

Developmental Milestones

Last Updated Monday, 30 October 2006

One to Six Months

The skills listed below are meant to be a guideline for keeping track of normal development. Remember that children develop at different rates. Your child may perform certain skills earlier or later than what is listed.

Social Skills

- Regards faces
- Smiles
- Resists toys being pulled away
- Recognizes familiar faces

Fine Motor Skills

- Follows moving objects with eyes
- Puts hands together
- Grasps toys
- Brings objects to mouth
- Reaches for objects

Language Development

- Reacts to sound
- Vocalizes with cooing sounds
- Laughs and squeals
- Looks in direction of voice/sounds

Gross Motor Skills

- On tummy, holds head and chest up
- Supports some weight on feet
- Supported sitting, head steady
- Rolls over

Parent-Child Developmental Activities

One to Six Months

Hold your baby close to you during feeding. Talk and smile! Propping bottles is convenient but it does not further development and can be dangerous.

A rocking chair provides a nice combination of comfort, motion, touching, and relaxation for both of you.

Put your baby's crib near a window to provide a wide range of colors and patterns and things to see.

Don't discourage tasting of safe objects as babies learn much about their world through their mouth.

Provide a "language envelope" for you baby by talking as you go about daily chores. Use a variety of expressions!

Place your child on his or her stomach often when playing on the floor. Some infants object to this position, but it is important for good motor development.

If your baby is content to spend a lot of time in an infant seat, be aware of the need to change position often.

Look at books together. Even at this young age, babies are interested in bright pictures and faces.

Car seats save lives! Please use one EVERY time your baby is in the car.

Toy Suggestions

Brightly colored mobiles on crib or playpen.

Lightweight, safe, texture objects to hold and "taste" such as plastic lids, brushes, scraps of materials, washcloths, plastic utensil, etc....

Sponges and floating objects are fun in the bath!

Cut faces out of magazines and paste on cardboard. Put them up along side of the crib and playpen.

Teething rings are fun toys, too!

The best toy of all is YOU!!! Play with your child often.

Six Months to Twelve Months

The skills listed below are meant to be a guideline for keeping track of normal development. Remember that children develop at different rates. Your child may perform certain skills earlier or later than what is listed.

Social Skills

-Shy with Strangers

-Works for toys out of reach

-Plays pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo

-Waves bye-bye

Fine Motor Skills

- Eyes follow dropping toys
- Pokes with index finger
- Bangs objects together
- Passes object from one hand to other
- Picks up small objects
- Finger feeds self

Language Development

- Responds to name
- Imitates speech sounds/babbles
- First words (other than mama/dada)
- Understands familiar words

Gross Motor Skills

- Rolls
- Sits without support
- Rocks on hands and knees
- Crawls, pulls self to stand
- Cruises furniture
- Stands alone momentarily

Parent-Child Development Activities

Six Months to Twelve Months

Imitate the sounds your baby makes and wait for a response. Change your responses to encourage your child to make sounds.

Place toys just out of reach to encourage forward movement.

Encourage baby to reach for toys from different positions, sitting, on hands and knees, standing, holding on. Once baby is comfortable with a position, reaching and playing helps develop balance.

Provide your child with a sippy-cup to practice drinking.

Give your child Cheerios, small pieces of cheese, cracker, etc. on the highchair tray to encourage finger feeding.

Listen for sounds in the environment as they occur: telephone, doorbell, clock chimes, door closing, water running, etc.

and indentify them for your child.

Allow your child to explore. Baby proof your house: outlet covers, gates on stairs, drawer locks, etc.

Talk to your child as much as possible about what you are doing, where you are going, what/who you see and hear etc. DO NOT use baby talk!

Use the playpen as a "special" place. Let some toys "live" in there to be visited by your child.

Latest research suggest that children learning to walk do best barefoot or in soft soled shoes. It has been found that the high top, hard soled walking shoes interfere with normal development of the feet and ankles and with proper balance.

Remember to take time to buckly your child in the car seat. It's the law!!!

Toy Suggestions

Pots and Pans - use for filling with objects or as drums

Mirrors- at floor level for playing

Musical toys- hide under blankets for baby to find

Soft blocks- for exploring textures, banging together

Picture books- board book and texture books are fun at this age

Plastic cups- fun in bath and to chew on

Twelve to Eighteen Months

The skills listed below are meant to be a guideline for keeping track of nomral development. Remember that children develop at different rates. Your child may perform certain skills earlier or later than what is listed.

