During the toddler years, your child will grow in 5 important areas:

1. **physical** – how he uses his body
2. **social** – how he deals with others
3. **emotional** – how he deals with feelings
4. **cognitive** – how he thinks and reasons
5. **language** – how he communicates

How your child develops depends on many things, including his natural genetic makeup, the support he receives and the things he experiences.

### Physical Development
Your toddler will improve his **gross motor skills** (controlling the large muscles he needs to sit, crawl, walk and run) and his **fine motor skills** (controlling his hands and fingers and getting the hand-eye coordination to reach for things and pick them up).

- **BRAIN BUILDER**
  You can help your child develop in all 5 areas with “serve and return” interactions. Pay attention to him and show an interest in what he’s interested in. By “returning” what he “serves,” you’ll encourage his curiosity and spark his enthusiasm for practising things like speech and social skills (see Brain Development).

- **DID YOU KNOW**
  When you cuddle your child, his brain releases hormones that he needs to grow.

- **DID YOU KNOW**
  By continuing to breastfeed, you’ll support your child’s development in all 5 areas.

### Social Development
Your toddler will learn to make friends and get along with others.

- **HOW TO Support your toddler’s social development**
  ✓ Help him learn to cooperate, trust and be confident with others.
  ✓ Respond to his behaviour in warm and consistent ways. (See Positive Discipline)

- **HOW TO Support your toddler’s physical development**
  ✓ Create safe, interesting activities, and places for him to explore and be active in.
  ✓ Use screen time in a healthy way. (See Screen Time)
  ✓ Hug and cuddle him.
  ✓ Provide healthy foods. (See Eating Well)
Emotional Development
Your toddler will learn to recognize, show and manage his feelings.

HOW TO Support your toddler’s emotional development
✔ Help him learn to recognize and name his emotions.
✔ Help him learn to show his feelings in a healthy way.
✔ Comfort him.

Cognitive Development
Your toddler will learn to think, remember, imagine, gather and organize information, solve problems and use judgment.

HOW TO Support your toddler’s cognitive development
✔ Set up safe and interesting play opportunities.
✔ Play with him.
✔ Praise him.
✔ Talk to him.

Language Development
Your toddler will learn to listen and talk – and can learn multiple languages if you speak more than one at home.

HOW TO Support your toddler’s language development
✔ Talk to him.
✔ Listen to him.
✔ Read to him. (See Reading to Your Toddler)
✔ Tell him stories.
✔ Sing with him.

BRAIN BUILDER
Talk to your child all the time. By asking him questions, chatting about what you’re doing, and sharing rhymes, songs and stories, you’ll stimulate his brain and help him learn to speak and read.