



# Practical Parenting

## SO YOU WANT TO BE A PARENT?

# 102

### KEY POINTS



#### PROGRAM SUMMARY

Viewers meet a young couple who expect a baby. Several points of information are presented about important things parents should talk over **before** the baby arrives. There is also a review of important things parents should be aware of **after** the child is born in regard to **stages of child development** from birth through age 5, and how parents can understand and support good development and a successful school start.

#### MAJOR MESSAGE

Being a parent is one of life's greatest privileges and, at the same time, one of life's biggest responsibilities. In every way, a youngster's chief caregivers - the parents - shape the child's future. Each parent must frequently think about their growing child's needs and how best to address them. The task of child-rearing requires real dedication and **long hours** of carefully considered and lovingly provided care.

#### WHILE VIEWING

You will see examples of child development at different points in the first four years. Pick out four "developments," the age they occur, and how they are illustrated in the video. You may wish to jot them down.

Before "Baby" is born, parents need to discuss ways in which the baby's arrival will change several things, such as the following:

- (1) the effect on your personal relationship as a couple, as well as the effect on the entire family;
- (2) the effect on your job(s);
- (3) the effect on family finances; and
- (4) the effect on your lifestyle in general.

When the newborn comes home, the #1 priority should be to assure a loving and harmonious environment. First, bond with the baby through affectionate touching, cuddling, and talking as you dress, feed, change, and handle the baby.

Mothers must remember to avoid cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs, especially if breast feeding. A baby's liver cannot process these toxins **at all**, so irreversible injury or even death may result.

All children go through a set of developmental stages, some slower, some faster, as follows:

**Year 1** - tremendous physical development (sitting, crawling, standing, walking) as well as gradual but obvious reaction and interaction with people and things: language grows, and the child's self-image and image of the world are developing. Remember that babies are not toys, and are very fragile: avoid shaking and rough play.

**Year 2** - everything started in Year 1 improves and expands. Parents notice that the pace picks up! Toddlers begin to assert independence and even defiance! Caregivers must be **v-e-r-y p-a-t-i-e-n-t!**

**Year 3** - children integrate and perfect their extensive development: three-year-olds tend to be more cooperative and calmer than "two's" - but, as always, it's a time for loving, cuddling, reading, talking, ... and for questions - questions - questions.

**Year 4** - four-year-olds are almost "grown up," yet, like "two's", they tend to be somewhat rebellious. They perfect skills of running, jumping, tumbling (called "large motor" skills) and begin to exhibit "small motor" skills such as buttoning their clothes. Caregivers need to strike a balance between being too permissive and too strict with them, and should keep on providing **constant loving support**.



#### REFLECTIONS

Take a few minutes to think about what you viewed. Then consider these questions:

- (1) Have you (or someone you've observed) treated a two-year-old in a way that's *not appropriate* to his stage of development (such as fussing at a two-year-old for not buttoning a shirt)? Discuss this with a friend or a group.
- (2) Have you known someone who never reads to a small baby, claiming that "they can't understand"? Do you agree with this behavior? Why, or why not?