



NataliaRose's
Life Force Families

Interact, share tips and recipes, exclusive content from Natalia

Toddlers (18 months - 2.5 years)

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“Perhaps we should give our children the freedom to grow up without our dogma and then ask the children where and which way to go.”

—Vladimr Megre, Anastasia, The Ringing Cedar Series, Book 3, p. 156.

Curriculum topics for Toddlers include:

- What We Can Learn From Our Toddlers
- The Ideal Toddler Diet
- Toddler Food List
- Dietary/Home Life Tips and Tricks
- Converting the Picky Eater
- Strategies for Playdates and Social Interactions
- TV and Toys

Introduction

This is a time of great sensory exploration for your little one—a continuation of the magical process of orienting him/herself with the world. The world for a two-year-old is delightful, as everything is a learning opportunity. A muddy puddle, a prickly stick, the smell of a rose, and a juicy strawberry all invoke wonder and teach the child about the physical elements of our world directly through their senses. In addition to learning about the natural world, the child at this stage is also learning about the nifty artifacts and tools that we adults use—for example, by spending hours figuring out how to use the salad spinner, investigating the contents of Daddy’s tool box, or organizing books.

This stage provides us a wonderful opportunity to slow down and see the world through our children’s eyes. If we pay attention, there is more to learn from our children than we could possibly imagine teaching them. For the time being, they are uncluttered by dogma, ideas about good and bad, and the voices of others, so there is still purity in their intentions and actions. The laws of nature apply here as they do in our bodies and in any other aspect of life. When we encourage our children’s curiosity and innate goodness, giving them the space to play and explore, learning is joyful and effortless. When we block or in any way stifle their natural unfolding—physically, mentally, or emotionally—anxiety, behavior problems, and illness quickly set in.

Acidic environments, addictive and numbing food, the hypnotic nature of television, parental stress and anxiety, and alienation from nature can all block the natural flow of health, growth, and development. These are realities of the world we live in, and in order to be role models for our children, we have to work diligently to ensure these are not stifling factors in our own lives. The point here is not to become “the perfect parents” or to raise “the perfect children.” The point, rather, is to embrace this opportunity to become “perfectly human.” For years, indeed generations, the human race has been degenerating and mutating into weaker and weaker forms, and we not only want to stop this degeneration, but actually reverse it through clean living. Many of the unnatural and acidic elements in our modern world rob us and our children of that opportunity.

A great place to combat the ills of modern living is to observe the way our children approach the world. When we allow ourselves to see the world through their eyes, we can take a leap of consciousness. Children, and toddlers in particular, are captivated by nature in all its life forms—whether it’s the wriggling of the earthworm, the bright flash of butterfly wings, or the levitation of a hummingbird.

Their instincts are not to consume animal flesh. In fact, they don't generally want meat unless they are repeatedly exposed to it, and even then, only when it is disguised with ketchup or breaded with addictive additives. Toddlers cringe at the idea of killing animals for food, and unless they are repeatedly exposed to addictive processed foods and sodas, they are fully content with whole and blended fruits and vegetables—perfect human food. Children love the colors, textures, and sweet juiciness of fruits and many vegetables.

Toddlers also naturally live in the moment (unless they've been overexposed to artificial stimulation). Watching them interact with their environment and live in the present can help us rekindle the love affair we all once had with the world and embrace each and every moment. Our toddlers can teach us that there is an abundance of joy, love, and laughter to be found within. We adults just have to remove the clutter so we can see it.



Ideal Toddler Diet

Along with the natural desire to fully explore and embrace the world, children at this age want to taste most foods that are put in front of them. This is a critical time for wiring their senses for health-generating foods. If they are surrounded by the colorful array of apples, bananas, kiwis, and pineapples, they will take pleasure in these fruits and come to love nature's offerings, setting the stage for a lifetime of natural choices.

If, by contrast, we are constantly exposing them to foods in bright, shiny, cartoon-character packaging in animal shapes and fluorescent colors, they will forever gravitate toward processed foods and their palates will be wired for those extremely stimulating flavors.

Never mind social pressures, this is NOT the time to expose your child to artificial, chemical-laden foods. This is the time to stay the natural course. This is the time to protect your child's palate so that it remains pure and sensitized to the beautiful, subtle flavors of natural foods. Once exposed to chemicals in mainstream foods, the palate becomes tainted and eventually numb to whole foods. For example, an untainted palate can detect the deliciously sweet and delicately spicy flavors in a ripe pear and enjoy the earthy flavors of freshly pressed green juice.



