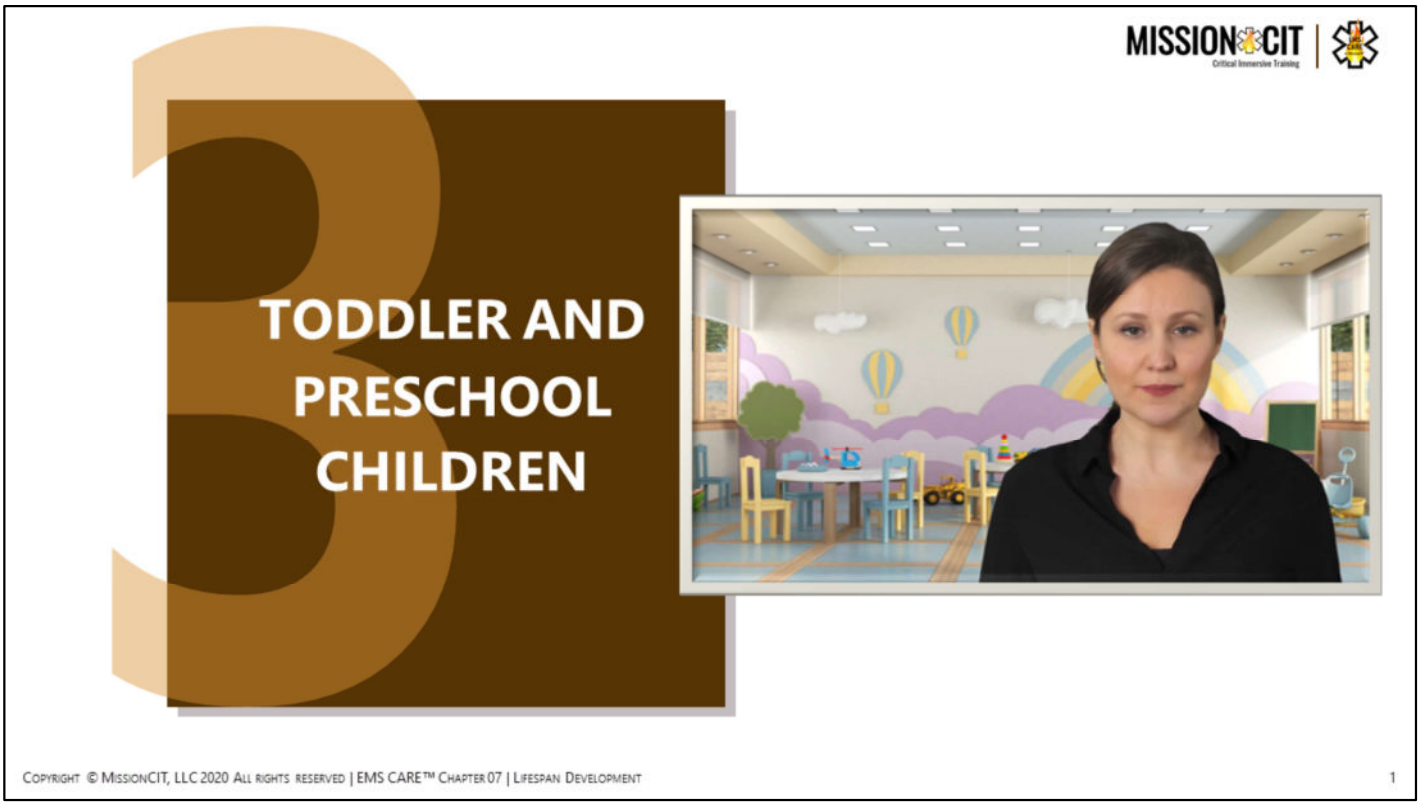
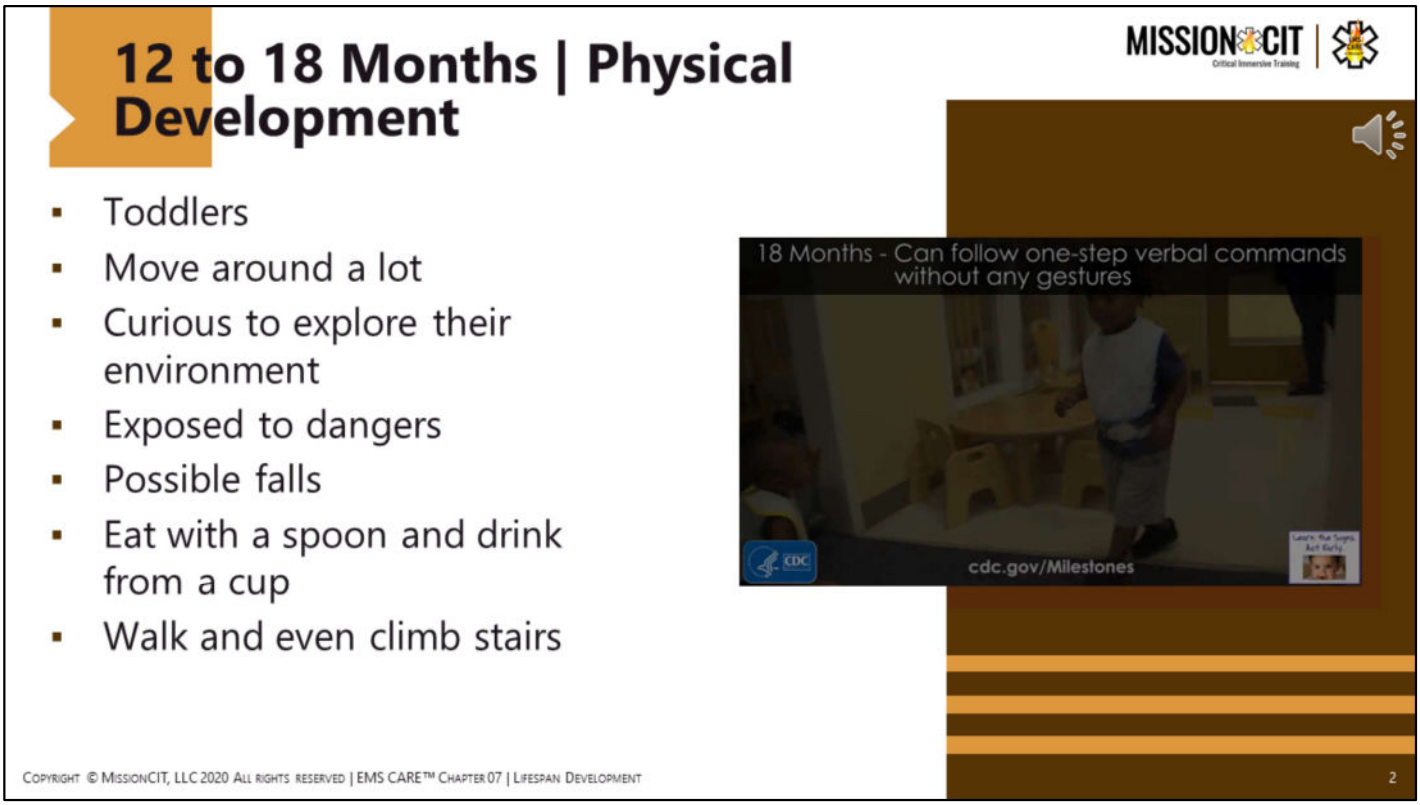


