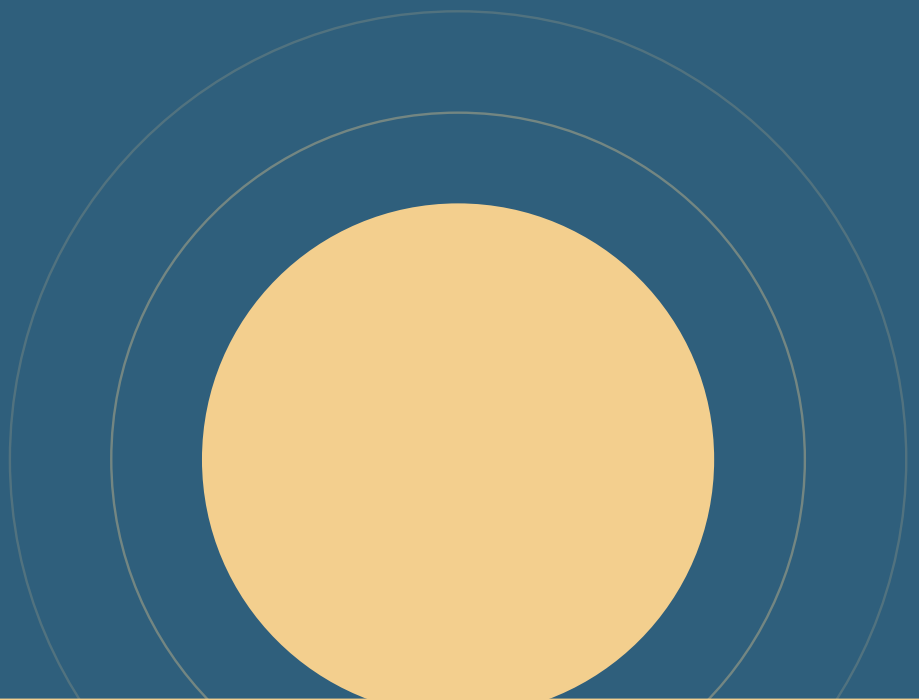


Mamavela

The Toddler Years (2-4)

Potty training, sleep, meals and tantrums from two to four, with calm, sourced advice.



Free sample

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Welcome: the most exhausting, most wonderful years

Somewhere around the second birthday, your baby turns into a person with opinions. Strong opinions. About which cup, which shoes, which way to walk to the park, and whether bedtime is a reasonable idea at all. In the same week, they may say their first real sentence, hug a crying friend, and lie on the supermarket floor screaming because the banana broke.

All of this is normal. More than normal: it is what healthy development looks like from the outside. The NHS explains that toddlers "want to express themselves, but find it difficult", and that "the frustration comes out as a tantrum". The CDC describes the "terrible twos" as the stage when toddlers "begin to assert their independence", and adds that it "can be an exciting time as toddlers undergo huge changes in their thinking, learning, social, and emotional abilities".

This book gathers, in one calm place, what the leading health bodies of the United States and the United Kingdom say about the big topics of ages 2 to 4: potty training, tantrums, discipline, sleep, eating, talking, a new sibling, starting nursery or preschool, and keeping your home safe. Each chapter turns that guidance into plans, checklists and charts you can actually use at 7 a.m. with a toddler on your hip.

No perfect parents here

You will read a lot of "do" and "don't" in these pages. Please hold them lightly. Nobody follows every tip every day, and no official body expects you to. A child who still wears a nappy at three, a night of shouting you regret, a week of fish fingers and cartoons because everyone was ill: none of this makes you a bad parent. The AAP itself writes that if you do not handle a situation well, "try not to worry about it. Think about what you could have done differently and try to do it the next time." Solo parents, two-mum and two-dad families, blended, adoptive and foster families: the toddler years look much the same in every home, and so does the love.

If a baby is on the way (or just arrived)

Many parents open this book with a toddler on one hip and a new baby on the other, or in the bump. If that is you, start with Chapter 9 (a new baby in the family), then Chapter 2 on when to time potty training and Chapter 6 on moving to a big bed: the AAP suggests finishing those changes before the birth, or waiting until the baby is settled.