In addition to devastating our children's palates and reducing their ability to enjoy natural foods, chemicals in mainstream foods literally short-circuit the innate sensors that detect harmful toxins in the substances they consume. The toxins commonly used by food manufacturers today compromise the blood, create mucus, damage organs, and irritate the intestine, setting the stage for all manner of sicknesses—from behavioral problems to IBS to cancers. These processed foods are not innocuous substances that we can reasonably feed our children in moderation. They are dangerous—the harbingers of your child's cellular deterioration. They will rob your baby of his/her physical power and mental acuity. We have spent generations excusing these destructive substances because they are fun or taste good, allowing them to silently destroy our children's wholeness and power. How can we excuse that? How can that be worth it? It's our job as parents to provide our children a safe place to grow up healthy and strong. It's time to step out of the dark ages!

During these preschool days, you are in effect home-schooling your child. This is your best, uninterrupted chance to teach your child the fundamentals of what is life-generating and what is not. Make it easier on yourself by stocking your kitchen with only life-generating foods. And if you really want to simplify matters and ensure that the message sinks in at this early stage, eat the same foods that your toddler eats! Confusion and frustration can arise during the "this is OK for Mommy and Daddy but not for you" conversation.

Toddler Food List

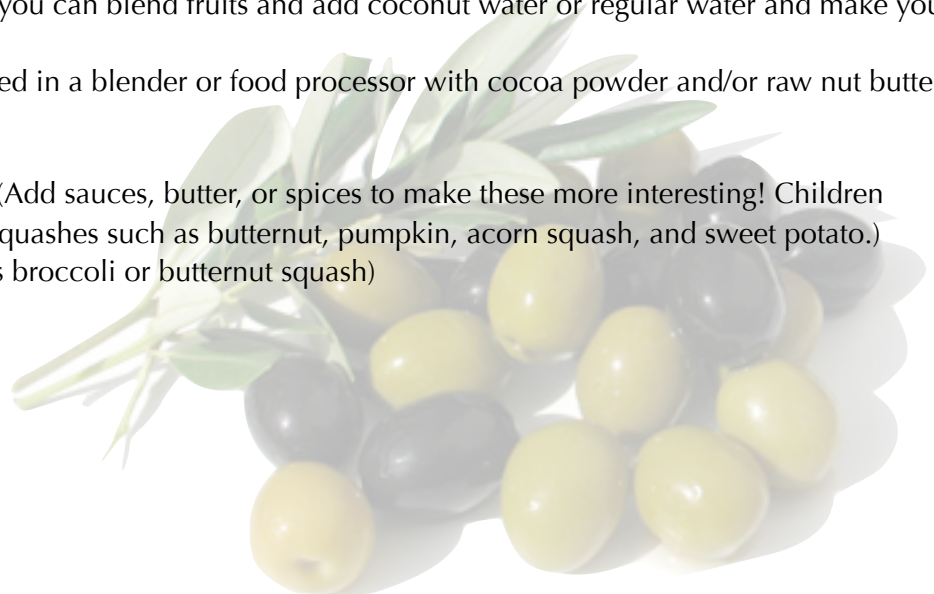
Here are the foods that both you and your toddler can enjoy in abundance. Have fun with any combinations of these foods and experiment often, as a toddler's preferences can change daily. Just remember, due to the chemicals and highly addictive nature of the foods in the Toxic category of the Food Chart, avoid those items at all costs.

Fruits

- We find toddlers especially like avocado, banana, grapes, cherry tomatoes, melons, and berries.
- Baked apples and pears
- Stewed fruits
- Organic raisins or other dried fruits (no sugar added)
- Baby shakes
- Whole-fruit popsicles (you can blend fruits and add coconut water or regular water and make your own popsicles)
- Frozen bananas (blended in a blender or food processor with cocoa powder and/or raw nut butter)

Vegetables

- All cooked vegetables (Add sauces, butter, or spices to make these more interesting! Children especially like winter squashes such as butternut, pumpkin, acorn squash, and sweet potato.)
- Blended soups (such as broccoli or butternut squash)
- Raw olives



Grains & Legumes

Note: You and your toddler may enjoy these grains and legumes as desired, but remember that they are not perfect human foods, so do not let them take the place of life-generating fruits and vegetables.