Thank you, Justin.

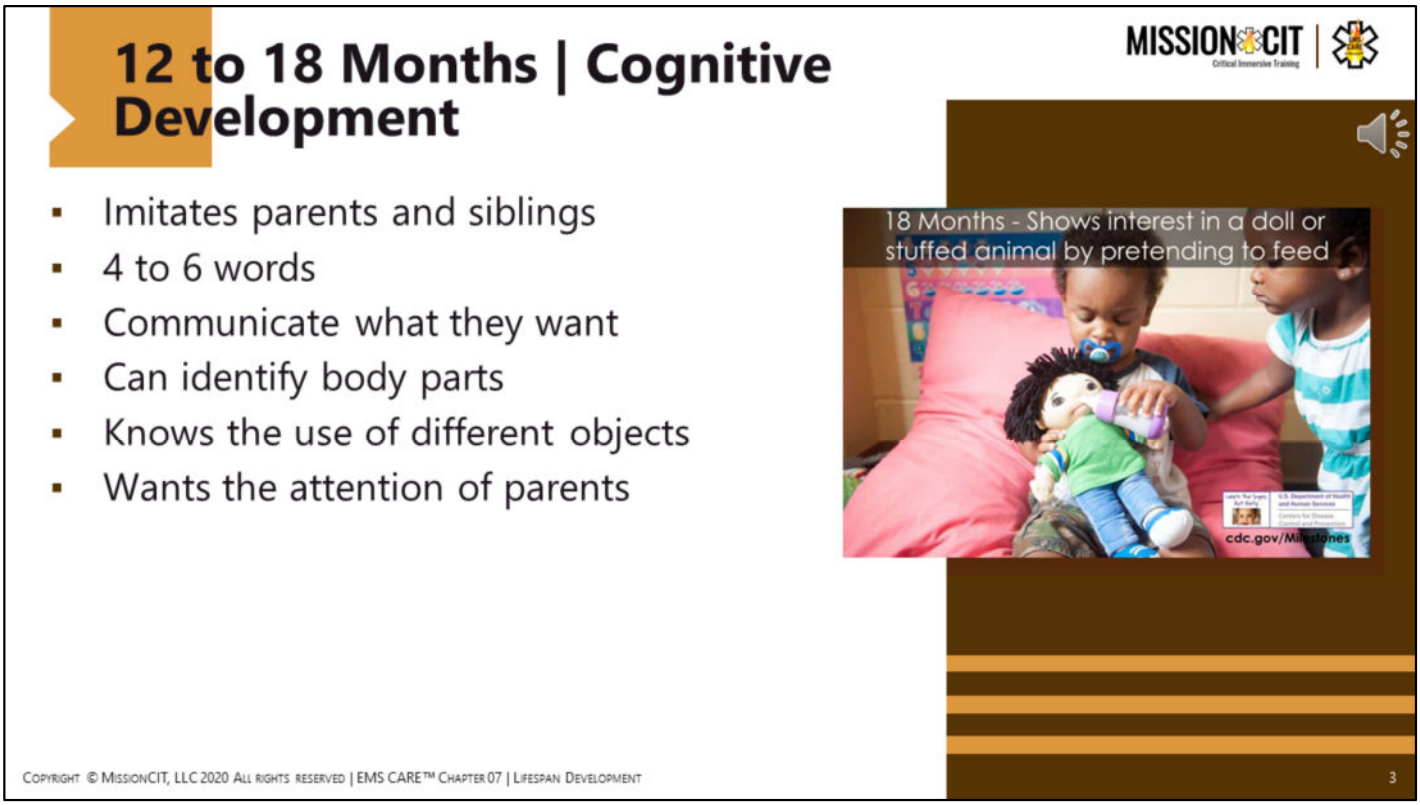
In this lesson, we will talk about the next stage of development, which is the toddler and preschool years. A child is a toddler from 12 to 36 months and a preschooler from 36 to 60 months.

Let’ see the exciting changes that happen during this phase.



During this time, babies have grown into toddlers, and this is when they start moving around. This is the time when they are curious and explore their environments extensively. This also opens the possibility of getting exposed to dangers and falls.

