

## I Said “No!”

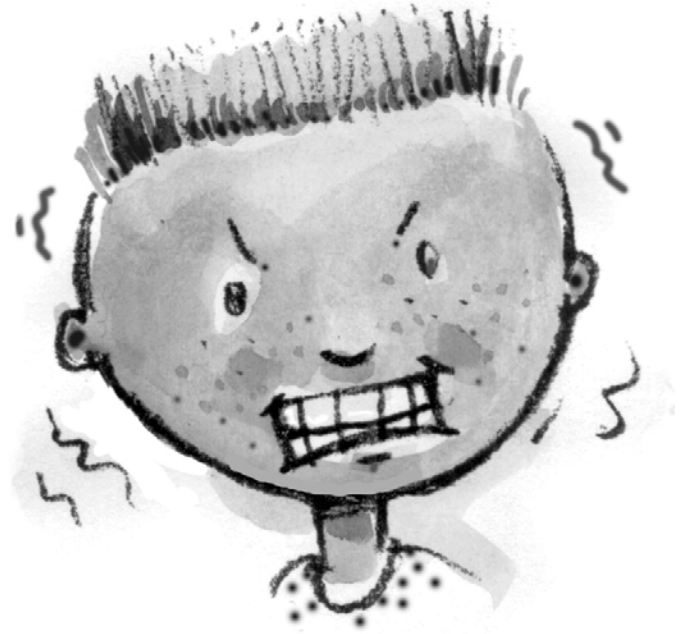
**S**ometimes you want me to do something and I shout, “NO!” Other times, when there’s something you don’t want me to do, I do it anyway.

You may think that I’m being a pest. I’m really not. *I’m just a kid trying to grow up.* You can help me grow well if you understand what’s happening in my life.

### What I Want You to Know

People are used to me being a baby. Since I was born, folks have carried me, done things for me, and bossed me around.

But I’m not a baby anymore. I’m growing up. This is good news, isn’t



it? I’m sure you don’t want to be pushing me in a stroller when I go to high school!

*I want to do more things for myself.* I’m still not very good at lots of things – like feeding myself, getting dressed, taking a bath, and putting things away.

Please don't take my growing independence as a sign that I'm a bad child.

I can learn only if you give me a chance to try things. Please help me learn to do more things on my own.

## **Here's How You Can Help Me**

The world is full of cool stuff. When I see interesting things, I want to play with them.

Be wise; keep dangerous things away from me. But I hope you will surround me with lots of things I can play with! Give me safe toys. *Let me explore. Let me make lots of choices.*

I hope you will understand that when you tell me to do something and I shout "NO!" I may be saying, "Hey! Give me a break. I'm capable of doing

things on my own, please give me a chance to show you how much I can do." And sometimes, when you ask me to *not* do something and I do it anyway, it's because I want to do my own thing. *I'm not trying to be rebellious or disrespectful.* I'm just trying to grow up. *Give me a safe choice.* You can calmly help me do things that are safe. If something's not safe – like playing with a knife – give me something I can play with. I shouldn't use a steak knife to cut my clay, but maybe you have a plastic knife I can use.

Please don't make too many rules or I'll feel like I can't do anything.

I hope that when the time comes for me to go to school, you will be proud of all the things I have learned to do on my own.