

Gain Awareness — llangarlluni

CARLIAQA LLANGLLARNGAUQ. – MY CHILD IS AWARE.



Photo: First peek at the teacher's new baby, Berna Joy. Goudie Collection, Courtesy of the Wood Island Tribal Council. This baby is too young to be aware.

Why do toddlers like to say, “No!”? The answer lies in a baby’s growing brain. In the transitions from infant to toddler, children develop their sense of self-awareness, both physical and emotional. By about 18 months, children recognize themselves as unique individuals. At this age, many know and use their own name, recognize their image in a mirror, share opinions, express personal feelings like pride and shame, and act with concern for others.

Saying “No!”, or “Mine!” is an excellent indication of this transition. It shows that a child can express likes and dislikes and that he understands he is an individual separate from his caregivers. This awareness is part of the process of gaining independence among toddlers who are also mastering walking and language.

This transition to self-awareness is recognized in Alutiiq culture. In the Alutiiq language, speakers differentiate between babies, who are unaware of their surroundings, and children who have gained awareness. The phrase *llangart’llria* literally means “he/she came to.” Alutiiq Elders associate this awakening with their earliest memories, with developing consciousness. Additionally, the term can be used to describe someone who awakens from being unconscious, or for an old soul—someone who knows more than their years.