

Child Development Chart

Normal Developmental Behaviors

(revised July 2019)

	Cognitive/Language	Psychological	Motor	Emotional/Social	Sexual
0-6 Months	Recognition of caregiver; recognizes and responds to name; discriminates between familiar and unfamiliar faces; reaches for familiar people or toys.	Attachment to caretaker; totally dependent; totally trusting; learn intimacy.	Sucking; hands clenched/grip; neck muscles develop; lifts head and chest when on stomach; rolls over; sits with & without support; reaches for objects.	Expresses affection; shows interest in faces; becomes excited when played with; smiles and babbles with people.	Erections possible; both sexes can be stimulated.
6-12 Months	Objects can be held in memory; learns through routines and rewards; recognizes name; says two to three words besides “mama” and “dada”; imitates familiar words.	Separation from caregiver; begins to develop a sense of self; learns to get needs met; trusts adults; stretches arms to be picked up; likes to look at self in the mirror.	Stands without support; creeps/crawls; walks with help; pulls self to standing position and stands unaided; transfers object from one hand to the other; drops and picks up toy; feeds self a cracker; holds cup with two hands; drinks with assistance; holds out arms and legs while being dressed.	Becomes more emotionally attached to caregiver; plays simple games with adults; enjoys communicating with others; expresses pleasure and displeasure.	Generalized genital play.
12 – 18 Months	Experiments with physical environment understands the word “no”; comes when called; recognizes words as symbols for objects, e.g. cat/meows; uses 10 to 20 words, including names; combines two words such as “daddy bye-bye”; waves good-bye and plays pat-a-cake; makes the sounds of familiar animals; gives a toy when asked; uses words such as “more” to make wants known; points to his or her toes, eyes and nose; brings objects from another room when asked.	Early social development; egocentric; accepts limits; develops self-esteem; plays by self.	Creeps up stairs; gets to standing position alone; walks alone; walks backward; picks up toys from floor without falling; pulls and pushes toys; seats self in child-sized chair; moves to music; turns pages two or three at a time; scribbles; turns knobs; paints with whole arm movement; shifts hands; makes strokes; uses spoon with little spilling; drinks from cup with one hand unassisted; chews food; unzips large zipper; begins to indicate toilet needs; removes shoes, socks, pants, sweater, etc.	May show fear in new situations; repeats sounds or actions to get attention; begins to follow simple directions; may need help coping with temper tantrums; may begin to explore alone but with parent close by; engages in simple pretend or modeling behavior, such as feeding a doll or talking on the phone; demonstrates joint attention, e.g. the child points an airplane in the sky and looks at caregiver to make sure the caregiver sees it too.	Continues generalized genital play.

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18-36 Months	<p>Can conduct experiments inside head but limited to experience; rapid language growth; copies adult chores in play; carries on conversation with self and dolls; asks “what’s that?” and “where’s my...?”; knows 100-300 words at 2 years; 900 words at 3 years; understands a lot more than what they can say; gives first name; holds up fingers to tell age; combines nouns and verbs “mommy go”; refers to self as “me” rather than by a name; Ego-centric: assumes you know what he/she knows; likes to hear same story repeated; may say “no” when means “yes”; cannot incorporate a doll to represent themselves, but can use other objects in play that represent real life.</p>	<p>Autonomy struggles; learns system of meeting needs; seeks adult approval; social development increases; points to things he or she wants; joins in play with other children; shares toys; Takes turns with assistance; separation anxiety common (<u>look for lack of separation anxiety in children who have endured trauma.</u>)</p>	<p>Can run, throw ball, kick ball, jump; goes up stairs with one hand held by adult; turns single pages; snips with scissors; hold crayon with thumb and fingers (not fist) but may ignore adults as they draw since they must concentrate; uses one hand consistently in most activities; rolls, pounds, squeezes, and pulls clay; uses spoon with little spilling; gets drink from fountain or faucet independently; opens door by turning handle; takes off and puts on coat with assistance; washes and dries hands with assistance.</p>	<p>Copies others, especially adults and older children; shows more and more independence and may show defiant behavior; mainly plays alongside other children (parallel play), but is beginning to engage other children in play; follows simple instructions; may start to understand the idea of “mine” and “his” or “hers”; may feel uneasy or anxious with major changes in routine; begins to learn how to take turns in games and follows directions with 2-3 steps; names a friend and may show concern for a friend who is sad or upset.</p>	<p>Continued generalized genital play; early sex-role development; interested in potty behavior; touches and rubs own genitals, disinhibited – no sense of privacy; role playing to understand what adults are doing, such as playing doctor.</p>
3-5 Years	<p>Wide range of language skills at this age. Can conduct experiments inside head; cannot sequence; understands some abstract concepts: colors, numbers (but this DOES NOT mean they can tell you “how many times” – they can count tangible objects in a room, like chairs, crayons, etc.), knows shapes, time (NOT clock time, but days, before/after, “naptime”, “bedtime”); understands family relations (baby/parent); can tell a story; has a sentence length of 4</p>	<p>Can cooperate; cannot separate fantasy from reality; has nightmares; models same-sexed parent; experiences and copes with feelings (sad, jealous, embarrassed) but they are all or nothing, meaning a child can be angry at their parent one minute but once the parent apologizes feelings shift and all is good again; plays and interacts with other children; dramatic play is closer to reality, with</p>	<p>Swings/climbs; uses small scissors; jumps in place; walks on tiptoes; balances on one foot; rides a tricycle; begins to skip; dances; bathes and dresses; runs around obstacles; walks on a line; pushes, pulls, steers wheeled toys; uses slide independently; throws ball overhead; catches a bounced ball; skates; jumps rope; pastes and glues appropriately; skips on alternating feet; buttons and unbuttons large buttons; washes hands independently; blows nose when reminded;</p>	<p>Cooperates with other children and may prefer to play with other children than alone; enjoys new things and activities; may want to please caregivers and peers; is aware of gender; can start recognizing what is real and what is make-believe.</p>	<p>Generalized genital play (rubbing genitals until raw is <i>not normal</i>); masturbation to orgasm in females is possible; early experimentation; watches/asks about body functions; may view private parts as funny or serious; gender identity established.</p>