- Spelt, buckwheat, or quinoa pasta
- Legume-based soups, such as split pea and lentil
- Sprouted-grain bread (Ezekiel, 4:9, Food for Life, Alvarado St. Bakery)
- Whole-grain cookies (Kollar, Kashi)

Animal Products (limited to the following items)

- Raw goat or sheep cheeses (non-raw is OK if you cannot find raw)
- Organic, free-range eggs

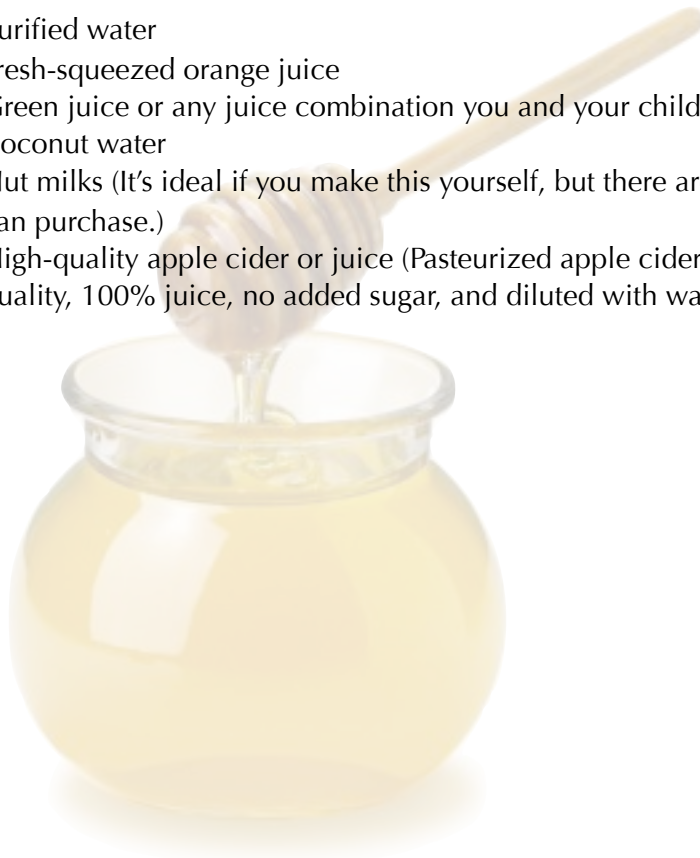
Spreads & Sauces

- Organic marinara sauce (Paesana or Seeds of Change are two delicious options! Toss into raw baby spinach leaves for a tasty way to incorporate greens.)
- Hummus
- Nut butters
- Raw honey
- Pure maple syrup
- Organic ketchup
- Organic butter
- Any spices (especially cinnamon and sea salt)



Liquids

- Purified water
- Fresh-squeezed orange juice
- Green juice or any juice combination you and your child enjoy
- Coconut water
- Nut milks (It's ideal if you make this yourself, but there are some good, high-quality brands you can purchase.)
- High-quality apple cider or juice (Pasteurized apple cider or juice is not ideal but fine if it's high-quality, 100% juice, no added sugar, and diluted with water.)



Tips and Tricks.

1. The food in your refrigerator and cupboards and anything at “grazing level” in the house should be healthy enough to be free for the taking. Allowing your child to make food decisions will help him or her to feel empowered. As long as everything in your house is relatively health-generating, you can rest assured that this freedom will not result in an unhealthy compromise.
2. Establish rhythms around the house—and by this we do not mean the traditional “three square meals” a day! We have been socially conditioned to accept the idea that humans need three meals a day with snacks in between, but a child will rarely gravitate toward such a schedule naturally. Children normally eat one very big meal and then essentially graze the rest of the day. Of course, this can change from day to day, based on how they are feeling.
3. Do not stress about how much food your child is consuming. Toddlers instinctively listen to their bodies and eat as much as they need to!
4. Unless your child has serious digestive issues, you do not need to worry about Quick-Exit Combinations at this time. However, keeping the “light to heavy” principle in mind throughout your child’s day can be helpful for digestion. But again, do not stress about this!

However, in the case of digestive problems, food combining can be critically important. To determine whether or not improper food combining is an issue for your child, simply pay attention to your child’s eliminations. Does your child become gassy or constipated after miscombined meals? If so, try paying attention to the quick-exit food combination principles and see if the issue improves.

5. There is no need to force-feed your child vegetables! Children instinctively prefer fruits, as these are the most health-generating, cleanest human foods. Your child will enjoy vegetables at some point, so don’t worry if he or she doesn’t love them now.
6. If your toddler didn’t like something as baby, try reintroducing it now. Kids can change their minds from month to month, and sometime even from day to day!
7. Instead of dictating, “Eat this” or “Don’t eat that,” try describing what each food will do to the body. For example, when presenting your child with fresh fruits and vegetables, try saying, “Here, this will give you lots of power.” When your child asks why you don’t eat junk food, try responding, “Oh, no, that sucks up your power like a vampire” or “That makes your blood dirty.” Using concrete but illustrative statements to explain why we do and do not eat certain foods helps a child conceptualize the physical effects of consumption. The earlier our children contextualize and conceptualize these things, the more sense it will make to them, and the more they will be empowered to make life-generating choices for themselves. Believe us, it’s never too early for that! In a world that’s largely clueless about the effects of food in the body, our children will be among the lucky few who are conscious about food and protected from a future of mindless consumption.