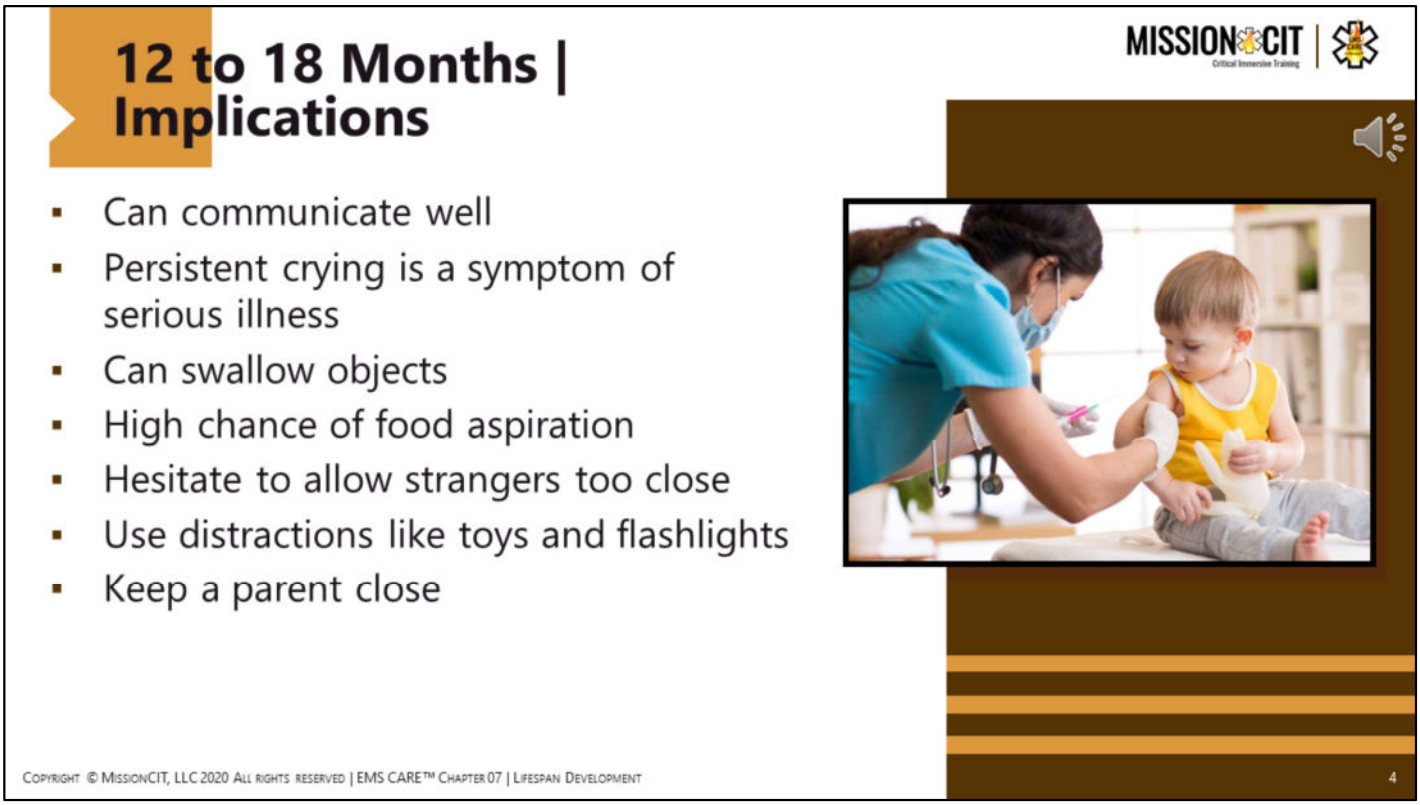
By 18 months, most children can walk and can even climb up the stairs. They may be able to eat with a spoon and drink from a cup.



Cognitive development is also rapid as a toddler can imitate parents and other elders like older siblings, caregivers, and other adults in the house.

In terms of communication too, there is a world of development. Toddlers can say at least 4 to 6 words, point to people or things, and can communicate what they want.

The toddler can identify body parts and follow simple instructions. They know the use of different objects and may want to get the attention of parents at all times.



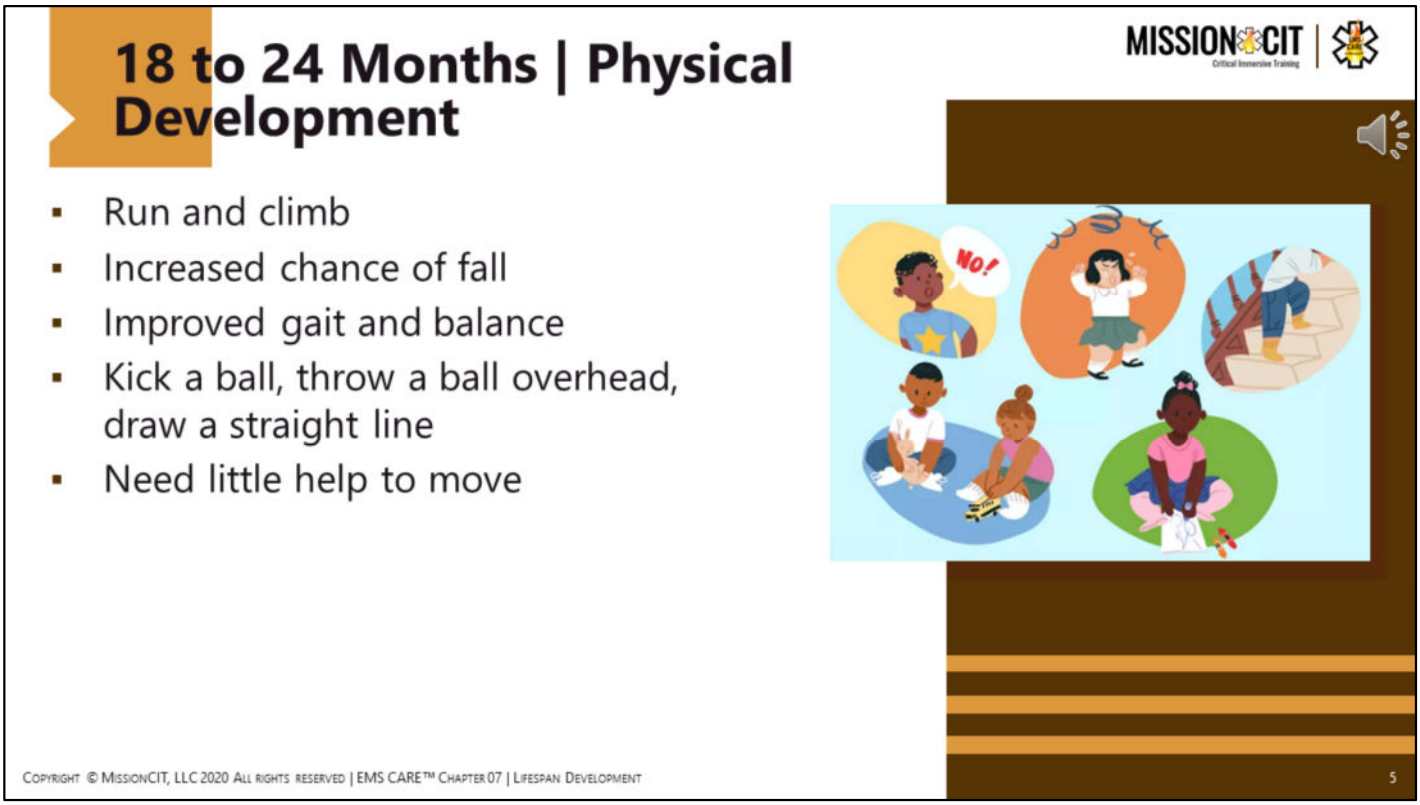
By this age, children can communicate what is bothering them. Still, persistent crying is a sign of serious illness.