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3-5 Years cont.	To 5 words; has a vocabulary of nearly 1000 words; names at least one color; understands “tonight”, “summer”, “lunchtime”, “yesterday”; knows his or her last name, name of street on which he or she lives and several nursery rhymes; uses past tense correctly; can speak of imaginary conditions “I hope”; understands basic concept of right and wrong – punishment centered; at age 4 can typically grasp truth vs. lie, but may confuse the difference between a lie and a mistake.	attention paid to detail, time, and space; plays dress up; symbolic representation of self begins (can now use a doll or picture to represent themselves.)	uses toilet independently; drawing improves and by age 4 will trace and draw stick figures.		
6-9 Years	Can think using symbols; can recognize differences; makes comparisons; can take another’s perspective; defines objects by its use; knows spatial relationships like “on top”, “behind”, “far”, and “near”; knows address; identifies penny, nickel, dime; knows common opposites like “big/little”; asks questions for information; distinguishes left from right; able to separate fantasy from reality; improved sequencing of events. By age 8, should be able to read a face clock.	Early close peer relationships; Presence of well-developed defenses; develops identity outside family (school, friends); has likes and dislikes (food, friends, games); chooses own friends; plays simple table games; plays competitive games; engages in cooperative play with other children involving group decisions, role assignments, fair play. Egocentrism crumbles – suddenly questions how others think of them.	Is increasing small muscle motor skills; cuts food with a knife; laces shoes; dresses self completely; ties bow; brushes independently; crosses streets safely.	Shows complex play using lots of imagination; shares well; reassures friends when they are upset; has best friends; sense of humor increases; able to control conduct and behavior; will defend and care for babies and toddlers.	Automatic mental reactions (defenses) can reduce experimentation, but some continues. Plays house, wedding, family role play games.

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10-15 years	Can engage in inductive and deductive logic; understands hypothetical situations; conflicts with parents.	Increased autonomy struggles; increased focus on identity; focus on peer relationships; rebellious; often moody; romantic feelings; struggle with sense of identity; feels awkward or strange about his or her body; worries about being normal' frequently changing relationships.	Greater body competence (e.g., physical coordination); manual dexterity, growth patterns vary.	More independence from parents and family; stronger sense of right and wrong; beginning awareness of the future; more attention to friendships and teamwork; growing desire to be liked and accepted by friends; learns by watching and talking with others; gives support when others are stressed or upset; begins to see things from viewpoint of others; still may require help to express feelings in appropriate ways; begins to form identity; starts romantic interests.	Puberty; sex organs mature; males ejaculate and have wet dreams; both sexes able to masturbate to orgasm with fantasies; girls develop physically sooner than boys; may display shyness, blushing, and modesty.
16-21 Years	Uses formal logic (e.g., opposes racism); debates and can change sides of debate; understands probabilities; is more practical in their abstract thinking; begins to analyze experiences for relevance; conflict with parents begins to decrease.	Interest in relationships; solidifies personal identity; becomes goal directed; sometimes rebellious; increased concern for others; increased concern for future; places more importance on his or her role in life.	Heightened physical power, strength and coordination.	More romantic interests; spends more time with friends and peers; more self-identity with clothes; music, hair, tattoos, etc.; may push limits; may select adult other than parents for role models; desires more independence; may experiment with drugs, alcohol, sex, etc.	Feelings of love and passion; development of more serious relationships; sense of sexual identity established; increased capacity for tender and sensual love.

Chart adapted from Katie Thompson, Elon College student intern, NC Guardian ad Litem Program. Sources include: "Infant and Toddler Development," Dr. Maureen Vandermaas-Peeler, Elon College; "Child Development," Ray Newnam, Ph.D.; "LD In Depth," LD OnLine, www.ldonline.org; "Growing Up," Pasternak and Kroth; "Your Child's Growth: Developmental Milestones," American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org; and "Normal Adolescent Development," American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, www.aacap.org; National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development; www.2.ed.gov