8. Keep your food preparations VERY SIMPLE, unless of course you choose to play gourmet chef. Your kitchen staples are all you will ever need. And they're cheap—carrots and other roots, sprouted-grain breads, apples, bananas, and avocados are even affordable organic! Baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, bell peppers, or olives can be put out before a meal. Just keep in mind the principles of “raw before cooked” and “light to heavy.” Think whole fruits and veggies in their whole forms. Here are some other simple, fun ideas to get you started:

- Baked root vegetables
- Baked sweet potatoes topped with organic butter and cinnamon
- Grilled raw goat cheese on sprouted-grain bread
- Organic free-range scrambled eggs with grated raw cheddar-style goat cheese
- Lentil soup with a side of sprouted-grain buttery toast

The simpler the meals, the less your child will expect and demand. That's a good thing for you both. The idea that meals need to be elaborate is a result of social conditioning. You do not need to set yourself up for work every day and night! There should be variety in your child's diet within a day or a week, but you do not have to worry about variety within every meal. The kids we know who are fussy started out with mothers who offered them the opportunities to become fussy. Toddler are always testing their boundaries, but don't give them too much room to fuss. Establish solid boundaries around simple, real food. You can give your child two choices: sweet potatoes or eggs; grilled cheese (our version) or broccoli “pasta”; apples or bananas. It really can be that stress-free!

9. Consider what you are putting on your child's body, not just in it! For example, it is best to use natural shampoos and soaps, as well as natural toothpaste, such as the fluoride-free Tom's of Maine products.

10. Children do not normally need extra vitamins. If their body's pathways are open and flowing, they will absorb all of the vitamins they need from the fruits and juices you are giving them. If their pathways are generally blocked and congested, all of the vitamins in the world will not help.

Converting the Picky Eater

We realize some of you may be new to this lifestyle and you may already have a child who refuses to eat fruits, vegetables, and anything that resembles a fruit or vegetable! Mainstream foods, like many drugs, are highly addictive and numbing to the sense of taste, so it is no wonder that after exposure to these foods our children will gravitate toward them exclusively. Moreover, children will crave more of the same chemical-laden foods in order to experience the same “high” as they get older. Therefore, now is the time to really “nip it in the bud” and be firm about the changes you want to make.

If you put natural foods in front of your child and he or she refuses to eat them, you will probably have some painful days or weeks. The transition may be challenging at first; when embarking on any significant life change, it takes persistence and a deep desire to do what you know is right. Do your best to keep your goals in mind and remind yourself that your child will not starve! In fact, over time, your child will develop a taste for life-generating foods. However, the process doesn't have to be completely miserable for you or your child! To assist you in this process, here are some additional tips and tricks to help make the transition healthy and enjoyable:

- Simply upgrading the quality of what your child is eating today will make a huge difference. Click [here](#) to see some suggestions for converting the picky eater with Transition Foods.
- Stress the quality over the quantity of the foods your children are getting. If they are eating large amounts of processed, dead foods today, they are actually starving nutritionally! Therefore, if they start to eat just a little bit of natural, whole, live foods, or consume some green juice in the morning, they will be getting more nutritional value today than they were yesterday. Remember, what is important is progress, not perfection!
- Focus on the fruits and vegetables they DO like without worrying about varying the types. If they will eat an apple every day, give them an apple every day! Don't stress if your child will eat fruits but not vegetables. Younger children are wired for fruits. There's no need to push vegetables on them. Their desire for more savory, vegetable-based fare will come later.
- Use some tricks of the trade to make fruits and vegetables more attractive. For example, try raw honey, tahini, or almond butter on fruits such as bananas and apples; high-quality marinara sauce on acorn squash or avocado; or hummus with baked sweet potato. This is a great way to start getting the fruits and vegetables into your child's diet. As your child's palate changes, you may eventually be able to eliminate some of these extras.
- Planting gardens, growing herbs, and having your child help you cook or prepare foods can help them enjoy the foods more. When children (and adults, too) understand the source of their food, they are more likely to appreciate it. We want our children to understand the “why” behind our decision to change their diet.
- For more on the addictive nature of mainstream foods, read Thom Hartmann's, **The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight**

Playdates and Social Interactions

This is the time where healthy boundaries around what other people give your kids will come into play. It is way too early for flexibility, and although there is a time and a place to give in a little and allow for exploration, a playdate should not be one of those exceptions! This is definitely a time when you will want to stick to your guns and do what is best for your child's health.