Increased mobility exposes them to more dangers and there is also a possibility for exposure to poisons.

One of the aspects to watch out for is choking, as they can put objects in their mouth and even swallow them.

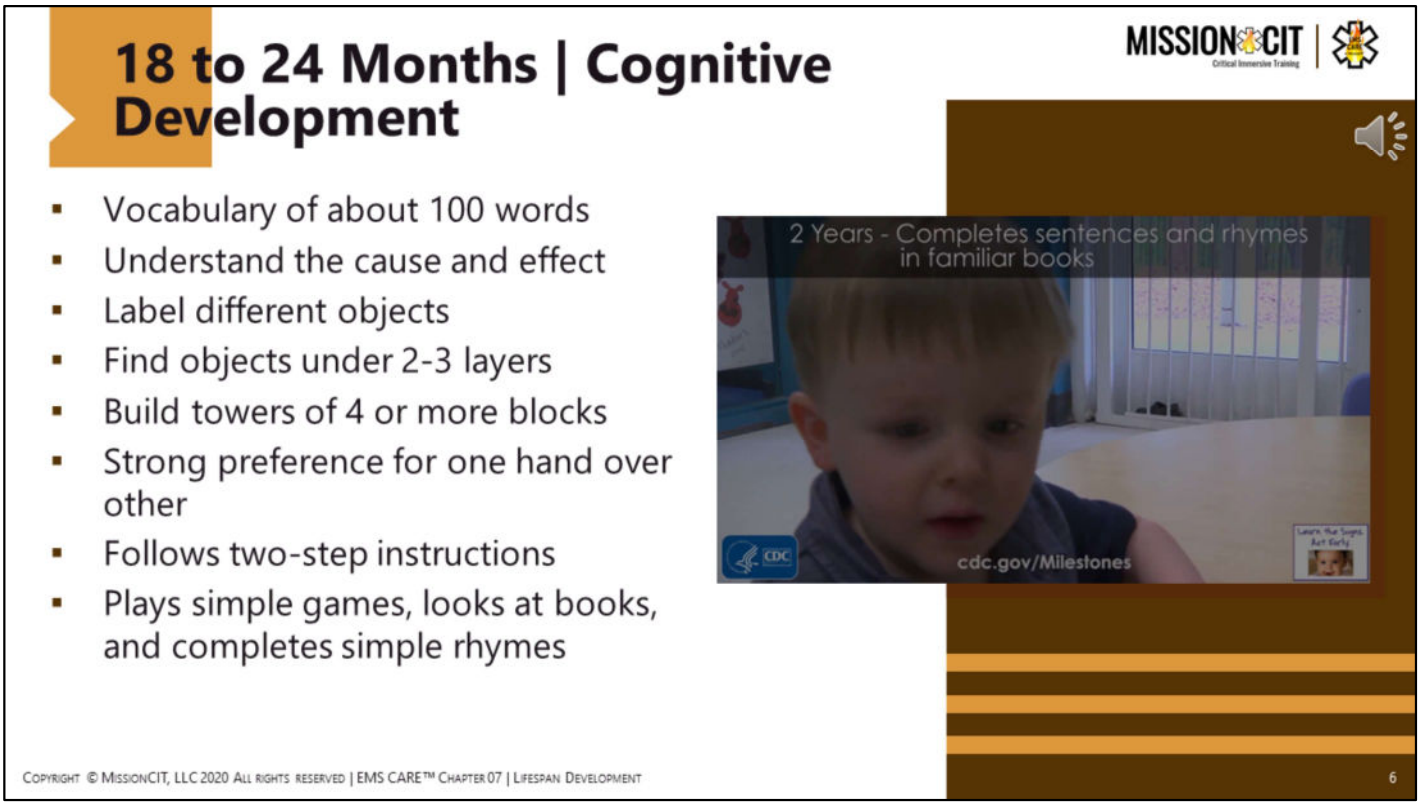
Likewise, children don't have the molars to grind food before swallowing, so there is a high chance of food aspiration.

Since children can identify you as a stranger, they may not be forthcoming for a physical exam. Keep the parent at close quarters and consider using a flashlight or a toy to distract the child while doing a physical examination.



Children tend to run and climb during this time, so this greatly increases the chances of fall. They also have improved gait and balance.

By two years of age, most children can kick a ball, throw a ball overhead, run, and draw a straight line. They are more physically accomplished and need little help from adults to move around.

