



Addressing Children's Behavior

Your baby isn't ready for discipline yet. The things your baby is doing now (yes, even the frustrating ones like throwing food and toys on the floor for you to pick up) aren't meant to manipulate you or make you angry.

Instead your baby is learning about:

- Cause and effect (if he lets go, it falls to the floor)
- The fact that actions have consequences
- That things exist even if your baby doesn't see them

When your baby does things that bother you (like throwing cheerios on the ground), do your best to ignore the behavior. At this age, your baby's brain is not ready to understand that food should "stay on the table."

For now, it's more important to let your baby learn things through experimenting (like finding out that throwing a spoon makes it hit the floor) than it is to teach your baby about table manners.

As your baby begins to move around, he or she will constantly come across dangerous items that they should not touch. By making your baby's surroundings safe to explore, you don't have to say "no, no no!" all day long. We call this a YES environment, and it helps to make caregivers less frustrated.

When you do find babies in a dangerous situation, it's okay to say "no" quickly and with a calm tone of voice. No explanation or yelling is necessary. Your "no" will mean much more to your baby if you don't say it very often.