

Developmental Playbook for Families

Monitoring Your Child's Developmental Progress



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Developmental Monitoring

Developmental milestones are how most children play, learn, speak, act, and move by a certain age. Parents have what it takes to help young children learn and grow. Watch your child's amazing progress by monitoring (tracking) his or her developmental milestones!

*In this playbook you
will learn Developmental
Domains:*

What is Social Emotional?

How children interact with
others and show emotion.

- Smiling spontaneously especially at people
- Cooperating with other children
- Showing affection for friends without prompting

Also: Pointing to show an airplane flying overhead, crying when mom or dad leaves, and imitating other children.

What is Language/ Communication?

How children express their needs,
share what they are thinking, and
understand what is said to them.

- Cooing, babbling
- Pointing to show others what he/she wants
- Singing a song from memory such as the
"Itsy Bitsy Spider"

Also: Following directions and speaking so others understand what they're saying.

What is Cognitive?

How children learn new things
and solve problems.

- Reaching for a toy with one hand
- Exploring objects in different ways,
like shaking, banging, throwing
- Building towers of at least four blocks

Also: An infant staring at mom's face as she leans over his crib.

What is Movement/ Physical Development?

How children use their bodies.

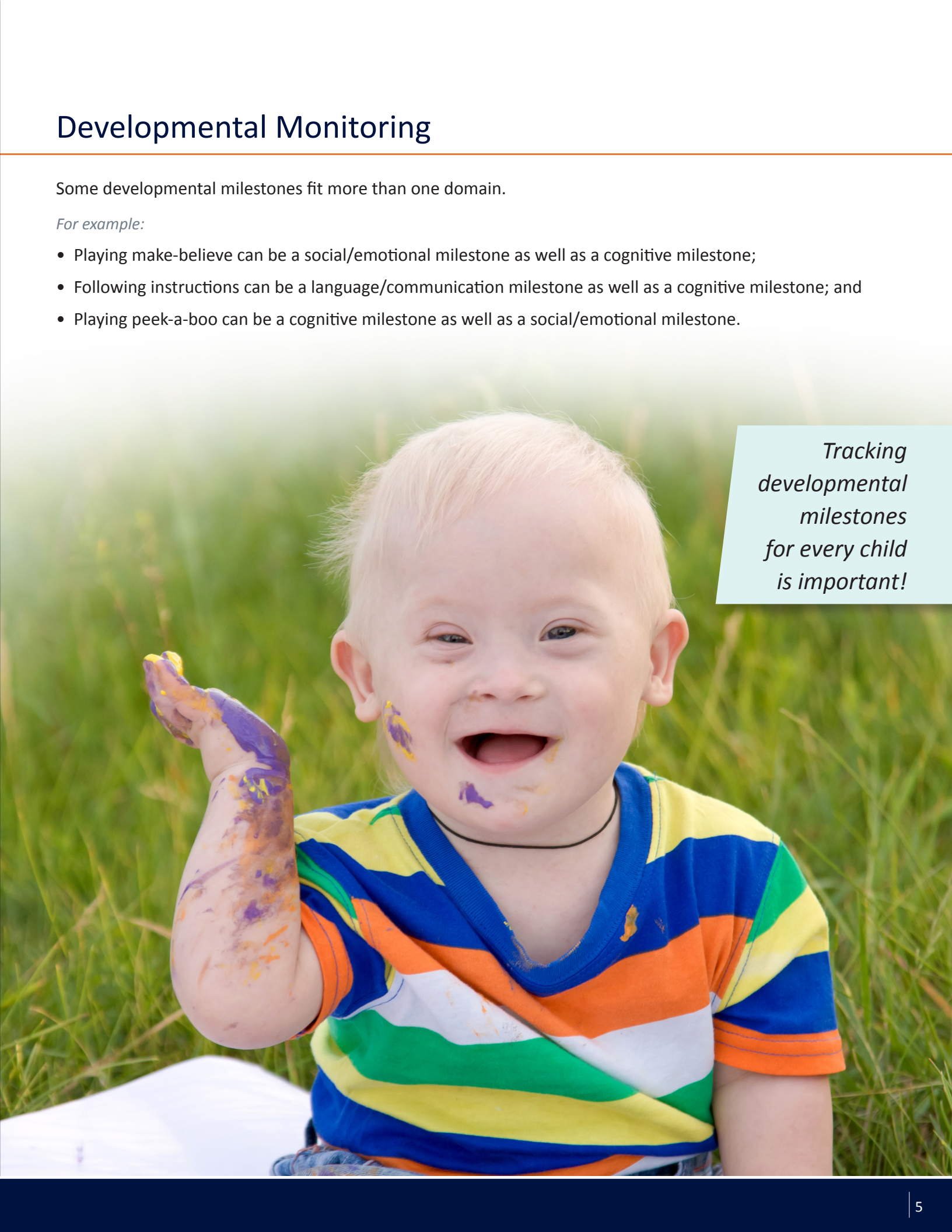
- Crawling
- Catching a ball
- Running and skipping

Developmental Monitoring

Some developmental milestones fit more than one domain.