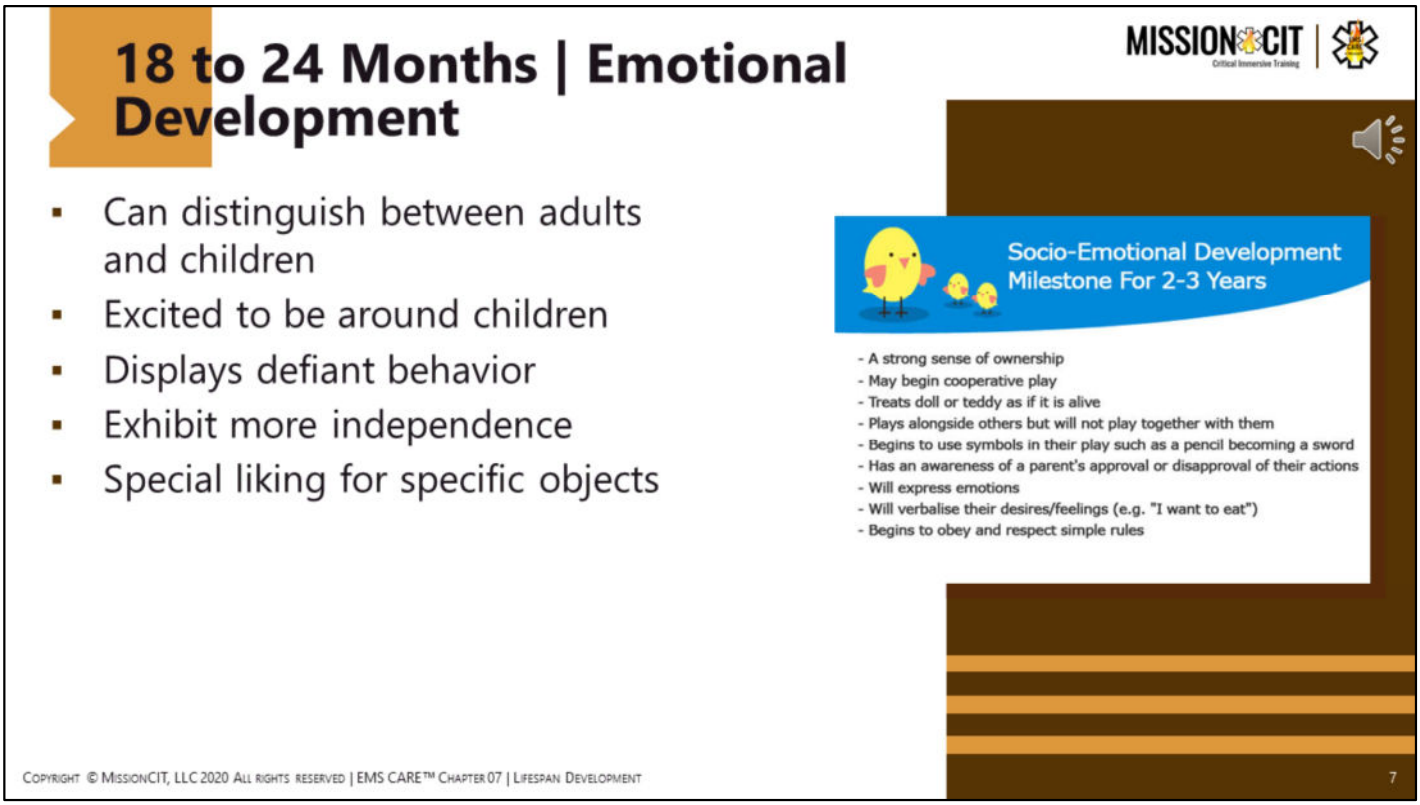


Rapid strides happen in language and communication, and by 24 months, children have a vocabulary of about 100 words. They can now understand the cause and effect of different actions and can even label different objects.

They can find things that are hidden under two or three layers, and may even be able to build towers of four or more blocks.

During this time, they have a strong preference for one hand over another and can follow two-step instructions.

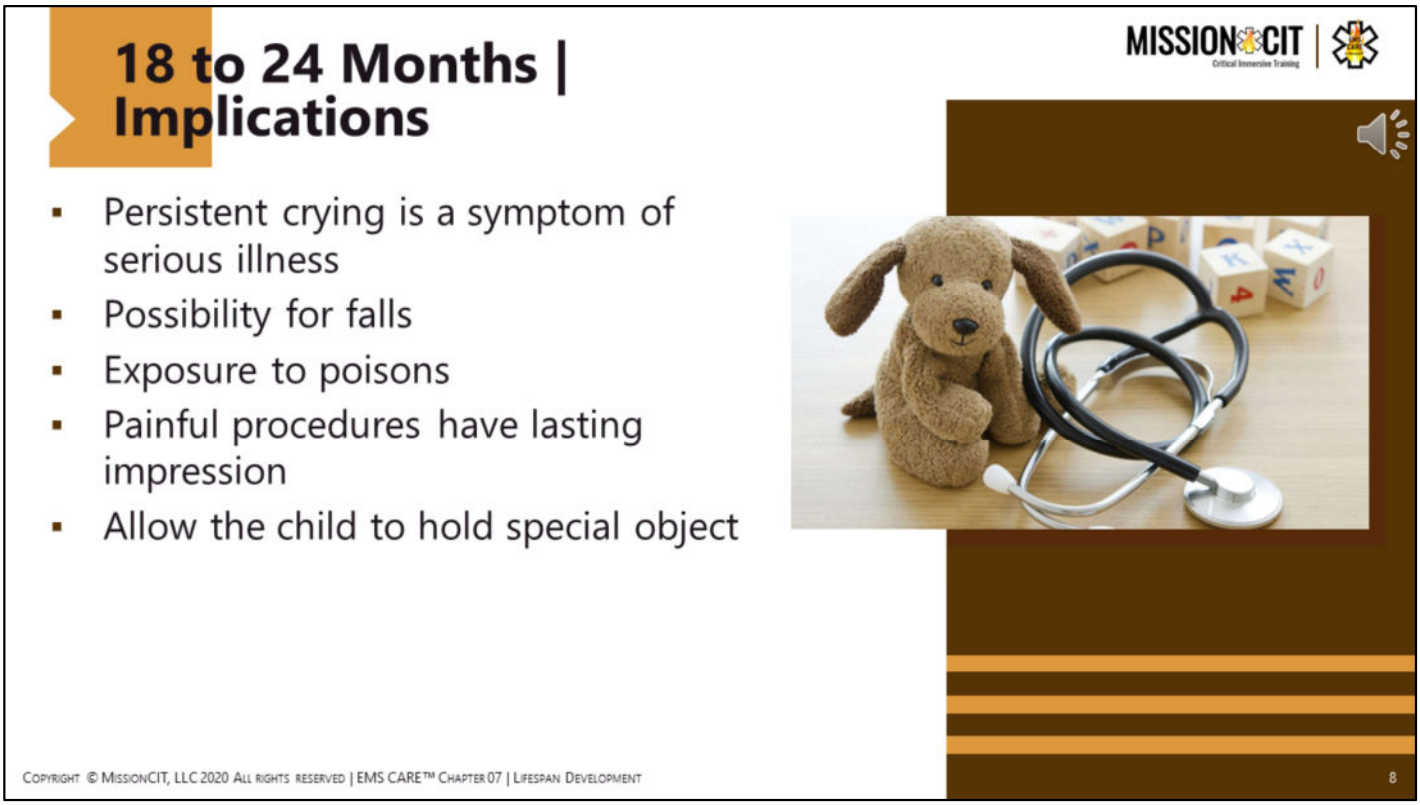
The child is familiar with books and objects in it, and can quickly identify them. Plays simple games and may be able to complete rhymes.



