

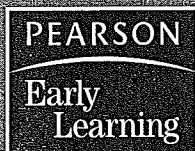
Toddlers 1: 18-24 months



The  
Ounce  
Scale

# Observation Record

Child's name .....



**The Observation Record** is a practical method of documenting children's growth and development. Its purpose is to strengthen relationships among parents, their children, and the caregivers who work with them by providing caregivers with structured opportunities to learn more about children's everyday actions and behaviors. It is part of The Ounce Scale, an observational assessment that helps parents and caregivers recognize the significance of their children's behaviors and respond in ways that will encourage further growth. Eight age-specific Observation Records span the years from birth through age three and a half.

The Observation Record highlights the remarkable changes that occur during the early years. It is a guide to assist caregivers in starting conversations with parents about their children's development, understanding children's behaviors, and keeping track of children's growth in six areas of development. In home visits or conferences at center-based programs, the Observation Record offers caregivers a basis for reviewing the child's achievements and progress and beginning to think about the child's future development. All of the ideas and activities that are described apply to both boys and girls.

In the record, you'll find questions and rationales designed to guide your observations of the children in your care, along with brief explanations of developmental areas and examples of situations in which behaviors might be observed. This information will help you focus on key aspects of each child's development. The record also includes space for you to write your own observations. To demonstrate growth, be sure to date your observations when you write them. A final section provides an opportunity for you to summarize what stands out about the child and to think about goals for the coming months.

For more information about The Ounce Scale, write to:

Pearson Early Learning  
1185 Avenue of the Americas  
26th Floor  
New York, NY 10036

or call 1-800-552-2259

[www.PearsonEarlyLearning.com](http://www.PearsonEarlyLearning.com)

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Observation Record  
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**The Ounce Scale™**

Samuel J. Meisels, Amy Laura Dombro,  
Dorothea B. Marsden, Donna R. Weston, Abigail M. Jewkes

# I. Personal Connections: It's About Trust

How toddlers show trust

## 1. How does the toddler show that the presence of familiar adults helps her do things on her own?

*Toddlers need to see the adults who are important to them as they play. Although their increased mobility allows them to be more active and self-reliant, they are easily scared by the new world now open to them. They need trusted adults nearby so they can feel safe.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Gain courage**—try the slide at the park, but only after sitting beside her caregiver for a while.
- **Stay close**—bring toys to an adult and pile them on his or her lap instead of playing in the other room.
- **Try again**—come back to where her caregiver is sitting, stand there briefly, and then go back to the sand pile.
- **Show she needs you**—go off to explore something while a familiar adult is sitting nearby, but begin to cry when that person moves toward the door.
- **Take a comforting look**—glance at a caregiver for reassurance and then go off to play with friends in another room.

How does *this* toddler show that the presence of familiar adults helps her do things? (Include dates.)

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## 2. How does the toddler respond to new people?

*Some toddlers are fascinated by new people and things, and others are cautious and unsure. For many, their reactions depend on the kind and the amount of their experiences with new people as well as their support from the adults who care for them.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Hold on for support**—reach for a caregiver's hand when the salesclerk says Hello.
- **Act afraid**—cling to a familiar adult for a long time at a children's gathering before approaching other children.
- **Jump in, yet hold back**—rush to open the door but wait until the family member says Hello before greeting the person at the door.
- **Follow a grown-up's lead**—pat the kitten sitting in an unfamiliar adult's lap after watching a caregiver do it.
- **Show cautious curiosity**—go over to see the man fixing the kitchen sink but not say hi until the parent comes in.

What does *this* toddler do around unfamiliar adults? (Include dates.)

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## II. Feelings About Self: Learning About Me

How toddlers express who they are

### 1. How does the toddler show how he feels?

*Toddlers show their wishes, worries, fears, and expectations through their behaviors, play, and actions. They find out who they are, what they can do, and who is in charge by exploring their surroundings, making choices, and experiencing some frustrations and some successes.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Enjoy his image**—look in the mirror and smile at his reflection as he tries on dress-up hats.
- **Show he did it**—show his mom or caregiver a sandwich he made “all by self!”
- **Become stubborn**—insist on wearing his shorts even though it’s cold outside.
- **Practice saying “no”**—answer no to everything, whether it’s to a question about wanting a cookie or a comment that it’s time to get ready for nap.
- **Lose it**—fall down on the floor wailing because he can’t have the truck someone else is playing with.

How does *this* toddler show how he feels? (Include dates.)

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### 2. How does the toddler show he is trying to manage his behavior?

