

THRIVE BY 3



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YOUR CHILD AS PART
OF THE FAMILY

"I FEEL SAFE HERE"

Title:

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Your child as part of the family

"I feel safe here"

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THRIVE BY 3



About

- Feeling secure in familiar surroundings
- Self-perception – who am I?
- Mastery – I want to do it myself!
- Express and understand emotions – be with me in my feelings!
- Learning – I'm curious about the world!

In this booklet you will find text and suggestions about your child as part of the family, your child's self-perception, mastery, expressions of emotion and behaviour and your child's learning. The information is presented in two columns: "Children can...." are examples of what children aged 9-18 and 16-36 months are about to learn, be, do, and know. "What you can try to do together with your child...." are examples of what you can do to help your child thrive, learn, and develop. Some of the things you will read will likely be familiar and you probably already practice some of the examples of what you can do together with your child. Perhaps there is still something that is new to you, something you did not know your child could do, or that you would like to try some of the suggestions with your child?

Keep in mind that the age divisions are not absolute. Many younger children can do some of the things listed for children aged 16-36 months, and much of what is listed under 9-18 months is applicable to older children.

The descriptions and suggestions in this booklet can be viewed as a basis for thinking through and talking about how to best support your child in different situations in everyday life. They are not set answers.

FEELING SECURE IN FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS

Children aged 9-18 months can...

What you can try to do together with your child...

- "Respond" when someone says the child's name.
- Seek comfort and closeness with parents and other familiar adults when they need help or experience strong emotions.
- Show scepticism, apprehension and anxiety towards strangers, and in new situations.
- Spend time getting to know new people and environments.

- Be physically close; hold, cuddle, hug, talk and play with your child.
- Laugh and have fun with your child.
- Respond quickly when your child wants contact, attention and help
If you don't have time to do what your child wants, you should still give your child an answer showing that you have understood what your child wants.
- Comfort or help your child to calm down when he/she is upset, frightened or frustrated by, e.g., using a quiet voice, holding around them, putting their feelings into words.
- Prepare your child for transitions and separations, e.g. tell them what is going to happen next and have a quick goodbye routine when you leave your child.
- Get to know the other adults who are important to your child and show your child that you work well together.

Children aged 16-36 months can....

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Have close relationships with caregivers outside the family (e.g. adults in the kindergarten, or other family members).
- Show clearly that they prefer adults and peers that they know.
- Feel safe and comfortable in a variety of situations and different surroundings if a familiar adult is present.
- Recognise roles in the family: mum, dad, siblings, grandparents, etc.
- Have a desire to participate in daily routines at home with you, e.g. cook, clean, wash, etc. Your child likes to be involved in what you do!

- Give your child time to get used to new places and new people.
- Give your child access to dress-up clothes so that he/she can play the different roles in the family.
- Look at family photos together and talk about the different people and their roles.
- Let your child take part in daily routines together with you. Describe what the child does.

SELF-PERCEPTION

WHO AM I?

Children aged 9-18 months can...

- Know what they like to do.
- Point to show what they want or are interested in.
- Choose toys to play with and books they want to read.
- Try to do things themselves. Show joy when they manage to complete simple tasks.
- Protest when there is something they don't want to do.

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Have a lot of eye contact.
Use your child's name when talking to him/her, especially when you have positive contact.
- Talk to your child about the different parts of their body and what they are used for. For example: "We use our teeth to chew with, eyes to see with", etc. Sing songs about how our bodies work.
- Use appropriate rhymes and verses.
- Give your child different things that he/she should learn how to use, e.g. a spoon. Be aware that a change of routines, being overly tired or illness can cause your child to protest more and be more defiant towards you.
- Some children retreat and become quieter than usual in these situations. You then need to show them that you understand that he/she is not doing or feeling ok.

Children aged 16-36 months can....