Considerable social and emotional development also happens during these months. They can distinguish between adults and children, and in fact, tend to get excited when they are around children.

By 24 months, displays defiant behavior, especially when asked to do something against their wishes. Overall, children tend to exhibit more independence in their thoughts and actions.

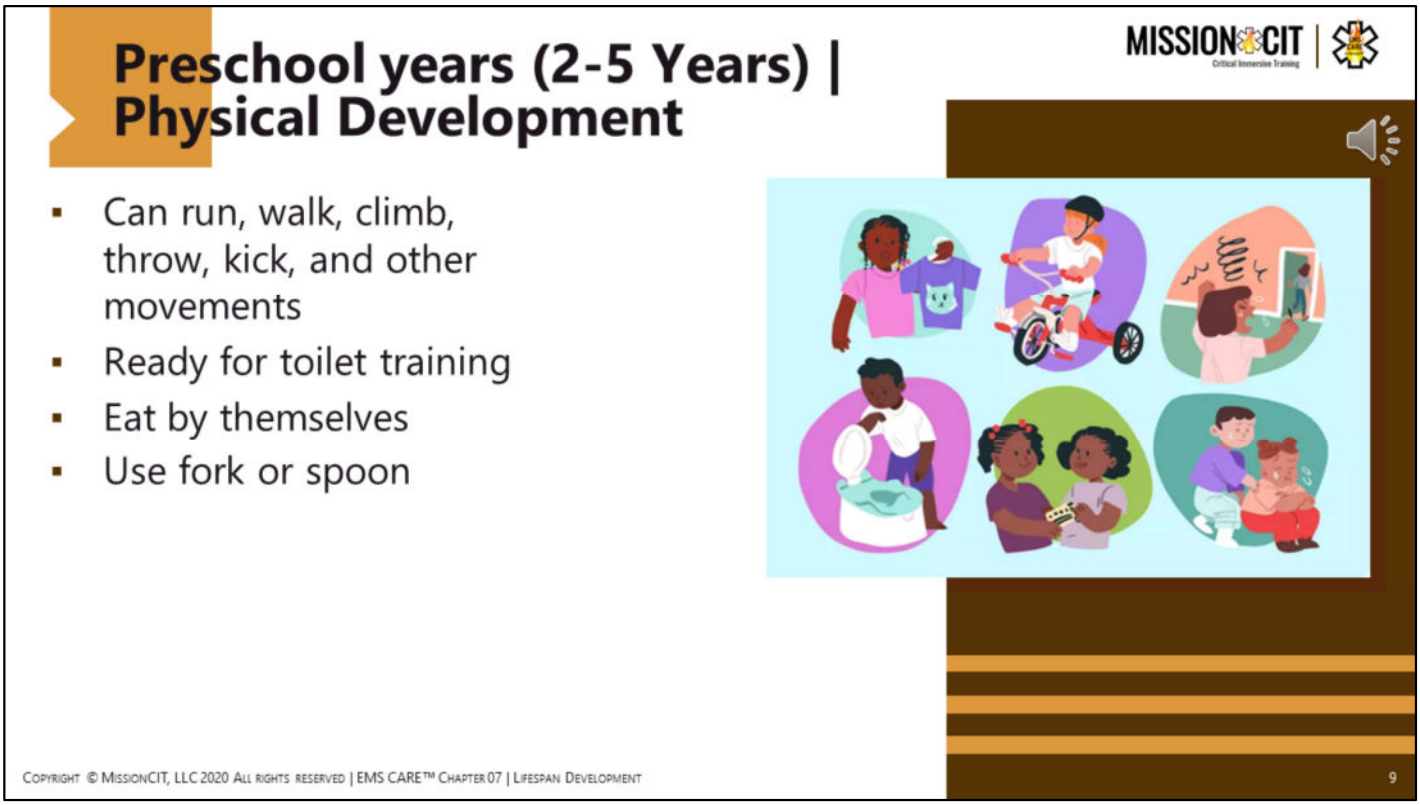
At the same time, they take comfort being around parents and may have a special liking for objects such as a particular toy or blanket.



Persistent crying is a symptom of serious illness even though the child can communicate better. This crying behavior must be treated as an emergency.

