

# Tool Man

My almost 17-month-old son has started using “tools”. When we put up the Christmas decorations, he started pulling chairs away from the table, pushing them over to the bookcase to try to climb and get at the nativity. Yesterday, he took down a wall hanging and began to use the hanger rod as a spoon for his mashed potatoes. When I told my dad about this mischief, he said that this behavior seems pretty smart. Yeah, I replied, smart like a chimpanzee! I really don’t remember the girls doing so much climbing, tool-using, or just general sabotage!

And another thing about little boys – the parental chasing. I always see moms chasing their little boys; running after them around the store, the zoo, wherever – and nine times out of ten, the kid being chased by the parent is a boy. I had a little boy almost a year and a half ago, and I’ve been wondering when my turn would come. Yesterday I got my answer. While I was getting my little boy dressed, he said an emphatic “NO!”, then turned around and ran from me. He dove under the dining room table, where I had to drag him out, kicking and screaming. So yeah, the chasing of little boys by their parents begins shortly after they learn to walk.

Ah, the toddler days again – feels like it’s been awhile, probably because the toddler in our family before our son was Disney, who is an almost perfectly behaved child. We often joke that Disney is [D.A.R.Y.L.](#) – remember that movie from the 80’s about a boy who is actually a robot? And she is a quick learner! We’ve been doing “sight words” with our Kindergartener Sammie, which are flash cards with words on them, like “orange”, “the”, “purple”, “my”, “I”, etc. Disney, who just turned 3, has been picking up the sight words as we practice with Sammie! She knows all the ones I listed above and is also starting to work on letter recognition – 3 years old is pretty early to start reading! I just feel badly for

Sammie, who has her own gifts but is also very competitive by nature – it might be difficult for her to see her little sister learning certain things faster than herself.

But the point is, Disney's toddler stage was barely noticeable, which is probably why her little brother seems like more than a handful – and I hate to tell myself this, but I think this is just the beginning!!