

motor development

at 18 months, most children:

- ▶ Can throw a ball overhand;
- ▶ Crawl up and down stairs;
- ▶ Walk forwards and sideways alone;
- ▶ Drop and throw toys;
- ▶ Stack things;
- ▶ Make crude lines with crayons or markers;
- ▶ Respond to music by swaying, clapping, or humming.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Play with bean bags, foam balls, tennis balls and large rubber ones;
- ▶ Dance with props like scarves, bells, and shakers;
- ▶ Provide tubes and baskets for children to throw things into or watch objects roll through;
- ▶ Play outside every day;
- ▶ Play at the sensory table with materials like sand, cornmeal, water, rice, etc.;
- ▶ Play with manipulatives such as duplos®, blocks, and pop beads;
- ▶ Draw or paint on paper, chalkboards, or objects;
- ▶ Make houses and tunnels with large cardboard boxes and sheets.

guidance

at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Have consistent and appropriate expectations for children's abilities;
- ▶ Re-direct inappropriate behavior;
- ▶ Distract frustrated children;
- ▶ Model empathic behavior;
- ▶ Narrate our activities, including transitions, so that children can anticipate what will happen next and know how they are expected to behave;
- ▶ Use affection and praise to encourage pro-social behavior;
- ▶ Provide plenty of outlets and challenges for abundant physical energy;
- ▶ Let children have time alone when they are frustrated by being part of a group;
- ▶ Give children choices: "You can put the toy away or Sue will do it."

easy ways to make an 18-month-old feel powerful:

- ▶ Provide meaningful and appropriate choices about food, activities, clothing; (stick to two choices at a time with this age);
- ▶ Let them help with routine chores, giving them child-sized tools: cloths, hand brooms, baskets, etc.;
- ▶ Allow them to bring comfort objects such as bears and blankets with them as they play;
- ▶ Encourage them to do everything for themselves that they can: walk, feed, find toys, etc.;
- ▶ Verbalize their struggles and victories.

Active Learning at Gretchen's House



your child at 18 months:

**-climber-
-tester-
-lover-**

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cognitive development

at 18 months, most children:

- ▶ Follow simple directions such as “pick it up” or “clap your hands;”
- ▶ Remember routines and anticipate favorite activities or events;
- ▶ Repeat certain behaviors in hopes of eliciting a familiar reaction;
- ▶ Look for missing toys;
- ▶ Find new ways to get things done;
- ▶ Persist at challenging or rewarding tasks.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen’s House we:

- ▶ Play follow the leader games such as hokey pokey;
- ▶ Keep routines consistent so children can begin to pace themselves;
- ▶ Repeat favorite activities and extend play over several days according to children’s interests;
- ▶ Use a flannel board with puppets or props that allow children to participate in story time;
- ▶ Play with simple shape puzzles, or challenging toys such as lock boxes;
- ▶ Vary manipulative accessories to encourage building and problem solving skills;
- ▶ Use prop boxes for dramatic play.

language development

at 18 months, most children:

- ▶ Have a much larger receptive (comprehension) vocabulary than what they can actually say;
- ▶ Answer simple “yes” or “no” questions;
- ▶ Can say the names or point to body parts;
- ▶ Use telegraphic speech: say “Milk?” to mean “Can I have some milk?”
- ▶ Cry when unable to express themselves;
- ▶ Begin to string together words: “go-bye.”
- ▶ Repeat favorite words for pleasure;
- ▶ Imitate tone of voice.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen’s House we:

- ▶ Interpret telegraphic speech out loud: “You would like a cup of milk?”
- ▶ Label their feelings and help clarify frustrations when they cry;
- ▶ Read books, tell stories, and sing daily;
- ▶ Continue to use children’s invented words along with the correct name to refer to things as their vocabularies grow;
- ▶ Speak simply with children but do not condescend to them;
- ▶ Phrase things positively: say “Roll the truck,” instead of, “Don’t throw toys!”
- ▶ Narrate activities and give warnings so children can anticipate what’s coming up.

social-emotional development

at 18 months, most children:

- ▶ Have difficulty separating from their parents and get emotional at pick-up;
- ▶ Are unable to share;
- ▶ Begin to demonstrate self-control: respond when told “stop.”
- ▶ Show interest in older children;
- ▶ Demonstrate a sense of humor;
- ▶ Prefer parallel play;
- ▶ Increase imitative play and may attempt to engage with other children by offering a toy or holding hands.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen’s House we:

- ▶ Remain consistent with drop-off and pick-up routines;
- ▶ Provide plenty of duplicate toys so children are not frustrated by waiting;
- ▶ Play with baby dolls and encourage nurturing behaviors;
- ▶ Play with the children so we are available to problem-solve when needed;
- ▶ Provide plenty of hugs and lap time to soothe tender feelings;
- ▶ Celebrate accomplishments;
- ▶ Explain our actions to children. “We’ll give the toy back because she was using it first. Let’s find one for you.”