

Normal Development of Children

Each child is different and special in his or her own way. You will find unique traits for each of your children. There are, however, developmental milestones that most children follow. Some may vary, but this list provides estimates of changes and developments you will likely see. You can use these to prepare for the next phase of your adventure with your child.

Birth-One month

1. Moro reflex (spontaneous startle with arms out quickly & in slowly to midline) present
2. Vigorous sucking reflex present
3. Lying prone (face down); lifts head briefly
4. Lying prone; makes crawling movements with legs
5. Held in sitting position; back is rounded, head held up momentarily
6. Hands tightly fisted
7. Reflex grasp of object with palm
8. Startled by sound; quieted by voice
9. Ringing bell produces decrease of activity
10. May follow object with eyes to midline

Two months

1. Kicks vigorously
2. Energetic arm movements
3. Vigorous head turning
4. Ventral suspension (prone); no head drop
5. Held in sitting position; head erect but bobs
6. Hand goes to mouth
7. Hands often open (not clenched)
8. Head and eyes turn toward sound
9. Listens to bell ringing
10. Cooing
11. Smiles back when talked to
12. Follows object past midline
13. Alert expression

Three months

1. Lying prone; holds head up 90 degrees
2. Lifts head when lying on back (supine)
3. Hold hands together
4. Sucks fingers, inspects fingers
5. Reaches for but misses objects
6. Holds toy with active grasp when put into hand

7. Pulls at his clothes
8. Rolls side to back
9. Rolls object (toy) side to side (and 180 degrees)
10. Looks predominantly at examiner
11. Glances at toy when put into hand
12. Recognizes mother and bottle
13. Smiles spontaneously
14. Cooing, chuckling, squealing, grunting, especially when talked to
15. Moro reflex begins to disappear
16. Grasp reflex nearly gone

Four months

1. Sits when well supported
2. No head lag when pulled to sitting position
3. Turns head at sound of voice
4. Lifts head (in supine position) in effort to sit
5. Supports weight on forearms when prone
6. Lifts head and chest when prone
7. Held erect; pushes feet against table
8. Grasps rattle
9. Plays with own fingers
10. Reaches for object in front of him with both hands
11. Transfers objects from hand to hand
12. Pulls dress over face
13. Smiles at people

Five months

1. Moro reflex gone
2. Rolls supine (back to front)
3. Rolls side to side
4. No head lag when held by hands and pulled to sitting position
5. Full head control when sitting
6. Grasps dangling object
7. Reaches for toy with both hands
8. Scratches on table top
9. Pushes chest off table when prone
10. Smiles at mirror image
11. Jabbers, squeals with high voice
12. Regards toy in hand
13. Recognizes familiar voices

Six months

1. Supine; lifts head spontaneously

2. Bounces on feet when held standing
3. Sits briefly (tripod fashion)
4. Rolls front to back (6-7 months)
5. Grasps foot
6. Grasps cube with palm
7. Holds one cube in each hand
8. Puts cube in mouth
9. Re-secures dropped cube
10. Transfers cube from hand to hand
11. Shakes rattle
12. Bangs spoon on table
13. Turns head to bell
14. Conscious of strange sights and persons
15. Consistent regard of object and person
16. Makes four different sounds
17. Vocalizes at mirror image
18. Localizes source of sound (bell, voice)
19. Laughs out loud

Eight months

1. Sits alone
2. Early stepping movements
3. Tries to crawl
4. Leans forward to get an object
5. Works to get toy out of reach
6. Scoops pellet
7. Rings bell purposively
8. Drinks from cup
9. Looks for fallen object
10. Bites and chews toys
11. Pats mirror image
12. Two-syllable babble
13. Vocalizes: (for instance) day-ma-ka-ah-oh
14. Responds when called

Ten months

1. Sits steadily (long time)
2. Pulls up to feet (on bed railing)
3. Plays "pat-a-cake", "peek-a-boo"
4. Waves bye-bye
5. Uses handle to lift cup
6. Will release a toy (crudely)
7. Feeds self crackers
8. Picks up pellet with finger and thumb

9. Bangs toys together
10. Removes cube from cup
11. Drops one cube to get another
12. Extends toy to a person
13. Holds own bottle
14. Turns around when left on floor
15. Crawls on hands and knees
16. Walks when held
17. Listens to conversations
18. Shouts for attention
19. Vocalizes “mama”, “dada”
20. Responds to name

One year

1. Walks when lead
2. Stand alone (or with support)
3. Creeps on hands and knees
4. Grasps two cubes in one hand
5. Holds cup to drink
6. Gives toy on request
7. Cooperates with dressing
8. Plays with cup, spoon, saucers
9. Points with index finger
10. Pokes finger (into stethoscope) to explore
11. Secures small object (raisin) with pincer grasp
12. Releases to into your hand
13. Tries to take cube out of a box
14. Unwraps a cube
15. Holds crayon
16. Tries to imitate scribble
17. Reacts to music
18. Says three words
19. Babbles to self when alone
20. Understands simple commands