For example:

- Playing make-believe can be a social/emotional milestone as well as a cognitive milestone;
- Following instructions can be a language/communication milestone as well as a cognitive milestone; and
- Playing peek-a-boo can be a cognitive milestone as well as a social/emotional milestone.



*Tracking
developmental
milestones
for every child
is important!*

What You Should Know



Child Well Visits

Families and children should attend all well child visits, and share information about their child’s development with your health care provider. Well visits should take place at:

9 months | 18 months | 30 months

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends developmental and behavioral screening for all children during regular well-child visits at these ages
- In addition, AAP recommends that all children be screened specifically for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) during regular well-child visits at:

18 months | 24 months

Corrected Age for Premature Babies

If a baby was born early, you have two important days to mark on the calendar:

- The day your baby was born and
- Your estimated due date

Use your child’s corrected age if your child was prematurely born (before 37 weeks)

	Actual age in weeks	-	Weeks preterm	=	Corrected age
<i>For example:</i>	16 weeks since birth	-	8 weeks	=	8 weeks (2 months)

Impact of COVID-19

The Impact of COVID on Early Childhood Development

The pandemic may have had impacts on young children. Due to the closure of childcare programs, schools and programs with social distancing measures in place, many children missed opportunities for development.

As we edge our way toward normalcy, how we get back into routines, schedules, play, and transitions?

We need to learn new ways of regulating our daily routines.

GET BACK INTO ROUTINE	Routines are safe and familiar for children which can help reduce anxiety.
FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL	Helping children identify what they can control and practical things they can do, may help them be more in the present moment and reduce anxiety. Practical strategies may include getting organized, making plans for the weekend, preparing their school bag, etc.
REVISIT SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES AND GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICE	Reviewing rules for safety can help your child feel more at ease about their safety when in public spaces.
PROVIDE REASSURANCE	Children need to feel understood and supported. We can't solve all our children's problems, but they don't always need solutions – just to feel understood and supported.
EXPLORE THE POSITIVES	Even if children are worried about returning to school, there may be some things they are looking forward to. It can be helpful to chat through these together if they seem open to this. Find out what your child is looking forward to about returning to school.

Developmental Monitoring | 2 Months

Social Emotional Milestones

- Begins to smile at people
- Can briefly calm himself or herself (may bring hands to mouth and suck on hand)
- Tries to look at you



Let's Play!

- Respond to all of the baby's calls or signals for support or attention to build his or her trust. Engage in a soothing voice and gentle approach when lifting, holding, repositioning, cradling, feeding, diaper changing and dressing the baby
- Help the baby learn to calm themselves. It's okay for them to suck on their fingers

Language/Communication Milestones

- Coos, makes gurgling sounds
- Turns head toward sounds



Let's Play!

- Talk, smile, read and sing to the baby
- Enjoy two-way "conversations" by exchanging smiles, eye contact and "oohs" and "aahs"
- The baby may respond to the sound of your voice by becoming quite, smiling or getting excited by moving their arms and legs
- Act excited and smile when the baby makes sounds



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't smile at people | If your baby can't hold head steady

Developmental Monitoring | 2 Months

Cognitive Milestones

- Pays attention to faces
- Begins to act bored (cries, fussy) if the activity doesn't change



Let's Play!

- Cradle the baby on your lap facing you. Smile, stick your tongue out, blow raspberries, sing a song and talk to the baby. Then repeat any sounds the baby makes
- Hold a rattle in front of the baby. Slowly move the object from side-to-side and in a circular motion
- While in the baby's line of vision, slowly walk towards him or her and look for signs that they recognize you
- Change the baby's position. Hold the baby, walk around with him or her, sing to the baby, play soft music and talk in a soft, soothing voice

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Can hold head up and begins to push up with their arms while lying on their tummy
- Makes smoother movements with arms and legs



Let's Play!

- Place the baby on his or her tummy on a blanket on the floor or carpeted area. Place toys in their line of vision or lay down in front of the baby. Talk and or sing to the baby to encourage weight bearing on his or her forearms and lifting of their head
- Place the baby on the floor on his or her back. Have objects to bat, grab and kick near the baby



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't watch things as they move | If your baby doesn't bring hands to mouth

Developmental Monitoring | 4 Months

Social Emotional Milestones

- Smiles spontaneously, especially at people
- Likes to play with people and might cry when playing stops
- Copies some movements and facial expressions, like smiling or frowning



Let's Play!

- Smile and be cheerful while you hold and talk to the baby
- Set consistent routines for sleeping and feeding
- Copy the baby's sounds
- Have quiet play times when you read or sing to the baby

Language/Communication Milestones

- Begins to babble
- Babbles with expression and copies sounds he or she hears
- Cries in different ways to express hunger, pain, or being tired



Let's Play!

