good places to practice motor skills.

A child's fine motor skills are developing. These skills can be practiced, for example, by building with blocks and doing puzzles.



Own will and setting boundaries

Two-year-olds often express their own will strongly. For some children, this shows as intense emotions and testing boundaries, while for others, the phase may pass more calmly. At this age, children still find it difficult to express their feelings with words. As their imagination develops, they may also experience various fears. It is important for parents to understand their child's emotions. Feelings can be named together with the child.

Denial and restrictions can cause frustration in a child. It is important for parents to maintain boundaries calmly and firmly. A child does not yet fully understand what they are able to do or what they are allowed to do. Parents must ensure the child's safety and, when necessary, say no and set limits.



Speech development

Every child learns to speak at their own pace. Most two-year-old children speak several words. Many two-year-olds speak in 2- to 3-word sentences.

A child learns by asking questions. Reading books, rhymes, and music support word learning and speech development.

When a child is exposed to multiple languages, their speech may develop a bit more slowly. It's important for parents to speak their own native language to the child. This helps the child learn other languages more easily.

Screen time is recommended to be limited to a maximum of one hour per day for a 2-year-old. It is important that the child watches only programs and videos that are right for their age. Excessive screen time may lead to restlessness, irritability, and difficulty concentrating. It can also disrupt the child's sleep.



Speech develops at an individual pace for each child.

Speak your own native language to your child.

Reading books, rhymes, and music support a child's speech development.

Playing and social skills

Two-year-olds are happy to be with other children. They may not yet play together, but they often play next to each other. Play can go smoothly, but sometimes a child might bite, pull hair, or grab a toy from another child.

It's important for an adult to be nearby when children are playing together. A child needs to be told that hurting others is not allowed. This way, the child learns to consider other people's feelings and to understand the rules of shared play.

Some children go to daycare, and being apart from a parent can feel a bit scary. With enough warmth and reassurance, the child learns to trust that their parent will come back.





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Niitty 2 Project 2023–2026

Working together with immigrant
families for a better everyday life

More information about the project:

<https://projects.tuni.fi/niitty2/>

Family Info Material Portal:
tuni.fi/perheinfo

Sources and further information:

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