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Recognise and focus their attention on themselves in mirrors or in pictures.
- Show that he/she is aware that others are watching him/her. They can show this by, e.g., repeating an action when someone is watching them.
- Show pride in showing off a finished project such as, e.g., a drawing or a tower they have built out of blocks.
- Listen to your child: show interest, answer questions, and make suggestions.
- Praise your child's attempts when he/she tries something new by describing what they are doing.
- Talk about what you and your child are doing together, or what your child has done with other children in kindergarten. Adapt the narrative to your child's age and maintain a leisurely pace so that your child can follow along and respond.
- Give your child sufficient help if needed, so that he/she manages to do it themselves in the end.

MASTERY

- I WANT TO DO IT MYSELF!

Children aged 9-18 months can...

- Look for your reactions in unfamiliar situations or when they try something new to see if the situation is safe.
- Test your reaction by, for example, touching something they know is forbidden and then looking at you to check your reaction.
- Move slightly away from you to explore the surroundings.
- Focus their attention on a toy or other object that you are looking at or talking about.
- Try to regain your attention if you get distracted and are no longer looking at your child.
- Follow some rules and master some routines. Routines help children master skills, because knowing what comes creates security and a sense of control.
- Follows simple instructions.

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Provide him/her with safe and interesting surroundings to be explored, both inside and outside.
- Be close by and show interest in what your child is interested in. Your child will dare to try new situations/activities to a greater extent when you are close by.
- Maintain and talk about routines for daily events such as meals, sleeping etc. Give your child an opportunity to gradually participate more themselves (e.g. feed themselves, dress themselves, etc.).
- Give your child simple instructions about what your child can do themselves (e.g. "I want you to put the blocks back in the box") and give your child TIME to follow up.

Children aged 16-36 months can....

- Have difficulties practising and learning new skills when routines are changed and in new surroundings.
- Practice being independent.
- Stop doing something or deliberately avoid doing something if an adult asks them to do so.
- Do what they have been asked not to do.
- Show an increasing ability to remember earlier events and tell adults about them, including information about feelings (sad, happy, angry, afraid)

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Whenever possible, give your child choices that are appropriate to his/her age and situation, e.g. "Do you want to play with the car or the blocks?", "Do you want an apple or a pear?"
- Set simple boundaries and have simple rules. Your child's protests are a typical and important part of development.
- Notice and articulate when your child does something positive/good or tries to do it (e.g. "So nice of you to put your shoes away", "I saw that you tried to wait your turn, good for you!").
- Avoid general praise such as "you are so good"

EXPRESS AND UNDERSTAND EMOTIONS

- BE WITH ME IN MY FEELINGS!

Children aged 9-18 months can...

- Communicate through feelings. Begin to understand that other people have thoughts and feelings that are different than their own.
- Show empathy towards other children and adults, e.g. giving comfort when others are sad ("poor you," "it'll be fine").
- Small children can easily be overwhelmed by strong emotions and therefore need help to calm down and understand their feelings
- Express and react to a variety of different emotions (such as being happy, curious, sorry, angry, frightened and sad).

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Share your child's positive feelings and put them into words (e.g. "Oh so happy it made you!!"). *Enjoy things with your child and have fun!*
- Comfort your child when needed. Small children need physical closeness. Lift and hold around your child in a friendly and calm way. Speak quietly with him/her.
- Let your child also express negative emotions (angry, upset, frustrated, frightened). React with closeness and comforting words and a calm voice.
- Help your child calm down by using a favorite toy, comforter, etc. and "talk" to themselves.

Children aged 16-36 months can....

- Feel a variety of emotions. Children can have different ways of showing emotions, some have distinct expressions, while others have weak emotional expressions that can be difficult to sense and understand.
- Put a name to a number of their feelings, persons they know and animals, e.g. "kitty sad," "I afraid," "mummy happy".
- Express strong feelings during temper tantrums or loud protests. This is often called "defiance". Defiance is quite normal at this age and is a way of exploring their independence.
- Need the support of an adult to calm down and deal with strong emotions.
- Gain practice through play to understand different emotions both in themselves and others, for example through roleplay and being read to.