- Listen and watch for the baby's cues. Smile back at the baby and/or respond to cries that may indicate a need such as hunger, a diaper change, sleep or discomfort
- Snuggle, kiss and enjoy one-on-one time with the baby throughout the day
- Respond to the baby's coos and gurgles with vocalizations of your own.
- Encourage the baby to keep using her or his voice as he or she learns about back-and-forth communication exchanges



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't watch things as they move | If your baby doesn't coo or make sounds

Developmental Monitoring | 4 Months

Cognitive Milestones

- Let's you know if she is happy or sad
- Responds to affection
- Reaches for toy with one hand
- Uses hands and eyes together, such as seeing a toy and reaching for it
- Follows moving things with eyes from side to side
- Recognizes familiar people and things at a distance



Let's Play!

- Lay the baby on his or her back. Place the toy on one side of the baby as you encourage him or her to reach for desired toy. Then switch the toy to the other side and repeat
- Place a toy at midline (center of the baby's body) and slowly move the toy to one side, watching to see if they follow the toy with their eyes, then back to the other side
- Cradle the baby in your lap facing you. Be animated in your facial expressions and sounds. Notice the baby's interest

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Holds head steady, unsupported
- Pushes down on legs when feet are on a hard surface
- May be able to roll over from tummy to back
- Can hold a toy and shake it and swing at dangling toys
- Brings hands to mouth
- When lying on stomach, pushes up to elbows



Let's Play!

- Support the baby in an upright position. Notice if he or she is beginning to tolerate feet on a hard surface. He or she will do this by extending their legs and pushing off the hard surface
- Place preferred toys around the baby while on his or her tummy. Notice an interest in rolling over
- Place the baby on a blanket, with toys and rattles overhead. Allow exploration. Encourage the baby to swat, reach and grasp the toys as well as shake rattles to elicit noises



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't smile at people | If your baby can't hold head steady

Developmental Monitoring | 6 Months

Social Emotional Milestones

- Knows familiar faces and begins to know if someone is a stranger
- Likes to play with others, especially parents
- Responds to other people's emotions and often seems happy
- Likes to look at self in a mirror



Let's Play!

- Show the baby how to comfort himself or herself when he or she is upset. The baby may suck on his or her fingers to self-soothe
- Play on the floor with the baby every day
- Hide a toy but not out of the baby's immediate sight. Encourage the baby to find it. Praise and clap for his or her achievement - even if the baby only finds the toy by eye gaze
- Use positive words and phrases, such as "Yeah", "You did it" and "I love you"

Language/Communication Milestones

- Strings vowels together when babbling ("ah", "eh", "oh") and likes taking turns with parents while making sounds
- Responds to own name
- Makes sounds to show joy and displeasure
- Begins to say consonant sounds (jabbering with "m")



Let's Play!

- Engage in back and forth exchanges and interactions with the baby. Imitate noises the baby makes, pause and wait for a response. Repeat the activity
- While sitting near the baby. Call his or her name. Wait for a response (turns head, smiles). Encourage siblings and extended family to do the same
- As the baby begins to babble you will hear simple constants. Mimic the baby and add in consonant-vowel successions such as "bababa" "mamama"



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't show affection for caregivers | If your baby doesn't make vowel sounds ("ah", "eh", "oh")

Developmental Monitoring | 6 Months

Cognitive Milestones

- Looks around at things nearby
- Brings things to mouth
- Shows curiosity about things and tries to get things that are out of reach



Let's Play!

- With the baby in a stroller or by holding the baby, take a walk outside. Observe the baby turn his or her head as cars drive by or when he or she sees something of interest (a familiar person, a dog)
- Allow the baby to hold onto stuffed animals and toys and explore them in his or her mouth. The baby may also begin to show interest in bringing food to his or her mouth, such as a cereal o's
- Purposefully put a favorite object in sight but out of the baby's immediate reach. Watch the baby show interest and possibly roll towards the desired toy

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Rolls over in both directions (front to back, back to front)
- Begins to sit without support
- When standing, supports weight on legs and might bounce
- Rocks back and forth, sometimes crawling backward before moving forward



Let's Play!

- Place the baby in a sitting position in between your legs to engage supported sitting. As the baby becomes stronger you will notice that he or she can sit briefly for short periods of time
- As the baby masters rolling in both directions, stay close
- Notice that while laying on their belly, the baby may scoot backwards before forwards
- While holding the baby upright, allow him or her to bring his or her feet to the floor. Here, the baby may automatically start a bouncing motion



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't smile at people | If your baby can't hold head steady

Developmental Monitoring | 9 Months

Social Emotional Milestones

- May be afraid of strangers
- May be clingy with familiar adults
- Has favorite toys



Let's Play!

