

Well Check: 2½ years

Your child may have a lot of opinions and may not want to do what you say. Be sure to focus on the good choices your child makes. Notice and praise what is done well. Give your child lots of attention. Stop and listen carefully when your child wants to talk to you.

Keeping your child safe and well

- **Make sure your child gets recommended immunizations on schedule.**
- **Promote healthy teeth-cleaning habits.**
 - Brush your child’s teeth morning and night with a toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.
 - Take your child to the dentist every 6 months.
 - Give your child water to drink instead of juice. Juice has a lot of sugar and causes tooth decay.
- **Be safe in and around cars.**
 - Be sure your child’s car seat is installed correctly. There should be no more than a finger’s width of space between your child’s car seat and the harness.
 - Make sure everyone in the car is using seat belts.
 - Never leave your child alone near a driveway, near the street, or in a car.
- **Be safe at home and other places.**
 - Never leave your child in your home, yard, or garage without a responsible adult nearby. Never leave your child on a playground unsupervised.
 - Make sure your child wears a helmet when riding a bike or scooter or while skating or skiing. Wear your own helmet as a good example.
 - Stay within arm’s reach when your child is near water. Make sure pools have locked fences around them and that play pools and buckets are emptied right after use.



(Milestone) *At 2 ½ years old, most children:*

- Copy a circle or a line.
- Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts, and do simple puzzles.
- Play make-believe games.
- Copy others, especially adults and older children.
- Throw a ball overhand.
- Can follow instructions with 2 steps (“Pick up your shoes, and put them in the closet.”)

Your child will reach milestones at their own pace. For detailed information about milestones, visit [cdc.gov/actearly](https://www.cdc.gov/actearly), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

- Put a hat and sunscreen on your child before going out in the sun.
- Keep a gate at the top of the stairs, and keep furniture away from windows.
- **Lock up dangerous items.** These include medicines, poisons, chemicals, cigarettes, lighters, and alcohol in your home as well as firearms in any house your child visits.

Helping your child learn and grow

- **Help your child learn to communicate.**
 - Read to your child every day and talk about the pictures in the books. Ask your child to point to the pictures you're reading about.
 - Your child may want to hear the same story or sing the same songs over and over. Repetition helps children learn language.
 - Give your child plenty of time to answer your questions.
 - You don't need to correct your child's grammar. Listen to what they say, and repeat it back using correct grammar.
 - Teach your child acceptable ways to show that they are upset. Help your child express and name their feelings.
 - Put your phone away so that you can look at and listen to your child. Model paying attention.
- **Prepare for preschool**
 - Consider when and where to begin preschool or Head Start.
 - Give your child chances to play with other children. Go to the park, invite children to play, or join a play group.

- Dress your child in clothing that they can pull down on their own when they need to go potty.
- Give your child choices. Allow your child to choose between 2 good options, such as playing with a ball or a toy truck.

- **Create daily routines at home.**

- Eat meals together as a family whenever possible.
- Have quiet bedtime routines, and put your child to bed at about the same time every night.
- Have all members of the family follow the house rules.

Keeping your child active

- **Limit screen time.**

- Do not let your child watch the TV or other screens for more than 2 hours in a day. Too much screen time leads to shorter attention span and less exercise.
- Be careful about what your child watches. When you can, watch together and talk about what you see.

- **Be active together as a family.**

- Go outside often. Visit parks, zoos, museums, and libraries together.
 - Make sure your child is active at child care and with sitters.
- If you're concerned about your child's weight or eating habits, ask your doctor for advice.



Follow-up appointment

Your next well-child visit will be when your child is 3 years old.

Date: _____ Time: _____

Here are some helpful resources in the meantime:



[IntermountainMoms Facebook page](#)



For more age-appropriate safety information, visit safekids.org and sign up for the monthly newsletter



If you need help with housing, food, or if you feel unsafe at home, call 2-1-1, or visit 211ut.org for community services



When should I call?

If you think your child may have eaten poisons, medicines, or cleaning supplies, call Poison Control immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

This is general information that applies to most families. If your doctor tells you something different, follow what your doctor says.

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