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Show your child healthy ways to express emotion through your own conduct and behaviour.
- Put your child's feelings, and what is happening inside them, into words. Your child will then learn the words for the different emotions and how they feel
"I think you got a little scared", "I understand that you got mad when you had to stop playing because we were going to eat dinner," "You got upset because you fell and hurt yourself".
- Try to "look behind" your child's behaviour and understand the feelings they have inside them.
- Children must be allowed to be angry, but may need to learn how to express their anger. Stop your child in a confident, clear and friendly manner when he/she shows anger in ways that are not acceptable, e.g. hitting, kicking and hurting others. *Remember, children also learn to express anger by watching you when you are angry. Be a good role model.*
- Organise and participate in roleplay.

LEARNING

- I'M CURIOUS ABOUT THE WORLD!

Children aged 9-18 months can...

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Show curiosity and want to learn.
Use all of their senses to explore their surroundings.
- Learn through play and being with others.
- Use toys and objects creatively: e.g. turn a bucket upside down so it can be the bottom of a tower.
- Actively play games with their caregiver involving repetition such as peek-a-boo; taking turns and waiting their turn.
- Experiment to see if different things have the same effects/results, e.g. shake a teddy bear or cuddly toy to see if it makes the same sound as shaking a rattle.
- Use something they've already learned on something new, or in a new way. For example, bang on a drum to make sounds, and then bang on a bucket.
- Repeat the same simple activity until he/she can do it. For example, put puzzles together, or play with a "sorting box".
- Stay focused on one activity for a while.
- Start remembering information (e.g. where a toy is hidden) and keep track of simple changes (e.g. follow the movements of a hidden toy/object).
- Offer your child a variety of interesting toys and things it can play with.
- Play with your child every day, encouraging your child's curiosity and efforts.
- Give recognition for what your child does and achieves by describing it in an engaged voice ("See, you managed to put two blocks on top of each other!")
- Give your child time to try out different activities and toys and give them time to master them. Let your child try things first many times before helping them, but give help quickly if he/she signals a need for help.
- Watch what they do and make encouraging comments.
- Give enough help so that he/she gets a step further, but do not take over.
- Give your child simple descriptions and explanations of the daily activities you do together. (For example: "delicious milk, it comes from cows", "now we take off our sock, it's red").
- Look at books and tell your child stories, preferably the same ones over and over.
- Repetition promotes learning.
- Play hide-and-seek games with your child.

Children aged 16-36 months can....

What you can try to do together with your child...

- Ask questions.
 - Experiment with the effect he/she has on objects and persons.
 - Insist on making choices. Choose an activity and keep on doing it for longer and longer periods each time.
 - Want to do their favorite activity, or read their favorite book over and over.
 - Seek help and accept help when they encounter a problem or something they can't do themselves.
 - Derive pleasure from and enjoy playing pretend and finding new things to do, as well as make things.
 - Change behaviour based on something new he/she has learned.
- Answer your child's questions, even when they ask the same questions over and over.
 - Ask your child questions about his/her play, activities and exploration, but do not disturb their attention. *Describe the activity your child is doing.*
 - Read your child's favorite book even if you are tired of it; they learn by repetition and see/understand something new every time.
 - Give your child enough time to keep busy with an activity for a while. Show interest, comment and provide simple help; it promotes your child's perseverance. *You do not need to actively participate in their play unless your child invites you in, but the fact that you are present and available supports your child's*



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FEELING SECURE IN FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS

SELF-PERCEPTION - WHO AM I?

MASTERY - I WANT TO DO IT MYSELF!

EXPRESS AND UNDERSTAND EMOTIONS - BE WITH ME IN MY FEELINGS!

LEARNING - I'M CURIOUS ABOUT THE WORLD!



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unges psykiske helse**

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