- As the baby moves around more, stay close so he or she knows that you are near
- Continue with routines; they are especially important now
- Encourage the baby to try new things
- Babies show facial expressions that correspond to all of the basic emotions: Happy surprise, sadness, mad and crying. Adults can mimic each facial expression "Are you happy"?

Language/Communication Milestones

- Understands "no"
- Makes a lot of different sounds like "mamamama" and "bababababa"
- Copies sounds and gestures of others
- Uses fingers to point at things



Let's Play!

- Describe what your baby is looking at; for example, "red, round ball"
- Talk about what your baby wants when he points at something
- Play simple social games. Such as "peek a boo". See if your toddler will fill in the "boo" or any vocalization during this game
- Label everything your baby points to. He or she is beginning to identify objects



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't respond to own name | If your baby doesn't babble ("mama", "dada", "baba")

Developmental Monitoring | 9 Months

Cognitive Milestones

- Looks for things they see you hide
- Plays peek-a-boo
- Moves things smoothly from one hand to the other
- Picks up things like cereal O's between thumb and index finger



Let's Play!

- Place items on the baby's high chair. Allow the baby to explore them as they fall. This will quickly become a fun game! Model sound such as "Uh oh" as they fall, observe if the baby indicates a desire to continue the activity
- Partially hide toys under blanket. Let the baby "find" the toys
- Place the baby's toy on a shelf but still visible. This will encourage the baby to communicate with you that he or she wants the toy
- Give the baby a small wash cloth and take one for yourself. Play a simple game of peek-a-boo. The baby will remove the washcloth from his or her face and or your face

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Can get into sitting position
- Pulls to stand
- Crawls



Let's Play!

- Allow times for the baby to hold on to you while standing. Encourage the baby to also use a couch, chair or coffee table
- Provide lots of time on the floor so that the baby can work on getting in and out of a sitting position. It is okay to help the baby if they become frustrated
- Sit with the baby on the floor. Provide a soft pillow behind incase they fall backwards or to the sides
- Provide lots of encouragement as the baby begins to show an interest in pulling to a stand along furniture



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't recognize familiar people | If your baby doesn't bear weight on legs with support

Developmental Monitoring | 12 Months

Social Emotional Milestones

- Is shy or nervous with strangers
- Cries when mom or dad leaves
- Hands you a book when he wants to hear a story
- Has favorite things and people
- Repeats sounds or actions to get attention
- Puts out arm or leg to help with dressing
- Plays games such as “peek-a-boo” and “pat-a-cake”



Let's Play!

- Give the baby lots of hugs, kisses and praise for good behavior
- Talk to the baby about what you are doing. For example, “Mommy is washing your hands with a washcloth”
- Provide reassurance and comfort when the baby seems fearful of something new. Use simple encouraging phrases like, “good job”
- Teach the baby action songs such as the “Itsy Bitsy Spider”, “Wheels on the Bus” and “Pat-a-Cake”. Babies love to hear and learn these songs and anticipate the accompanying movements

Language/Communication Milestones

- Responds to simple spoken requests
- Uses simple gestures, like shaking head “no” or waving “bye-bye”
- Makes sounds with changes in tone (sounds more like speech)
- Says “mama” and “dada” and exclamations like “uh-oh!”
- Tries to say words you say



Let's Play!

- Take a cardboard paper towel holder and talk through it using various inflections in your voice
- Play “Where is mama?” or “Where is Nana?”
- Model saying, “uh-oh” when toys fall
- You can use exaggeration to gain the baby’s attention in a playful way. Act surprised, model facial expressions and sounds in the environment



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't search for things they see you hide | If your baby loses skills he or she once had

Developmental Monitoring | 12 Months

Cognitive Milestones

- Puts things in a container, takes things out of a container
- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging, throwing
- Finds hidden things easily
- Starts to use things correctly; for example, drinks from a cup, brushes hair
- Bangs two things together
- Pokes with index (pointer) finger
- Follows simple directions like “pick up the toy”



Let's Play!

- Play with blocks, shape sorters and other toys that encourage the baby to use his or her hands
- Read throughout the day. Babies love repetition. Use familiar books and encourage the baby to find pictures within the books that are familiar
- During playtime, have a mirror nearby and play with images and facial expressions in mirror. Model blowing a kiss, a fish face, clapping hands and waving “hi” and “bye”

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Pulls up to stand, walks holding on to furniture (“cruising”)
- May take a few steps without holding on
- Gets into a sitting position without help



Let's Play!

- Read with your child every day. Have your child turn the pages. Take turns labeling pictures with your child
- Build on what your child says or tries to say, or what he points to if he points to a truck and says “t” or “truck,” say, “Yes, that’s a big, blue truck”
- Sing songs with actions, like “The Itsy Bitsy Spider” and “Wheels on the Bus.” Help your child do the actions with you



Developmental Concerns

If your baby doesn't point to things | If your baby doesn't crawl

Developmental Monitoring | 18 Months

Social Emotional Milestones

- May cling to caregivers in new situations
- Points to show others something interesting
- Explores alone but with parent close by
- Shows affection to familiar people
- Likes to hand things to others as play
- May be afraid of strangers
- Plays simple pretend, such as feeding a doll



Let's Play!

