

# TODDLERS AND TWO'S

## I learn who I am.

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Sometimes I feel powerful.  
But independence can be scary.

I count on you to set clear and consistent limits to keep me safe. When I test limits I am learning who I am and how I should behave. I am not trying to “get you” or “manipulate you” even though you may feel that way.

I feel good about myself and where I come from when my culture is reflected in my child care or preschool setting.

I feel I belong when you speak to me in my language. I feel proud when I see pictures of my family and other people like me hanging on the wall. I feel safe when I see adults who care about me working together.

I sense how you feel about me. Your feelings help shape how I feel about me.

When you respect me I respect myself. I know when you think I am good or bad, pretty or ugly, and smart or dumb. I tune in carefully to your tone and words when you talk about me. Please don't talk about me as if I can't understand.

Sometimes I want to be big. Sometimes I want to be a baby again. And sometimes I want to be both at the same time. This is one of the reasons why my behavior is sometimes hard to understand. I don't understand it myself.

Sometimes I will walk. Other times I want to ride in the stroller. Sometimes I insist on doing things my way. Other times I want you to do it for me. Sometimes I push you away. Other times I want to hold you close. It's OK. I still love you.

I am learning self control.

I understand what you expect of me more often. Sometimes I can stop myself from doing things I shouldn't. Sometimes I can't. I learn to control my behavior best when you give me only a few simple, clear rules to follow and are there to help me in case I forget them.

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## I learn about my feelings.

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My feelings are very strong.

I feel proud of things I make and do. I can get very frustrated and angry. I may hit, push, or bite to express myself. I may be afraid of the dark, monsters, and people in masks or costumes. Please don't punish me for my feelings. Help me learn the words for them.

I am learning to control my feelings.

I am learning to use words to express my feelings. I sometimes practice how to express my feelings when I play. You show me how to treat others by the way you treat me and others.

I know you have feelings too.

I may rub your back or comfort you or pat your cheek. I learn how to care for others by the way you care for me. I sense when you are happy and truly there for me. It makes me feel good. I can tell when you are very sad, scared or upset. Sometimes it makes me feel sad, scared, and upset too! I cannot be expected to meet *your* needs—please go to your partner and friends for that.

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## I learn about people, objects, and how things work.

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I am more aware of other children.

I am aware when other children are my age and sex. I am aware of skin color and may begin to be aware of physical differences. I can tell who is missing from the group when I see who is present.

I like to play together with other children.

I may pretend we are going to work or cooking dinner. I explore our environment.

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