*Toddlers are exploring the limits of their behavior. Their wish to be powerful and to control things can sometimes lead them to resist adult guidance and support. Adults can help them manage frustrations by being enthusiastic about toddlers’ efforts, setting limits, and comforting them when things don’t go their way.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Want it his way**—insist on taking out the puzzle even though his caregiver says it’s time to put things away.
- **Get frustrated**—give in to anger and tears while trying to string beads, but then pull himself together and try again.
- **Do what you say**—close the kitchen drawer after being told with words to keep it closed.
- **Get the message**—climb down off the sofa or the table when a caregiver calls his name, frowns, or shakes her head.
- **Clean up**—run over to the sink to wash off his hands when he’s finished fingerpainting.

How does *this* toddler show he is trying to manage his behavior? (Include dates.)

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### III. Relationships With Other Children: Child to Child

How toddlers act around other children

**1. How does the toddler play with other children?**

*Toddlers watch and play briefly with other children, often imitating them. They may play together for brief periods, though they can become quite possessive and demanding and need adult support and direction as they play.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Take what she wants**—watch for a while and then grab the shovel from a peer who is digging in the sand.
- **Try it out**—run across the play yard waving her arms and screaming “Yiiii!” behind another child doing the same.
- **Pretend with another child**—sit down to “eat” at the table with another child in the dramatic play area.
- **Give in**—let go of another child’s truck only after that child yells loudly.
- **Follow her impulses**—watch another child build a stack of cardboard blocks, then push it over.

How does *this* toddler play with other children? (Include dates.)

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**2. How does the toddler show her awareness of how other children feel?**

*Toddlers are inconsistent in their awareness of other children’s feelings. Sometimes they show empathy, and sometimes they act possessive, using words like “No!” or “Mine!” Their response to other children depends largely on the way the adults who care for them behave socially.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Comfort a friend**—pat another child on the back and say, “All right, all right,” when the other child cries after his mommy leaves.
- **Add to a friend’s project**—add a block to another child’s block structure when that child stops to look around.
- **Help a friend**—help a classmate look for her lost doll.
- **Give a hug**—throw her arms around a friend as he sings a song.
- **Protect what’s hers**—shout “No!” when another toddler comes near her while she’s holding a cracker.

In what ways does *this* toddler react to the feelings of other children? (Include dates.)

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## IV. Understanding and Communicating: Toddler Talk

How toddlers understand and communicate

### 1. How does the toddler show understanding of words and follow directions?

*Toddlers show that they understand by the way they respond, whether or not they do what is asked or indicated. They can provide answers to simple questions, and they are beginning to understand what will happen later in the day or who has more of something.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Wait until later**—stop fussing when told he can have a snack *after* he comes back from his walk.
- **Get the message**—go to the refrigerator door when you ask him if he wants some apple juice.
- **Connect words and meaning**—point to many body parts on himself (nose, eyes, hair) as well as on someone else.
- **See the whole picture**—make the sounds of the animals that are named or pointed to in the picture book.
- **Understand directions**—run to the sink when you say, “It’s time to wash your hands for lunch.”

How does *this* toddler show he understands you? (Include dates.)

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### 2. How does the toddler use words and word combinations to communicate?

*While toddlers’ understanding of language continues to be much greater than their ability to express themselves in words, their spoken vocabulary grows almost daily. Toddlers learn to use words to label, question, and express feelings.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Ask for something**—use his own word for juice or water when he wants a drink.
- **Make sentences**—put several words together, such as, “More juice” or “Go out now?”
- **Know the characters**—name pictures in the storybook as you read to him.
- **Make demands**—repeat, “Me go, me go!” and tug at Mom’s hand as he watches his brother put on his coat to leave for school.
- **Show his preferences**—shake his head no and insist, “Cookie, cookie!” when asked if he wants a pretzel or an apple for snack.

What are the ways *this* toddler uses words to communicate? (Include dates.)

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**3. How does the toddler show he wants to begin to participate in conversations?**

*Although most toddlers lack the words to take part fully in conversations, they understand about the give and take of talking to someone. You can see this even in their babbling and their repetition of single words.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Talk to his animals**—babble in a run-on flow of words to his stuffed animals while he feeds them and puts them to bed.
- **Follow an adult's lead**—say "Bye" after his parent reminds him as they leave child care.
- **Sound like he's talking**—imitate the flow and inflection of a conversation while jabbering away to a friend or baby sister.
- **Give a report**—tell about something that happened on his walk.
- **Try to be included**—interrupt a conversation between two adults by repeating one word over and over in an attempt to become a part of the conversation.