- Provide a safe, loving environment. It is important to be consistent and predictable
- Provide toys that encourage pretend play. For example, dolls and play telephones
- Labeling emotions like "Sad", "Happy" or "Mad"

Language/Communication Milestones

- Says several single words
- Says and shakes head "no"
- Points to show someone what he wants



Let's Play!

- Encourage communication throughout the day through communication prompts. Place objects out of reach so the toddler needs to request them. Model single words and accept all forms of word utterances to obtain object of interest
- Exaggerate nodding "yes" and shaking head "no" during floor time. Be silly and animated
- Read books and talk about the pictures using simple words
- Copy the toddler's words



Developmental Concerns

If your toddler doesn't copy others | If your toddler doesn't have at least 6 words

Developmental Monitoring | 18 Months

Cognitive Milestones

- Scribbles on his own
- Knows what ordinary things are for; for example, telephone, brush, spoon
- Points to get the attention of others
- Points to one body part
- Can follow 1-step verbal commands without any gestures; for example, sits when you say "sit down"



Let's Play!

- Provide paper and cardboard boxes for supervised coloring. Tape the corners of paper down to stabilize the paper
- Play a matching game. Have two of everyday objects within eye sight and match them, then allow the toddler to use the objects for intended purposes
- Give the toddler a stuffed animal or doll to feed and brush their hair. Have a pretend phone call with the toddler, encourage him or her to put a pretend phone or a block to his or her ear
- Follow the toddler's lead and adjust routines to his or her needs

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Drinks from a cup
- Eats with a spoon
- Pulls toys while walking
- Walks alone
- Can help undress herself



Let's Play!

- Sit and eat meals together. Model using a cup and other table manners for the toddler. For example, support the toddler in wiping his or her face with a napkin and encourage his or her use of a spoon
- While sitting for meals together, prepare for accidents. Accidents will happen and they are a learning experience
- With increased stability the toddler will enjoy pulling and pushing carts, strollers and pulling or dragging items around the house
- Encourage walking both inside and outside and on various surfaces, such as grass, carpet, sand and sidewalks



Developmental Concerns

If your toddler doesn't point to things | If your toddler can't walk

Developmental Monitoring | 2 Years

Social Emotional Milestones

- Copies others, especially adults and older children
- Gets excited when with other children
- Shows defiant behavior (doing what he has been told not to)
- Plays mainly beside other children, but is beginning to include other children, such as in chase games



Let's Play!

- Play follow the leader. Model tip toe walking and see if your child can follow along
- Role play. Pretend they are a doctor and you are the patient. This is a way to explore and grow and make sense of the world around them
- Include your child in adult daily routines. Have them take responsibility of their own items. Put laundry in basket, fold clothes, put clothes away, put dishes in dishwasher. Give them simple instructions that they can successfully accomplish tasks. This will build up their self confidence and self help skills including cooperation

Language/Communication Milestones

- Points to things or pictures when they are named
- Knows names of familiar people and body parts
- Says sentences with 2 to 4 words
- Follows simple instructions
- Repeats words overheard in conversation



Let's Play!

- Teach the toddler to identify and say body parts, animals and other common things
- Do not correct the toddler when he or she says words incorrectly. Rather, say it correctly. For example, "That is a ball"
- Toddlers thrive off of routines. Keep instructions simple and clear. Have the toddler be a helper by setting the table, getting food from refrigerator to place on the table, putting dishes in sink, etc.
- Toddlers are parrots and will repeat. Model good language and encourage the toddler to express himself or herself



Developmental Concerns

If your toddler doesn't follow simple instructions | If your toddler doesn't use 2-word phrases (exp. "drink milk")

Developmental Monitoring | 2 Years

Cognitive Milestones

- Finds things even when hidden under two or three covers
- Begins to sort shapes and colors
- Plays simple make-believe games
- Builds towers of 4 or more blocks
- Might use one hand more than the other
- Follows two-step instructions such as "Pick-up your shoes and put them in the closet"
- Names items in a picture book such as a cat, bird, or dog



Let's Play!

- As a game, hide the toddler's toys around the room and let him or her find them
- Encourage the toddler to continue to search for objects out of immediate sight. Give them clues
- Encourage the toddler to play with blocks. Take turns building towers and knocking them down
- Ask the toddler to help you open doors and drawers and turn pages in a book or magazine
- While out and about in the community or on a walk, point out and talk about familiar sights such as cars, animals, buses, etc.

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks a ball
- Begins to run
- Climbs onto and down from furniture without help
- Throws ball overhand
- Makes or copies straight lines and circles



Let's Play!