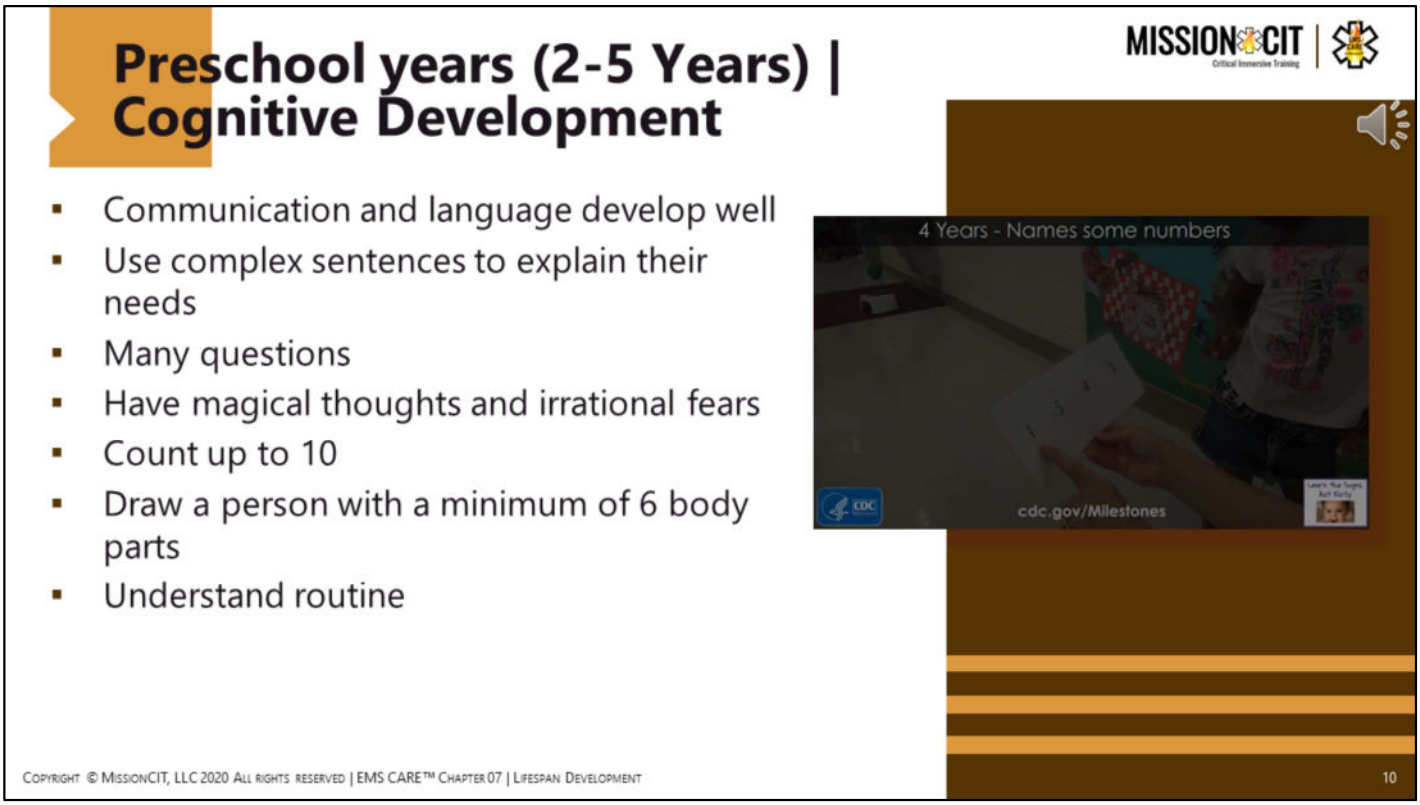
Besides, there is a possibility for falls and exposure to poisons and other sharp objects, given their curiosity to explore the environment around them.

By this age, children have memories, so painful procedures can have lasting impressions. Be careful about what you do. During physical examinations, it will help to allow the child to hold that special object.



By this age, children can perfectly run, walk, climb, throw, catch, kick, and do a whole range of movements. They are ready for toilet training and by five years, most of them are well-trained to use the bathroom when they have to relieve themselves.

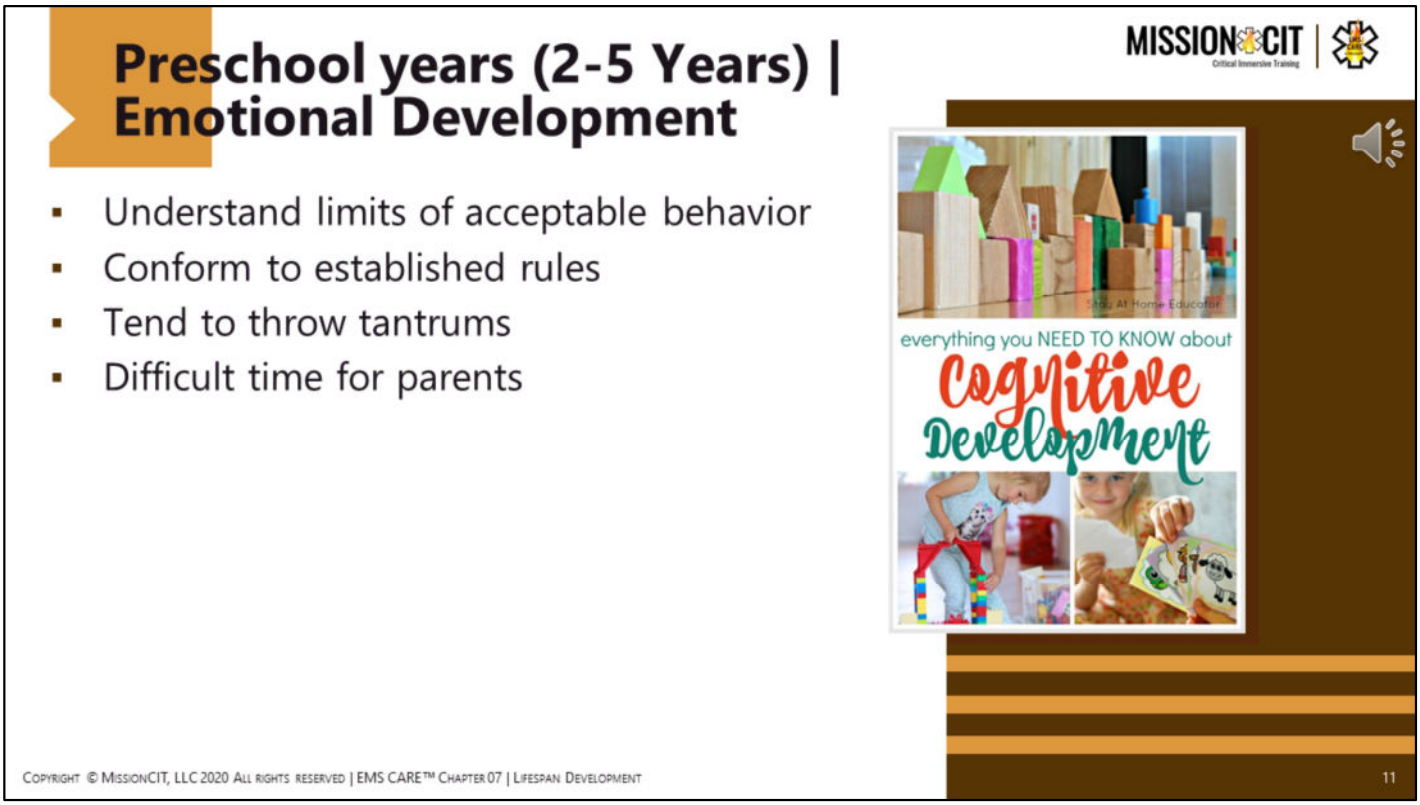
Children of this age can eat by themselves with little to no help from adults. They can use a fork and spoon comfortably, and sometimes, may even be ready to use a blunt knife.