Fifteen months

1. Stand alone
2. Creeps upstairs
3. Walks few steps – starts and stops
4. Gets off floor and walks alone
5. Uses spoon but spills
6. Tilts cup to drink
7. Puts pellet in bottle
8. Builds tower of two cubes

9. Drops cube into cup
10. Helps turn page in book, pats picture
11. Helps pull off clothes
12. Indicates wants by pointing
13. Shows or offers toy
14. Imitates scribble
15. Speaks four to six words, uses jargon

Eighteen months

1. Walks without falling
2. Runs (stiffly)
3. Walks upstairs- one hand held
4. Climbs into chair
5. Walks backward
6. Pulls string toy
7. Hurls ball
8. Turns pages
9. builds tower of 3-4 cubes
10. Puts ten cubes into cup
11. Points to and names pictures
12. Points to indicate what he wants
13. Points to nose, eyes, hair
14. Feeds self (with spilling)
15. Carries or hugs a doll
16. Takes off shoes and socks
17. Scribbles spontaneously
18. Imitates vertical stroke on paper
19. Says 5-10 words
20. Can say "hello" and "thank you"
21. carries out two directions (one at a time), for instance: "get the ball from the table" – "give the ball to mommy"

Twenty-one months

1. Jumps and runs well
2. Walks downstairs-one hand held
3. Squats while playing
4. Kicks large ball (when demonstrated)
5. Builds tower of five to six cubes
6. Uses spoon well
7. Pours water from one cup into another
8. Pulls person to show something
9. Folds paper once when shown
10. Takes three directions (one at a time), for instance: "take ball from table" – "give the ball to mommy" – "put ball on floor"

11. Speaks 15-20 words
12. Combines two to three words
13. Asks for food, drink
14. Echoes two or more words

Two years

1. Says simple phrases
2. Uses "I", "me", "you"
3. Repeats two digits (after few trials)
4. Distinguishes "in" and "under"
5. Refers to self by name
6. Knows four body parts
7. Asks for things at table by name
8. Points to 7-10 pictures
9. Builds 5-6 cube tower
10. Cuts with scissors
11. Removes wrapping from candy
12. Claps hands
13. Runs without falling
14. Goes up and down stairs alone
15. Kicks large ball
16. Imitates circular strokes
17. Pulls on simple garment
18. Opens door
19. turns pages in book, singly
20. Throws ball into a box

Two and One Half Years

1. Refers to self by pronoun (rather than name)
2. Walks on tiptoes
3. Jumps with both feet
4. Tries standing on one foot
5. Pushes toy with good steering
6. Helps put things away
7. Can carry breakable objects
8. Builds tower of eight cubes
9. Holds crayon by fingers
10. Identifies 5-7 pictures
11. Names objects (key, penny, watch)

Three Years

1. Names three or more objects in a picture
2. Repeats six syllables (for instance "I have a little dog")

3. Repeats three digits (several trials)
4. Gives sex (“Are you a boy or a girl?”)
5. Gives full name
6. Knows a few rhymes
7. Gives appropriate answers to “What: swims – flies – shoots – boils – bites – melts?”
8. Comprehends concepts, such as “cold,” “tired,” “hungry”
9. Understands taking turns
10. Copies a circle
11. Can put on shoes
12. Alternates feet going upstairs
13. Jumps from bottom stair
14. Rides a tricycle
15. Stands on one foot for a moment
16. Puts ten pellets into bottle in thirty seconds
17. Feeds self with little spills
18. Pours from a pitcher
19. Can undo two buttons
20. Builds three block pyramid

Four years

1. Counts four pennies
2. Comprehends: “What do you do if: you are hungry, sleepy, cold?”
3. Repeats ten word sentences
4. Repeats four digits
5. Counts three objects, pointing correctly
6. Copies a cross
7. Compares lines “Which is longer?”
8. Completes three-piece puzzle in 45 seconds
9. Draws a man with two parts
10. Stands on one foot for four to eight seconds
11. Folds paper three times
12. Brushes teeth, washes hands and face
13. Dresses and undresses self (supervised)
14. Laces shoes
15. Cooperates with other children in play
16. Knows at least one color
17. Can select heavier from lighter objects

Five years

1. Copies a square
2. Knows age (“how old are you?”)
3. Performs three tasks (with one command); for instance: “Put pen on table – close door – bring me the ball.”
4. Knows four colors

5. Defines use for: “fork – horse – key – pencil, etc.”
6. Skips, using feet alternately
7. Stands on one foot for seven to eight seconds
8. Draws man with at least six parts ; (for instance: head, arms, legs, eyes, etc.)
9. Counts twelve objects correctly
10. Counts number of fingers correctly
11. Names nickel, dime, penny
12. Dresses self without assistance
13. Prints few letters
14. Comments on pictures
15. Asks meanings of words
16. Can pronounce correctly; “T –D –N –G –K –NG –Y.”
17. builds six block pyramid
18. Knows days of week
19. Transports things in a wagon
20. Plays with coloring set, construction toys, puzzles, jump rope, skates
21. Participates well in group play

REFERENCES

7. New Mother’s Guide to Breastfeeding This is an excellent source of breastfeeding information published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.