- Play follow the leader. Model tiptoe walking and see if the toddler can follow along. Try having the toddler put one foot in front of the other and walk in a line or walk backwards
- Play bowling. Set up plastic cups and roll a ball towards the cups to knock them down. Next, try kicking the ball to knock down the cups
- Provide space for the toddler to run. Set aside time every day for the toddler to use his or her large muscles to jump, hop, climb and let out energy
- Make an obstacle course with your couch cushions. Allow the toddler to climb and navigate in and out of the surfaces



Developmental Concerns

If your toddler doesn't copy actions and words | If your toddler doesn't walk steadily

Developmental Monitoring | 3 Years

Social Emotional Milestones

- Copies adults and friends
- Takes turns in games
- Shows affection for friends
- Dresses and undresses self
- Understands the idea of “mine” and “his” or “hers”
- Shows a wide range of emotions
- Separates easily from mom and dad
- May get upset with major changes in routine



Let's Play!

- Work with the preschooler to solve a problem when he or she is upset
- Give the preschooler household items that belong to various members of the family and have him or her return the items to the family member
- Make a chart of faces with various emotions. Encourage the preschooler to use the chart to share how he or she is feeling
- Plan outings where the preschooler spends time without you. Always say goodbye and let the preschooler know when you will be back

Language/Communication Milestones

- Names a friend
- Says words like “I,” “me,” “we,” and “you” and some plurals (cars, dogs, cats)
- Talks well enough for strangers to understand most of the time
- Follows instructions with 2 or 3 steps
- Can name most familiar things
- Understands words like “in,” “on,” and “under”
- Carries on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences



Let's Play!

- Encourage the preschooler to practice saying his or her full name and address in a song “My name is ... and this is where I live.....”
- Discuss gender. For example, “You are a girl and daddy is a...”
- Talk about who the preschooler likes to play with. Ask simple questions
- Model using words and phrases for the preschooler. For example, “I did it,” “We are going to the park” and “You can have ice cream”



Developmental Concerns

If your preschooler doesn't make eye contact | If your preschooler doesn't speak in sentences

Developmental Monitoring | 3 Years

Cognitive Milestones

- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Does puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces
- Copies a circle with pencil or crayon
- Understands what “two” means
- Turns book pages one at a time
- Builds towers of more than 6 blocks
- Screws and unscrews jar lids or turns door handle



Let's Play!

- Have the preschooler explore cause and effect by experimenting with different pieces and parts of toys or objects in the home, such as light switches, door knobs or water fountains
- Set up pretend play activities such as a vet station, fire station or grocery store. Interact with the preschooler and expand on his or her play agenda
- Allow opportunities to match plastic lids to their containers. Have the preschooler nest objects. Trial and error fosters problem solving skills. Help the preschooler be successful!
- Point out all the circles and round objects you and the preschooler can find. Encourage the preschooler to make a circle with cheerios on a plate

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Walks up and down stairs, one foot on each step
- Pedals a tricycle
- Runs easily
- Climbs well



Let's Play!

- Provide as many sensory breaks as you can that allow for movement, such as jumping, stretching, hopping, galloping and climbing
- Go on a family jog, brisk walk, or bike ride
- Provide energy outlets that include use of legs, such as biking forward or pushing a toy, such as a child size wheel barrow
- While out in the community, practice walking up and down steps inside stores and buildings as well as outside. Count as you go up and down



Developmental Concerns

If your preschooler doesn't play pretend or make-believe | If your preschooler can't work simple toys

Developmental Monitoring | 4 Years

Social Emotional Milestones

- Plays “Mom” and “Dad”
- Is more and more creative with make-believe play
- Would rather play with other children than by himself
- Enjoys doing new things
- Often can’t tell what’s real and what’s make-believe
- Talks about what he/she likes and what he/she is interested in



Let's Play!

- Play make-believe with the preschooler. Let her or him be the leader and copy what she or he is doing
- Boost the preschooler's imagination by encouraging pretend play. Be creative and spontaneous, and allow the preschooler to drive the play activity by following his or her lead
- Nurture the preschooler's interests
- Talk about what other people are interested in and like

Language/Communication Milestones

- Knows some basic rules of grammar, such as correctly using “he” and “she”
- Sings a song or says a poem from memory such as the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” or the “Wheels on the Bus”
- Can say first and last name



Let's Play!

- Talk about friends and or classmates. Ask simple questions, such as, “What does your friend Jack like to play with?” or “What is Hannah’s favorite food?”
- Take out props or make props, such as spiders, monkeys, stars, etc. Encourage preschooler to sing along to familiar songs, such as “The Itsy Bitsy Spider”, “Five Little Monkeys” or “Twinkle, Twinkle”
- Have a story telling evening once a week. You and your preschooler can share a story about any topic they choose. An example topic could be “what I want to be when I grow up”



Developmental Concerns

If your preschooler doesn't follow 3-part command | Doesn't use “me” and “you” currently

Developmental Monitoring | 4 Years

Cognitive Milestones

- Understands the idea of “same” and “different”
- Draws a person with 2 to 4 body parts
- Starts to copy some capital letters
- Plays board or card games
- Tells you what he/she thinks is going to happen next in a book
- Names some colors and some numbers
- Starts to understand time
- Remembers parts of a story



Let's Play!