How does *this* toddler try to participate in conversations? (Include dates.)

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## V. Exploration and Problem Solving: Toddler Discoveries

How toddlers explore and figure things out

### 1. How does the toddler explore and learn how things work?

*A toddler's life seems to consist of constant motion as they touch, examine, try things, drop, and pick things up. They are busy learning how things work, and how they don't work.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Experiment with water**—pour and fill at the water table or sink.
- **Fill and dump**—put small things such as clothes pins or large beads into containers, dump them out, then put them back in again.
- **Figure it out**—push a toy truck forward and backward to see the wheels turn and hear the siren whistle.
- **Make sounds**—bang a pot cover on the tile floor, on the rug, and then on the tile floor again.
- **Turn on the lights**—look with wonder from her hand to the overhead bulb that goes on and off as she flips the switch up and down.

In what ways does *this* toddler explore the things in her world? (Include dates.)

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### 2. How does the toddler show her increased memory skills?

*Toddlers are comfortable when they can relate to routines and know what to expect. Familiarity helps toddlers feel they have some control and helps them understand how the world works.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Repeat what she hears**—hum or sing over and over a few words or a short tune she learned from listening to a tape or CD.
- **Help out**—remember to take her dish over to the sink after she finishes eating.
- **Choose a book she knows**—run to the shelf to get a favorite book to look at during rest or nap time.
- **Want to buckle up**—hold up her seat belt to have it fastened after she climbs into her car seat.
- **Put things in their place**—put the round, square, and triangle pieces into their correct holes in the form board.

How does *this* toddler show her increasing memory skills? (Include dates.)

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3. How does the toddler use toys and other objects with a purpose?

*At this age children want to do most things "By self!" and they show that they expect certain results. They enjoy repeating things they've done before, but they also want to try new ways to make things happen. They keep several ideas in mind and can carry them out to reach their goals.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Match them up**—experiment with matching toys to the toy shape-labels taped on the shelves in order to show where the toys should be stored.
- **Do a puzzle**—dump out the pieces of a four-piece puzzle and then put them back together again.
- **Deal with cause and effect**—hammer pegs into a pounding board, turn it over and pound them back from the other side.
- **Sort by color**—put all the red pegs in a container and the blue ones in a pile on the table.
- **Share her tower**—call you over to see how high she piled the unit blocks.

In what ways does *this* toddler use toys and other things with a purpose? (Include dates.)

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## VI. Movement and Coordination: Toddlers in Motion

How toddlers move their bodies and use their hands

### 1. How does the toddler show increasing balance and coordination as he combines actions?

*Toddlers waddle when they walk, hold their arms out for balance, and stand with their legs wide apart. Yet they love to experience their new freedom of movement. They may bump into things and often find it difficult to turn corners or steer themselves.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Find his seat**—turn around, back up to a chair, and sit down.
- **Try a new way**—make a noisemaking toy work by pulling it while walking backward.
- **Make it go**—ride his kiddie car by pushing with both feet together.
- **Enjoy silly moves**—play “Ring Around the Rosie,” loving the falling-down-on-purpose part best.
- **Dart and scoot**—practice running, climbing, jumping with joy and speed, often calling “Look at me.”

How does *this* toddler move around? (Include dates.)

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### 2. How does the toddler use his fingers, hands, and eyes to accomplish a variety of tasks?

*Toddlers coordinate finger, hand, and wrist movement with increased skill, though their movement is often not precise. They practice their grasp and use their eyes and hands together as they examine objects and put things together and take them apart.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Make it fit**—slide envelopes into slots, keys into locks, blocks into shape sorters.
- **Scribble and paint**—hold his crayon in a full-fist-on-top grasp as he swirls and twirls with his crayons, markers, or chalk.
- **Crank it up**—turn the key on a wind-up toy.
- **Make a necklace**—string large beads, using one hand to slide the bead on while the other hand holds the string.
- **Tell a story with his fingers**—imitate the hand motions of a variety of fingerplays.

How does *this* toddler use his fingers, hands, and eyes to do things? (Include dates.)

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**3. How does the toddler participate in self-help activities?**

*Toddlers are becoming very interested in their own self care, especially in feeding themselves. They like routines so this is a good time to establish health routines such as brushing teeth after meals and washing hands before meals.*

The toddler might do one or more of the following:

- **Dress up**—try to put on his own shirt (frontward or backward) and socks.
- **Do it by himself**—insist on washing his own hands and drying them without help.
- **Use a cup**—drink from a cup with little spilling.
- **Choose his clothes**—run to the drawer and pull out his red shirt even though you've chosen a white one.
- **Help out**—help with the household chores such as putting napkins and spoons on the table.

