

Toddler's First Steps



**A Best Chance Guide to Parenting
Your 6- to 36-Month-Old**



3rd edition

My Team Contact Information

Partner: _____

Cell phone: _____

Health Care Support Team

Name/Title

Contact Information

Personal Support Team

Name/Title

Contact Information



Introduction

Welcome to the 3rd edition of *Toddler's First Steps: A Best Chance Guide to Parenting Your 6- to 36-Month-Old*, published by the Government of British Columbia.

In this edition, we provide you with updated information that's based on current evidence and guided by the real-life experiences of parents and caregivers. In addition, we've revised the book to reflect the incredible diversity of families in British Columbia. This edition also contains new information about how to nurture a loving and healthy attachment between you and your child – a bond that will be a lifelong gift to you both.

Your child's early experiences lay the foundation for a life of healthy development and well-being. As a parent, you have a beautiful and powerful role to play in giving your child the best start possible. This doesn't mean that you have to be perfect – it's your warm and loving presence that your child needs most.

The joys and challenges of parenthood are influenced by many things, including our childhood experiences, our families and our culture. At the same time, we each have the opportunity to create our very own parenting journey. We hope this book provides you with the resources that will help you to create the journey you envision for yourself and your family.

Toddler's First Steps: A Best Chance Guide to Parenting Your 6- to 36-Month-Old is the second of 2 books on pregnancy and early childhood development available from the Government of British Columbia. The first book, *Baby's Best Chance: Parents' Handbook of Pregnancy and Baby Care*, covers pregnancy and the first 6 months of a child's life. Both books are available through public health units and online at healthlinkbc.ca.

Toddler's First Steps aligns with criteria for the Baby-Friendly Initiative. The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) is a global program of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF to increase hospital and community support for promoting, supporting and protecting breastfeeding. Established criteria for designation of Baby-Friendly hospitals, maternity facilities and communities outlines evidence-based maternal child care and supports all families.

This book is updated every 2 years. If you have suggestions for the next edition, please email us at healthlinkbc@gov.bc.ca.

How to Use This Resource

User-friendly. That's the goal we had in mind in creating *Toddler's First Steps*. While a limited amount of print copies are available through your public health unit, you can also access the full book [here](#). We also recognized that sometimes parents, caregivers and health care providers may want to easily access and/or print a specific topic. Therefore we have created these specific topic resources that cover all the topics found in *Baby's Best Chance*, and which can be accessed and downloaded easily [here](#).

Toddler's First Steps is divided into 5 main sections:

Section 1, **Toddler Development**, provides information on typical milestones and how you can support your child's development in all areas – from his brain and language skills to his physical, social and emotional growth.

Section 2, **Feeding Your Toddler**, covers your toddler's nutritional needs, with comprehensive information on everything from breastfeeding to picky eating.

Section 3, **Your Toddler's Growth, Learning and Health**, details everything from sleep to using the toilet, with a focus on keeping your toddler safe and healthy.

Section 4, **Parenting Your Toddler**, helps you navigate the ins-and-outs of discipline, challenging behaviours and, of course, staying calm through it all.

Section 5, **Toddler Safety**, offers important information and helpful tips on keeping your child safe at home, at play, in the car and in the community.

You might notice throughout this resource that we sometimes refer to your toddler as *she*, other times as *he*. In almost every case, the same information applies to all toddlers, regardless of sex.

Need information on the services and supports available to help you and your family thrive?

See the **Resources** section.

Interested in information on healthy eating?

See the recently revised **Canada's food guide**.


Want to speak with a health care professional in person?


Phone **HealthLink BC**, an invaluable free service of the Government of British Columbia. **Call 8-1-1** toll-free, or 7-1-1 for the deaf and hard of hearing. Services are available in 130 languages, 24 hours a day. Speak with a registered nurse (anytime), a pharmacist (nightly, from 5 pm to 9 am), or a registered dietitian or qualified exercise professional (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday).


Want quick info at a glance? Look for the coloured boxes.


Throughout this guide, you'll find boxes in a variety of colours. Look to these for essential bits of information that will help you navigate life as a new parent – everything from ways to support your child's brain development to tried-and-true parenting advice from other moms and dads.


Our **What is...?** boxes explain key words and ideas in easy-to-understand terms.


 Our **Try This** boxes suggest simple first steps you can take to help you get comfortable with each new aspect of parenting.


 Our **Key Takeaway** boxes sum up the section's not-to-be-missed information.


 Our **Partners** boxes suggest ways your support team can get involved.


 Our **Did You Know** boxes offer handy bits of insider information that can help build your understanding.


 Our **Family Story** boxes give you a peek into the experiences of other parents.


 Our **How To** boxes help you master the practical tasks of parenting by breaking them down into easy-to-follow steps.


 Our **Money Sense** boxes share tips on how to save money on everything from child care to vision care.

 Our **Brain Builder** boxes offer simple ideas on how to support your child's brain development through everyday activities.

 Our **Be Aware** boxes draw your attention to common things that may be unsafe for your child.

 Our **Danger** boxes alert you to hazards that can pose a serious risk to your child.

 Our **Medical Emergency** boxes help you recognize whether a situation calls for immediate medical help.

 Our **Seek Care** boxes point out things that warrant a call to your health care provider or HealthLink BC.

