



the family values toolkit

For Children Birth to Age 2

This Month's Featured Value Is: **Tolerance**

A tolerant person accepts diversity and doesn't prejudge others on the basis of religion, race, or gender. If we are to live in harmony with others and seek cooperative solutions to conflicts, we need to focus more on our common humanity than on our differences. How a person treats those who appear different depends to a large extent on what he or she is taught in childhood.



What Can Parents Do to Nurture This Important Value?

First, Set Goals:

Help your child feel secure enough to move past the stages of separation and stranger anxiety.

Up to about 6 months, most babies are unaware of differences in their primary caretakers, as long as that care is loving, secure, and responsive to their needs. Babies are "intolerant" of hunger and discomfort, but not very discriminating about which adult makes the hurt go away. But by midyear, their visual and other sensory development enables them to distinguish Mom from others, at which point any person looming over the crib--sometimes even Dad or Grandma--who is discovered not to be Mom (or their primary caretaker) may be initially greeted with squalls of protest. Around 12 months of age, this response may slip into separation anxiety, a desire to not be left alone or with an unfamiliar person. Parents can help young children ease past these early stages of separation anxiety and learn to tolerate new faces and experiences.

Next, Take Action! Try These Activities:

- ✓ **Easy does it--but do it.** Don't leave your child abruptly with an unfamiliar caregiver. Allow some time for a transition.
- ✓ **Don't scold your baby for clinginess.** It's a natural stage. Instead, let your baby spend time interacting with other adults while you're around.
- ✓ **As your child begins to develop his senses, encourage him to explore with color, tastes, texture, smell and sound.** Your own enthusiasm for these new experiences will show him the wider world is something exciting to be explored, not feared.

Then, Report Back!

Share your stories of success, your challenges, and overall experiences with others in our community @ responsibilityproject.com/familyvalues