How does *this* toddler participate in self-help activities? (Include dates.)

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# **SUMMARY REPORT**

## **Pulling It All Together**

1. Describe this toddler.

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2. List what this toddler is especially good at.

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3. Note anything that seems difficult for this toddler.

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4. What more do you want to know about this toddler?

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Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# SETTING GOALS

## Putting What You've Learned to Work

1. What are some "next steps" for this toddler? What goals do you have for this toddler in the coming months?

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2. What are your plans for helping this toddler meet these goals?

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Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Areas of Development

### I. Personal Connections: It's About Trust

How children show trust

1. How children build relationships with familiar adults
2. How children respond to unfamiliar adults

### II. Feelings About Self: Learning About Me

How children express who they are

1. How children express who they are, their personality, their temperament, the way they are building self esteem, learning independence
2. How children manage their own behavior, self regulation
3. Expressing feelings: learning social skills when expressing feelings, needs, wants<sup>1</sup>

### III. Relationships With Other Children: Child to Child

How children act around other children

1. How children show awareness of other children, interact and play with them
2. Recognizing and responding to other children's feelings (empathy)<sup>2</sup>

### IV. Understanding and Communicating: Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Talk

How children understand and communicate

1. Receptive language: understanding gestures, words, directions, questions, and routines
2. Expressive language: using gestures, words, several words together, conventions of speech, expressing thoughts and ideas
3. Participating in conversations<sup>3</sup>

### V. Exploration and Problem Solving: Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Discoveries

How children explore and figure things out

1. How children attend, pay attention, explore, and understand concepts of color, size, matching, weight, and number
2. Memory, reasoning ability, imagination<sup>4</sup>
3. Making things happen, purposeful activity, expectations for planned results, anticipating consequences, solving problems

### VI. Movement and Coordination: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers in Motion

How children move their bodies and use their hands

1. Gross motor: controlling body, moving around, combining movements, playing games
2. Fine motor: reaching, holding, letting go, intentional exploration, eye-hand coordination, creative activities
3. Self-help activities<sup>2</sup>

Observation Record  
Toddlers I  
18-24 months

Child's name  
From / /

to

/

/

Date of birth

Caregiver/Home Visitor

<sup>1</sup>This Indicator begins with Toddlers II.

<sup>2</sup>This Indicator begins with Toddlers IV.

<sup>3</sup>This Indicator begins with Toddlers I.

<sup>4</sup>This Indicator begins with Toddlers II.

## The Ounce Scale Overview

The Ounce Scale™ is a functional, or practical, assessment that enables caregivers and families to record, understand, and evaluate young children's development. With The Ounce Scale, parents and caregivers have numerous opportunities to document, monitor, and participate in evaluating their children's progress and accomplishments continuously from birth to three and a half years of age. The scale also assists providers in program planning, design, and implementation by improving parent and caregiver skills in observing and interpreting young children's behavior, and by providing information that parents and caregivers can use in everyday interactions with their children.

The Ounce Scale has three elements:

- The **Observation Record**, which helps child care professionals document and shape their observations.
- The **Family Album**, which encourages parents to understand and participate in their child's development.
- The **Developmental Profile**, which enables caregivers and other staff to evaluate each child's development and progress over time and to compare that development to specific performance standards.

The scale is organized around six areas of development:

- I. **Personal Connections—It's About Trust:** How children show trust
- II. **Feelings About Self—Learning About Me:** How children express who they are
- III. **Relationships With Other Children—Child to Child:** How children act around other children
- IV. **Understanding and Communicating—Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Talk:** How children understand and communicate
- V. **Exploration and Problem Solving—Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Discoveries:** How children explore and figure things out
- VI. **Movement and Coordination—Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers in Motion:** How children move their bodies and use their hands

The scale provides an interactive system of documentation, monitoring, and evaluation of development for Early Head Start programs, Even Start programs, early intervention programs (including children at risk for special needs or those with disabilities), and other home- and center-based infant, toddler, and preschool child care in the community. It provides a meaningful way to evaluate children's accomplishments, areas of difficulty, and approaches to learning, as well as guidance in determining future goals toward which to work. Families and caregivers using The Ounce Scale learn to observe their children and to use this information to enhance relationships and support development. A User's Guide is available to assist you in implementing The Ounce Scale.