Social Skills

- Enjoys looking at picture books
- Indicates wants/needs without crying
- Imitates housework
- Drinks from a cup
- Begins to use a spoon

Fine Motor

- Turns pages of books
- Scribbles with crayons

-Puts objects in/out of containers

-Stacks three blocks

-Puts together simple puzzles

Language Development

-"Fetches" requested objects

-Chooses objects from groups

-Identifies two- five body parts (by pointing or imitating words)

-Five to ten word vocabulary

Gross Motor Skills

-Walks alone, may fall or stumble

-Stoops and recovers objects easily

-Climbs, kneels, and walks backwards

-Avoids obstacles when walking

Parent-Child Development Activities

Twelve to Eighteen Months

During bath time, name your child's body parts as you wash them. Also, give your child the washcloth and have him/her wash the parts you name. Never leave your child unattended in the bath tub.

Encourage your child to name pictures or repeat after you.

Allow your child to feed him/herself as much as possible. A plastic tablecloth under the highchair makes clean up easier.

Create the need for speech. Encourage and reward verbal responses for wants and needs.

Read to your child often. Ask your child to point to name pictures in the book. At this age, the story becomes more interesting.

If there are older children in the family, teach them to be good listeners. Encourage them not to talk for the young child.

Give your child simple task to do - retrieve objects for you from another room or giving things to others.

Filling up containers and dumping them out is a major activity for this age. You may get your child to help pick up toys, but watch out for the dumping part that comes next.

Be silly! Children love it!

Don't forget to use the car seat! It is the law!!

Toy Suggestions

Simple puzzles that feature one shape to a space.

Prop an empty wrapping paper tube against a chair or table. Let small cars, balls, or little people toys slide down through it.

Boxes, coffee cans, and buckets are great for stacking and filling.

Pull toys help develop coordination.

Jars and lids are fun!

Nesting toys- measuring cups, bowls, and boxes.

Big empty appliance boxes are WONDERFUL to play in!

Eighteen to Twenty Four Months

The skills listed below are meant to be guidelines for keeping track of normal development. Remember that children develop at different rates. Your child may perform certain skills earlier or later than what is listed.

Social Skills

- Uses spoons well
- Helps with simple household tasks
- Removes clothes
- Begins to put on clothes
- Washes and dries hands

Fine Motor Skills

- Turns knobs
- Imitates crayon strokes
- Stacks 5-6 blocks
- May begin to show hand preference
- Scribbles in circles
- Unzips

Language Development

- Understands 100-200 words
- 30-50 word vocabulary (NO is #1)
- Uses 2-3 word sentences

- Follows directions
- Ask questions
- Matches like objects
- Names pictures/objects

Gross Motor Skills

- Kicks a ball
- Runs with coordination
- Jumps off floor with both feet
- Throws a ball overhand

Parent-Child Developmental Activities

Eighteen to Twenty Four Months

Give your child the opportunity to dress and undress him/herself. Help only as much as necessary.

Encourage your child to use a spoon for most of the meal.

As your child's speech develops, it will be easier for him/her to learn proper speech structures if you talk to your child in short, simple sentences.

Children learn to speak by listening to others. At this age, you will notice frequent pronunciation errors. Do not correct your child. Simply repeat what he/she has said using the correct word. For example, if your child sees a dog and says "goggie" reply, "Yes, there is a doggie!"

Involve your child in simple household chores. Even small children can help wash a floor or clean a window and it makes them feel important.

Provide crayons, markers, pens, and paper for experimenting with color and creativity. Walls are a favorite place for young artists, so supervise well.

Outdoor activities such as running races and kick ball provide good practice in balance and coordination and are fun for the whole family.

Continue to read to your child. At this age, children love to talk about the pictures and help read the story.

Most children are not ready for toilet training and rushing this process can cause problems. Wait about six months or so and be sure the child is ready.

Buckle up even on short trips in the car!

Toy Suggestions

Simple shape puzzles are challenging for toddlers.

Paper bags are excellent for drawing and coloring activities.

Put on the music and dance! Toddlers love any kind of music!

A toy telephone is a wonderful toy at this age. Try to find a used, real phone at a garage sale.

Boxes are great fun and stimulate the imagination.

Things with buttons to push and levers to pull are wonderful!

Twenty Four to Thirty Months

The skills listed below are meant to be a guideline for keeping track of normal development. Remember that children develop at different rates. Your child may perform certain skills earlier or later than what is listed.