- Everywhere you go, search for opportunities to point out things that are similar and things that are different. Ask the preschooler to look for all the red cars or white trucks on the ride to the grocery store. How are they alike and different?
- Provide many manipulatives and sensory materials that can be used to construct and build. Encourage the preschooler to use his or her imagination
- Encourage the preschooler to use playdough and sculpt a figure that looks like dog
- Provide art and craft materials and safety scissors (supervised) for practicing cutting. Allow the preschooler to tear paper

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Hops and stands on one foot up to 2 seconds
- Catches a bounced ball most of the time



Let's Play!

- Encourage movement. Play hopscotch, move like various animals (such as hopping like a bunny,) make an obstacle course or hop or skip from one place to another
- Set up a basketball hoop. Make your own hoop with a cardboard box. Practice catching and throwing the ball
- Allow the preschooler to be engaged in cooking and meal preparation. Give him or her measuring spoons and cups to explore filling and pouring



Developmental Concerns

If your preschooler can't retell a favorite story | If your preschooler can't jump in place

Developmental Monitoring | 5 Years

Social Emotional Milestones

- Wants to please friends
- Wants to be like friends
- Likes to sing, dance, and act
- Can tell what's real and what's make-believe
- Shows more independence
- Is sometimes demanding and sometimes very cooperative



Let's Play!

- Encourage kindness and inclusion of all friends
- Encourage the preschooler to be his or her own person. Encourage the preschooler to express herself or himself
- Clarify rules, support cooperation and offer consistent routines to promote and guide the preschooler in positive ways and to create a positive environment. Include the preschooler in decision making
- Have dance parties. Make microphones out of paper towel rolls. Pretend you are a singer

Language/Communication Milestones

- Speaks very clearly
- Uses future tense; for example, "Grandma will be here."
- Can say name and address



Let's Play!

- Increased language skills allows the preschooler to discuss his or her feelings and opinions. Be attentive and present so the preschooler feels heard
- With the preschooler's increased imagination, he or she can now recall past events and share experiences
- Model language. The preschooler will pick-up on correct tenses after your modeling. When speaking to the preschooler use simple phrases, such as "We will go tomorrow."
- Practice saying the preschooler's full name and addresses in a song. "My name is... and this is where I live..."



Developmental Concerns

If your preschooler is unusually withdrawn |
If your preschooler doesn't respond to people, or responds only superficially

Developmental Monitoring | 5 Years

Cognitive Milestones

- Counts 10 or more things
- Can draw a person with at least 6 body parts
- Can print some letters or numbers
- Copies a triangle and other geometric shapes
- Knows about things used every day, like money and food



Let's Play!

- Have the preschooler collect 10 objects in a basket and bring them to you. Count them together
- Using Potato head, practice placing body parts in the correct places
- Encourage the preschooler to draw a picture of a special person. Praise all attempts at representation
- Using a tray of sand, practice writing simple numbers and letters with a finger

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Stands on one foot for 10 seconds or longer
- Can do a somersault
- Uses a fork and spoon and sometimes a table knife
- Can use the toilet on her own
- Swings and climbs



Let's Play!

- Hopscotch is a great active game for balance and eye foot coordination
- Pretend to be logs of wood and, with arms stretched over head, roll around the grass. Then move hands to the sides and roll around
- Rolling is good for coordinating the back, neck, shoulder and hip muscles, and building strength
- Choose different animals and pretend to move like them. Take turns guessing what animal the other person is



Developmental Concerns

If your preschooler doesn't play a variety of games and activities |
If your preschooler can't brush teeth, wash and dry hands, or get dressed without help

Impact of Trauma

The Impact of Trauma on Early Childhood Development

Research has shown us that traumatic experiences hold the potential for strong and lasting impact on the normal development of a child's brain. During early childhood, the brain is developing the framework for learning, planning, making connections, and abstract thinking. When the architecture of that framework is impacted by trauma, there can be adverse effects to the cognitive capacity, emotional experiences, and ability to manage and control their behaviors, ultimately impacting their interpersonal relationships⁸. The significance of this is even stronger when you consider that 47% of children experiencing trauma do so by the age of 5⁹.