When your child is on a playdate, make sure to bring food for him or her. Since a toddler is still too young for drop-offs, you or your caregiver can be there to ensure feeding time goes as desired. It's best to explain to your toddler beforehand that he or she may see foods at the playdate that are not good for her. It's never too early to point out that what others do is not necessarily what you or your child do. If your child wants to eat unfit foods that he or she sees, gently remind your child of the family parameters and divert his/her attention with something more health-generating. If all else fails, take your child into another room and explain it all again. No matter what, stick to what you say or else you will set the stage for repeat behavior. Upon returning home, praise your child for being so clever and understanding. Take every opportunity to positively reinforce the behaviors and attitudes you're trying to cultivate. Children learn far more from praise (which they will want to experience repeatedly) than from criticism and shame (which stresses them and shuts them down). Again, at this point, you still have most of the control around what your child consumes, so take advantage of this time to continue setting a solid foundation, nutritionally and emotionally.

This is also the time to establish boundaries socially. Kids are so much more comfortable knowing what's expected of them and what they should expect in turn. We cannot emphasize enough how helpful it is to your child to explain a potential scenario before it occurs. Say things like, "We don't eat other people's foods that Mommy didn't pack for you." The more you explain to your child, the better. Even if you don't think your child is understanding you, the tone you use and the approach you take make all of the difference. It makes your child feel like a part of the plan. If all else fails, just say, NO. Your child needs to know that no means no, without having to do a tango around it. There are times for explanations and colorful descriptions, and then there are times for a very strong, clear, unshakeable NO. Don't be afraid of being firm. In our experience, firmness has only made our children feel safer and helps them understand the rules of the family more clearly. Happy, unspoiled, well-balanced children grow up with a firm sense of boundaries and a deep source of unconditional love.

If you are worried about others constantly offering your child substances you don't want them to have and not respecting your preferences, you can always use the allergy excuse. Ultimately, we are all allergic to chemical-laden, unnatural foods, so it isn't really a lie. The only difference is the degree to which we experience dramatic symptoms. Therefore in essence, saying your child is allergic to these foods is accurate.

TV and Toys

Media brainwashing is fast, deep, and lasting. It begins the moment you switch the TV on. As soon as children are exposed to targeted marketing, they start to be robbed of their power. Exposing children to the constant stream of commercials and the insidious messages of mainstream programming cements their social conditioning. In addition, TV shows and the Internet are extremely addictive, and too much exposure to television and computer content can erode a child's attention span.

There is plenty of great entertainment for kids without ever switching on the TV. Consider buying, renting, and checking quality shows out from your local library, or even from online video stores. Consider banning TV at home (as many of us do), but reserve the right to pop in high-quality videos like the Baby Einstein series and all your old childhood favorites—like Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Oliver, Pollyana, Mary Poppins, Annie, the Shirley Temple movies, The Little Rascals, Strawberry Shortcake, Flipper, or Lassie. Our kids do not always have to watch what is on TV today (mostly junk) and this can be a fun trip down memory lane for you. The old musicals are especially fun!

As far as toys go, the idea that kids need flashing lights, talking dolls, and other obnoxious trinkets in order to learn or be entertained is far from the truth! Children do not need this extra stimulation. The world offers enough natural stimulation without synthetic and manufactured products always being pushed on them. Our children, if not overexposed to artificial stimulation, will gravitate toward the full range of nature's wonders (such as bugs, leaves, flowers, and wildlife) and all manner of arts and crafts projects far more than TV and battery-powered toys. Best of all, they become completely engrossed in their discoveries, and you too can enjoy these quiet moments to yourself.

It is far too early to expose your child to the hyper-stimulating and often violent imagery of video games. Keep your toddler away from video games at this ultra-impressionable time. They interrupt brain development and are terrible for eyes and attention spans.

Life Force Families Community Favorites:

- Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
- Oliver, Pollyana
- Mary Poppins
- Annie
- the Shirley Temple movies
- The Little Rascals
- Strawberry Shortcake
- Flipper
- Lassie

Closing Thoughts

People often talk about the “terrible twos” and think of temper tantrums and power struggles as normal and expected behaviors for toddlers. However, if we raised our toddlers on natural foods (to keep them balanced) and natural experiences (to support their instinctual learning processes) instead of canned stimulation—and if we set clear, healthy boundaries rather than confusing them with mixed messages—there would be no terrible twos!



Thank you. We look forward to serving you.

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