

Stage Two – “Doing” from about 6 to 18 Months

Stage two – the “doing” stage is a powerful time when it is important for the child to decide to trust others. That it is a safe and wonderful place to explore, to trust his senses, to know what he knows, to be creative and active, and to get support while doing all these things.

Helpful parent behaviors:

- Affirm child for doing developmental tasks
- Continue to offer life, safety, and protection
- Provide a safe environment
- Protect child from harm
- Continue to provide food, nurturing touch, and encouragement
- Say two yes’ for every no
- Provide a variety of things for the child to experience
- Refrain from interrupting a child when possible
- Refrain from interpreting the child’s behavior. “You like looking at yourself in the mirror” should be “Judy is looking in the mirror”
- Respond when child initiates play
- Take care of own needs

Unhelpful parent behaviors:

- Fails to provide protection
- Restricts mobility
- Criticizes or shames child for exploring or for anything
- Punishment
- Expects child not to touch dangerous objects
- Expects toilet training
- Discounting

Job of the child:

- To explore and experience the environment
- To develop sensory awareness by using all senses
- To signal needs; to trust others and self
- To continue forming secure attachments with parents
- To get help in times of stress
- To start to learn that there are options and that not all problems are easily solved
- To develop initiative
- To continue tasks from stage one