

PARENT-TEACHER MODELING

A toddler longs for rhythm, repetition and activities which feel safe. As a parent, you should continue on your daily rhythm or schedule and then slowly add a child, or two, or three within your daily activity. Contact other mothers while your toddler is napping and arrange a play date at the park, or some other place where there is freedom to move about and nature or animals to explore. The key is that this is a natural event.

Being a part of regular activities, which the child is used to is calming to the child. The mother doesn't need to feel stressed that she needs to make a certain appearance and that she is "locked in" to a set period of time. This makes everyone a lot more comfortable, and when you are more comfortable and stress free, you enjoy the time more.

Up until about 20 years ago, most children this age spent all of their time at home with mother and siblings. Play dates and groups are a relatively new concept. The age appropriate behavior for a child this age is to observe and learn by modeling YOUR behavior.

Toddlers don't want friends, they want to do what you do! They enjoy hanging on your hip or standing along side of you doing the dishes, the laundry, going to the market, etc. These daily activities are learning experiences and a joy for children of this age to participate in.

Reassure yourself that there is plenty of time for friends later. They will have the rest of their lives to socially interact with other children, and in a few short years, they will rather run off to play with children than to spend time at your side. Don't worry about your child getting socialized. The same way they learned to talk and walk, they will learn to play and be social.