Language and communication increase by leaps and bounds, and children can use complex sentences to talk and explain what they want. They can have perfect conversations with adults, and this can lead to a lot of questions about the world around them.

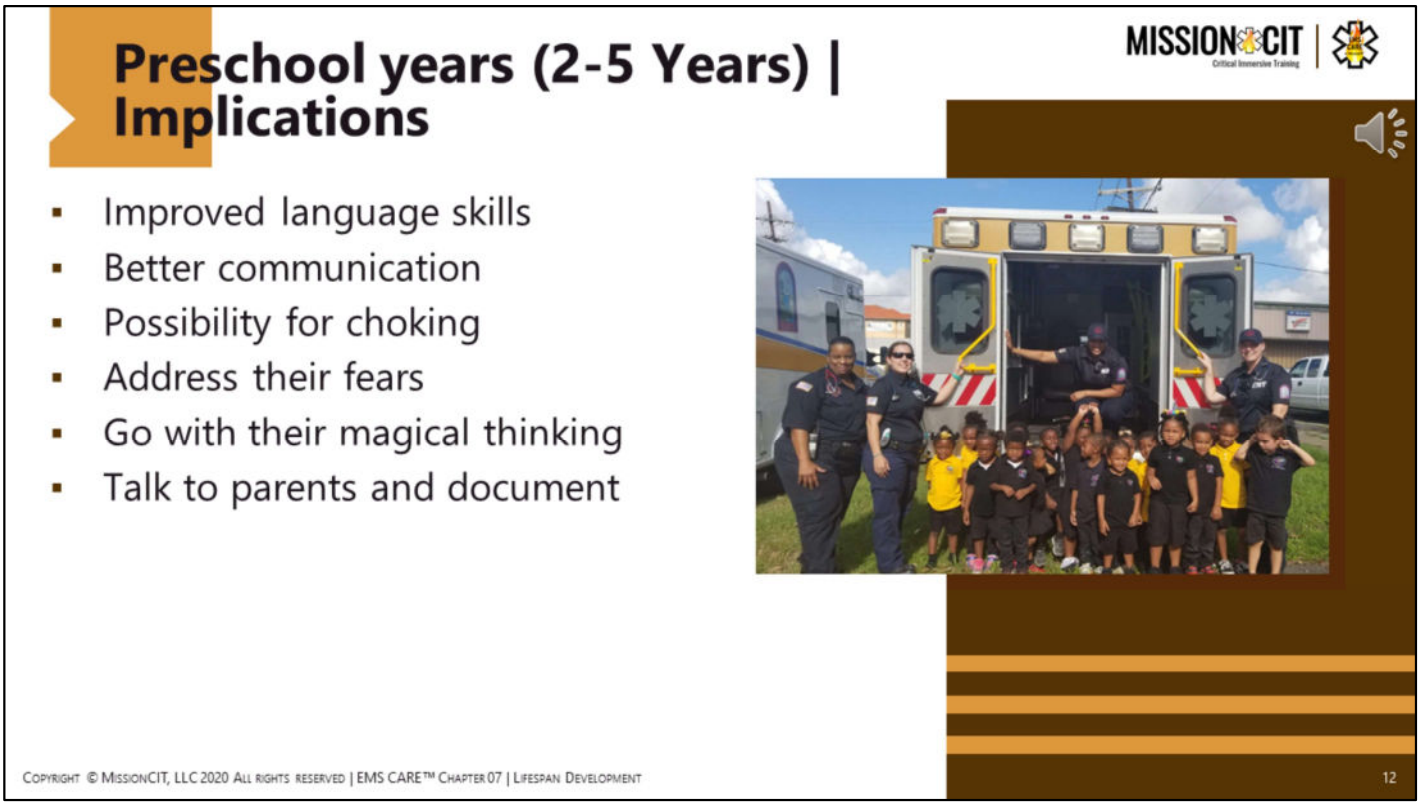
There are both magical thoughts and irrational fears, and these lead to a lot of pretend and play games.

Besides these, kids can count up to 10, draw a person with a minimum of six body parts, copy and draw geometric shapes, and can understand routines and everyday things that we use.



On the emotional front, they understand what acceptable behavior is and what is not, and tend to conform to established rules and practices.

At the same time, they also tend to throw many tantrums as they learn to strike a balance between doing what they want and following the rules. This can be a particularly difficult time for parents as they help children to learn and follow the rules.



Improved language makes it easy to help them understand what is going on and what you will be examining. Likewise, they can better communicate their pain and problems, and this could ease diagnosis to some extent.

Still, the presence of choking remains high as younger children tend to put things in their mouths.

While treating them, address their irrational fears, and go with their magical thinking to help them do what you want them to, such as swallowing medicine or inhaling a nebulizer.

Any developmental difficulties are identified by this age, so talk to the parents, and document everything.

This brings us to the end of this lesson and in the next one, Justin will talk about the developments that happen during 6 to 18 years.