While trauma can impact any child, children involved in child welfare are at a much higher risk of experiencing trauma and its consequences. This is in part due to the complex nature of the trauma, stemming from their primary attachment figures (traumatic loss, separation, intimate partner violence, impaired caregiver, emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse), and also because of the chronicity of traumatic experiences for many in the child welfare system. Adults may see young children adapt to these repeated traumatic events and experiences with behaviors that are sometimes confusing and displaced. Young children can learn at a very early age how to cope with trauma and may present with behaviors or actions that are often misinterpreted by adults. For example, a child may present as very clingy with a caregiver but is unable to calm down when the caregiver tries to comfort him. The child becomes more upset and may hit or push away the caregiver, refusing to accept comfort. The caregiver responds by putting the child down; the child then tries to climb back up onto the caregiver's lap.

Children who have experienced trauma in their early developmental years are more prone to perceive threats in their environment, exhibit impulsive or inhibited behaviors, and have difficulty trusting others. Most traumas experienced by children under the age of 5 are not explicit and instead are held in the body and can result in physical sensations, distress, and dysregulation.

The impact on children exposed to early trauma is often reflected in developmental delays. A national survey conducted of children in the child welfare system found that 35% of children who experienced trauma had developmental delays in the following areas:

- motor skills;
- speech and language development;
- emotional/behavioral regulation; and
- cognitive functioning.

Impact of Trauma

Exposure to chronic, prolonged traumatic experiences has the potential to alter children's brains, which may cause longer-term effects in areas such as

ATTACHMENT

Trouble with relationships, boundaries, empathy, and social isolation

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Impaired sensorimotor development, coordination problems, increased medical problems, and somatic symptoms

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Difficulty identifying or labeling feelings and communicating needs

DISSOCIATION

Altered states of consciousness, amnesia, impaired memory

COGNITIVE ABILITY

Problems with focus, learning, processing new information, language development, planning and orientation to time and space

SELF-CONCEPT

Lack of consistent sense of self, body image issues, low self-esteem, shame and guilt

BEHAVIORAL CONTROL

Difficulty controlling impulses, oppositional behavior, aggression, disrupted sleep and eating patterns, trauma re-enactment

Source: Cook, et al. (2005). Complex trauma in children and adolescents. *Psychiatric Annals*, 35(5), 390-398.

8 The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, pp. 28-29.

9 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2015). Child maltreatment 2013, p. 31. Available from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>.

Video Links

Social and Emotional

- 4 Months [Copies some movements and facial expressions, like smiling or frowning/ Likes to play with people and might cry when playing stops](#)
- 6 Months [Responds to other people's emotions and often seems happy](#)
- 9 Months [May be afraid of strangers](#)
- 12 Months .. [Repeats sounds or actions to get attention](#)
- 18 Months .. [Plays simple pretend, such as feeding a doll](#)
- 2 Years [Plays mainly beside other children, but is beginning to include other children, such as in chase games](#)
- 3 Years [Understands the idea of "mine" and "his" or "hers"](#)
- 4 Years [Is more and more creative with make-believe play](#)
- 5 Years [More likely to agree with rules](#)

Language/Communication

- 2 Months [Coos, makes gurgling sounds / Turns head toward sounds](#)
- 4 Months [Babbles with expression and copies sounds he hears](#)
- 6 Months [Responds to sounds by making sounds / Responds to own name](#)
- 9 Months [Makes a lot of different sounds like "mamamama" and "bababababa"](#)
- 12 Months .. [Responds to simple spoken requests](#)
- 18 Months .. [Points to show someone what he wants](#)
- 2 Years [Says sentences with 2 to 4 words](#)
- 3 Years [Carries on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences](#)
- 4 Years [Tells stories](#)
- 5 Years [Uses future tense; for example, "Grandma will be here."](#)

Cognitive

- 2 Months [Begins to act bored \(cries, fussy\) if activity doesn't change](#)
- 4 Months [Recognizes familiar people and things at a distance / Responds to affection video](#)
- 6 Months [Looks around at things nearby](#)
- 9 Months [Watches the path of something as it falls](#)
- 12 Months .. [Puts things in a container, takes things out of a container](#)
- 18 Months .. [Can follow 1-step verbal commands without any gestures; for example, sits when you say "sit down"](#)
- 2 Years [Names items in a picture book such as a cat, bird, or dog](#)
- 3 Years [Understands what "two" means](#)
- 4 Years [Tells you what he thinks is going to happen next in a book](#)
- 5 Years [Knows about things used every day, like money and food](#)

Movement/Physical Development

- 2 Months [Makes smoother movements with arms and legs](#)
- 4 Months [Brings hands to mouth](#)
- 6 Months [When standing, supports weight on legs and might bounce](#)
- 9 Months [Can get into sitting position](#)
- 12 Months .. [May take a few steps without holding on](#)
- 18 Months .. [Can help undress herself](#)
- 2 Years [Makes or copies straight lines and circles](#)
- 3 Years [Runs easily](#)
- 5 Years [Hops; may be able to skip](#)

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263 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, CT 06030-6222 • 860.679.1500 • infoucedd@uchc.edu
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