

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

The first four years of a child's life are the most important period of development physically, emotionally, cognitively, socially and morally. This is a guide to what you might expect in their first four years – often called developmental 'milestones'.

NOTE

EVERY CHILD DEVELOPS DIFFERENTLY



3 Months

- Turns head toward direction of sound
- Recognizes familiar faces and smiles back
- Follows moving objects
- Watches faces with interest
- Raises head and chest while lying on stomach
- Brings hand to mouth
- Takes swipes at dangling object with hands
- Begins to babble and imitate some sounds



6 Months

- Responds to other people's emotions
- Enjoys social plays/games (especially peek-a-boo)
- Struggles for out of reach objects
Uses voice to express pleasure and displeasure
- Interested in mirror images
- Responds to their own name
- Babbles chain of sounds
Rolls both ways (front to back, back to front)
- Sits with, and then without support on hands



1 Year

- Pulls up to stand, Walks holding onto furniture
- Tries to imitate during play (like winking when you wink or clapping when you clap)
- Explores objects; finds hidden objects and begins to use objects correctly (drinking from cup, brushing hair, dialing phone, listening to receiver)
- Uses simple gestures like shaking head to say 'NO' or waving to say 'BYE BYE'
- May speak single words like "Mama" and "Dada"
- Cries when Mother or Father leaves
- Babbles with inflection (changes in tone)
- Uses exclamations, such as "oh - oh!"
- Pokes index finger



2 Years

- Excited about the company of other children
- Begins to sort by shapes and colors; starts simple make-believe play
- Follows simple instructions; recognizes names of familiar people
- Walks without help; plays pretend (like talking on a toy phone)
- Points out at the objects, when you name it (like toy or photo)
- Imitates behavior of others, especially adults and older children
- Uses 2-4 word sentences
Repeats word overheard in conversation
- Pulls toys behind him/her while walking



3 Years

- Imitates adults and playmates
- Shows affection for playmates/friends
- Sorts objects by shape and colors; and matches objects to pictures
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals and people (like feeding a doll)
- Uses pronouns (I, you, me) and sometimes plurals too (cars, dogs)
- Uses simple phrases or micro sentences to communicate with others
- Understands concept of 'mine' and 'his/hers'
- Expresses wide range of emotions
- Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet (one foot per stair step)
- Runs easily and pedals tricycle
- Starts to make friends



4 Years

- Follows three-step commands (like wash your hands, comb your hair)
- Draws circles and squares
- Speaks in sentences of 5-6 words; Speaks clear enough for outsiders to understand
- Names some colors; understands counting
- Shares and take turns with other children
- Knows the difference between boys and girls
- Enjoys humor (like laugh at silly faces or voices)
- Brushes his/her teeth by self
- Dresses and undresses without help except for shoelaces
- Pretends by role playing
- Knows opposite (hot/cold, big/small)

Disclaimer: These are general milestones. All children are different and some will do things faster or slower than others. If you have queries/concerns about your child's development, contact a pediatrician.