Where the information comes from

We used the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and its parent website [HealthyChildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the NHS, the World Health Organization

(WHO), the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the UK Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT), RoSPA, and the Ellyn Satter Institute for feeding. Studies are cited with their DOI. Every source is listed at the end with its full web address and the date we checked it: 13 October 2026. Where sources differ (rewards for potty training is one example), we show you both views.

What this book is, and what it is not

This book is information, not medical advice. It does not diagnose, it does not recommend any medicine, and it never replaces your pediatrician, family doctor (GP) or health visitor. If you are worried about your child's health, development or behavior, talk to them. For any emergency, call 911 (US) or 999 (UK). In the UK, NHS 111 gives urgent advice. In the US, the Poison Help Line is 800-222-1222.

A quick US/UK key

United States	United Kingdom
Pediatrician, family doctor	GP, health visitor
Diaper	Nappy
Pacifier	Dummy
Crib	Cot
Preschool, child care, daycare	Nursery, pre-school, childminder
Pants (trousers)	Trousers ("pants" are underwear)
911	999 (or 112)

Chapter 1. Inside the toddler brain

Understanding why toddlers behave the way they do is the single most useful parenting tool there is. It turns "Why is she doing this to me?" into "Ah, this is what two looks like", and that shift alone lowers the temperature in the room.

What children can usually do from 2 to 4

The CDC's milestone checklists (revised in 2022 with the AAP) describe what most children (75% or more) can do by each age. A few highlights relevant to this book:

Age	Language	Feelings and social	Body and hands
2 years	Says at least two words together, like "More milk"	Notices when others are hurt or upset	Kicks a ball, runs, eats with a spoon
30 months	Says about 50 words; uses "I", "me" or "we"	Plays next to other children and sometimes with them	Takes some clothes off; jumps with both feet
3 years	Talks in conversation with at least two back-and-forth exchanges; asks "who, what, where, why"	Calms down within 10 minutes after you leave her, like at a childcare drop off	Puts on some clothes; uses a fork
4 years	Says sentences with four or more words	Comforts others who are hurt or sad; likes to be a "helper"	Catches a large ball most of the time; holds a crayon between fingers and thumb

Source: CDC "Learn the Signs. Act Early." milestones. For ages 0 to 3 in full detail, see the companion book *Milestones & Play, 0-3 Years*.

Four truths that explain most toddler behavior

1. Feelings arrive before words. A two-year-old feels jealousy, disappointment and frustration at full adult strength, but has only a handful of words to express them. The NHS notes that "once a child can talk more, they're less likely to have tantrums".

2. Independence and attachment pull in opposite directions. Your toddler wants to do it "MYSELF!" and also wants you within arm's reach. The NHS notes that separation anxiety "is common in young children between the ages of 6 months and 3 years".

3. Self-control is still under construction. Toddlers can know a rule and still be unable to stop themselves, especially when tired or hungry. The AAP advises parents to "anticipate tantrum triggers, like being tired or hungry, and help head them off with well-timed naps and meals".

4. Attention is the currency. The AAP calls attention "the most powerful tool for effective discipline", because "all children want their parent's attention". Children will take negative attention

if positive attention is not on offer. Much of this book is about spending attention on the behavior you want to see.

Your energy matters too

The CDC reminds parents: "Take care of yourself. Parenting can be hard work!" Toddler parenting is relentless. A rested, supported parent is a calmer parent, and calm is contagious. If you are feeling low or overwhelmed, talk to your doctor or health visitor; the AAP also encourages parents to "ask for help if you feel overwhelmed".

End of the sample

Thank you for reading this far. We hope these first pages already feel useful, and that you can see how the rest of the book is built: clear steps, pages to fill in, sources you can check.

The full book has 45 pages.

Get it here: <https://mamavela.com/shop/the-toddler-years/>

One-time payment, instant PDF.