Social Skills

- Temper Tantrums
- Separates from mother easier
- Begins to play interactive games
- Maintain longer attention span
- Dresses with supervision

Fine Motor Skills

- Inserts objects onto small containers
- Imitates drawn lines accurately
- Takes things apart and puts back together
- Folds paper
- Stacks 5-10 blocks

Language Development

- Understands at least 300 words
- 50-100 word vocabulary
- Use plurals
- 50% OF speech is understandable
- Uses longer sentences
- Identifies big and little
- Follows two step commands

Gross Motor Skills

- Jumps off 4-6 inch low step
- Goes up and down stairs using railing
- Walks on tip toes
- Runs with good balance
- Stands on one foot briefly

Parent-Child Developmental Activities

Twenty Four to Thirty Months

Allow your child to dress him/herself. Larger size clothes provide good practice, too.

Even though you will probably hear "What's that?" more than you can count, take time to answer your child's questions. It is important to his/her growing vocabulary.

Take walks with your child. Point out sounds you hear and encourage your child to touch and feel things.

Pretend to be different animals. Make their sounds and move like they do. It's fun for the whole family. Make a Charade game out of it and guess what animal is being imitated.

Play hide-n-seek game which requires directions such as "it is behind the chair, under the table, on the couch, etc."

Music and nursery rhymes are popular at this age and help to increase language skills.

Try to ignore temper tantrums. Giving attention to them serves to reward the behavior.

Your child will now have his/her favorite stories. Reading them over and over provides a solid language base and improves memory skills.

Provide a foot stool to encourage independence when hand washing or brushing teeth.

Car safety is important. Use car seats on every trip.

Allow your child to make choices from two items to wear or items to eat at meal times or snack to encourage independence.

Show your child how to make shapes with play dough to promote fine motor and language skills.

Toy Suggestions

Use plastic tubing or a stiff string for stringing large beads.

Cut out pictures from magazines and put them in a photo album for your child to look through and tell about.

Puppets stimulate imagination and language.

Recycled containers such as butter tubs, liquid soap dispensers and plastic detergent scoops are fun bath toys.

Empty cardboard box any size-decorate to make cars, blocks, or animals to expand your child's imagination.

Riding on scooters and trikes are a favorite at this age.

Thirty to Thirty Six Months

The skills listed below are meant to be a guideline for keeping track of normal development. Remember that children develop at different rates. Your child may perform certain skills earlier or later than what is listed.

Social Skills

- Plays house
- Dresses/undresses self
- Beginning to unbutton
- Takes turns/shares

Fine Motor Skills

- Eats with a fork
- Does simple puzzles easily
- Holds crayon with fingers
- Copies circle and crosses
- Unbuttons
- Strings beads

Language Development

- 100-200 word vocabulary
- 90% of speech is understandable
- Identifies 4 colors
- Understands in, out, on, under, and behind
- Knows full name
- Ask "who, what, where and why" questions
- Can carry on conversations

Gross Motor Skills

- Pedals tricycle
- Walks up/down stairs easily
- Hops on one foot
- Jumps over things

-Improved balance

Parent-Child Developmental Activities

Thirty to Thirty Six Months

Keep reading together. Look through catalogs and identifying things is great fun.

Messy activities are popular at this age. Finger painting with instant pudding is fun and easy.

Point out colors everywhere you go. Make a game out of finding all of the blue things, red things, etc.

Stuttering is normal at this age. Be patient!!

Play follow the leader using different types of movement: hopping, crawling, walking backwards, acting like an animal, etc.

Cut different sized shapes out of construction paper and have your child find all the shapes that are the same.

Need help in the kitchen? Your child can stir, pour, set the table, etc. When you make cupcakes let your child put the muffin papers in the pan holes for you.

Provide opportunities for drawing and coloring. Have your child imitate lines and simple shapes.

"Why?" becomes popular now. Do your best to give an answer!

Begin to teach your child the names of family members and where you live.

Don't forget a car seat or a booster seat. Buckle up for ALL trips!!

Toy Suggestions

Muffin tins and egg cartons make good sorting toys. Your child can sort objects by colors, shape, or size.

Clothespins provide finger dexterity.

Big boxes are still loads of fun!

Recycle old toys. 2 year olds find new ways to play with them.

Kitchen sets open up a whole world of imagination. Save food boxes and plastic containers to stock the shelves with.