

# Developmental Delay

Northern York County School District

## Developmental Milestones

Developmental milestones are a set of functional skills that are expected to be completed by a certain age. Milestones also help to provide a guide for your pediatrician to check how your child is developing



## What is a Developmental Delay?

A child is identified as having a developmental delay when he or she has delayed achievement in one or more of his or her developmental milestones.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) a child is eligible to receive services if he/she is identified as having a developmental delay in one or more of the following areas: cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help.

### 22 PA Code 14.101

*Developmental delay*—A child who is less than the age of beginners and at least 3 years of age is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists:

- i. The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in

one or more developmental areas.

- ii. The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests.



## Risk Factors

Risk factors for developmental problems fall into two categories:

- Genetic
- Environmental

Children are placed at genetic risk by being born with a genetic or chromosomal abnormality.

- Down Syndrome
- FragileX Syndrome
- Congenital Muscular Distrophy



Environmental risk results from exposure to harmful agents either before or after birth.

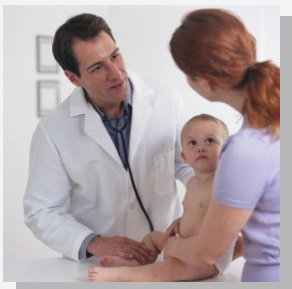
- *Maternal use of cigarettes*
- *Asphyxia*: lack of oxygen at birth
- *Poor nutrition*
- *Very low birth weight*: children born weighing less than 1,500 g (3 lb. 5 oz.)
- *Prematurity*: gestational age less than 37 weeks
- *Maternal Substance abuse*
- *Poor maternal nutrition*

*Risk factors have a cumulative impact upon development. As the number of risk factors increases, a child is put at greater risk for developmental delay.*

If your child is unable to perform any of the tasks included within their age range it does not necessarily mean that he/she has a developmental delay.



If however your child has not met several of his or her developmental milestones or is unable to perform several age expected tasks you may want to speak with your child's pediatrician.



## Signs of a Developmental Delay

Five categories are used to monitor a child's development:

- **Gross motor:** skills using large groups of muscles, such as standing, crawling, walking, running, and keeping balance.
  - **Fine motor:** skills using smaller muscles and require more precise movements, such as stacking blocks, coloring, eating, dressing, and writing.
  - **Language:** speaking, using body language
- and gestures, communicating, and understanding what others say.
- **Cognitive:** Thinking skills, including learning, understanding, problem-solving, reasoning, and remembering.
  - **Social:** Interacting with others, having relationships with family, friends, and teachers, cooperating, and responding to the feelings of others.

All children develop at different rates so it is important to keep in mind that the actual age when a normally developing child reaches his or her developmental milestones can vary.



### By 3 months...

#### Physical:

- Touch, pull, and tug own hands with fascination
- Repeat body movements, and enjoy doing so
- Hold head up for a few seconds, when supported
- Use sucking, grasping, and rooting (holding tongue to the roof of the mouth) reflexes
- Lift head and chest, while lying on stomach

#### Cognitive

- Focus on and follow moving objects, including human faces

- Respond with facial expressions to strong stimuli (like odors)
- See all colors and distinguish hue and brightness
- See clearly within 13 inches
- Discriminate sweet, sour, bitter, and salty tastes

#### Social/Emotional

- Observe their own hands
- Respond positively to touch
- Look at the place on the body that is being touched
- Can be comforted by

a familiar adult

- Smile and show pleasure in response to social stimulation

#### Language

- Respond to speech by looking at the speaker
- Respond differently to the voice of a parent than to other voices
- React to changes in a speaker's tone, pitch, and volume
- Attempt to imitate sounds
- Communicate with bodily movements, by laughing, babbling and crying

### By 6 months...

#### Physical

- Reach, grasp, and put objects in mouth
- Make discoveries with objects (ex. a rattle makes noise when shaken)
- Roll over
- Push body forward and pull body up by grabbing the edge of a crib

#### Cognitive

- Recognize faces
- Respond to familiar sounds
- React to and imitate the facial expressions of others
- Differentiate between different people based on the way they look, sound, or feel

#### Language

- Exchange sounds, facial expressions, or gestures with a parent or caregiver
- Listen to conversations
- Repeat some vowel and consonant sounds

#### Social/Emotional

- Plays peek-a-boo
- Pays attention to own name
- Laughs aloud

## By 9 months....

### Physical

- Transfer objects between hands
- Crawls
- Grasp and pull things word self

### Cognitive

- Stare longer at "impossible" events (e.g. ordinary objects suspended in midair)
- Distinguish between inanimate and animate objects
- Distinguish among pictures that show different numbers of items
- Understand that inanimate objects must be propelled into motion by an external force

### Social/Emotional

- Express several different emotions
- Distinguishes friends from strangers
- Responds actively to language and gestures
- Shows displeasure at loss of a toy

### Language

- Begin repetitive babbling
- Associate gestures with simple words and two-word phrases like "hi" and "bye-bye"
- Uses vocal and non-vocal communication to express interest and influence others



## By 12 months....

### Physical

- Walks with or without support
- Sit without support
- Stand unaided
- Roll a ball
- Throws an object
- Picks things up with thumb and one finger
- Drops and picks up toys

### Cognitive

- Can understand that an object still exists even when it is not in view
- Respond to simple directions with gestures, sounds, or even words
- Imitate gestures and actions
- Experiment purposefully with the physical properties of expressions
- Respond to a firm "no" by stopping what they are doing
- Says a few words

### Social/Emotional

- Feed themselves finger foods
- Holds cup with two hands and drinks with assistance
- Holds out arms and legs while being dressed
- Mimics simple actions
- Shows anxiety when separated from primary caregiver

### Language

- Understands the names of familiar people, places, and objects
- Show their understanding with responsive body language and facial



## By 24 months...



### Physical

- Walk backwards
- Pick up toys from a standing position
- Move to music
- Seat self in a child's chair
- Walks alone
- Walk up and down stairs with aid
- Turn knobs
- Scribble
- Push and pull objects
- Turn two or three pages at a time

### Language

- Responds correctly when asked "where?"
- Says successive single words to describe an event

- Follow a series of two simple but related directions
- Use "my" or "mine" to indicate possession; begin to use "me", "I", and "you".

### Cognitive

- Imitate adults' actions and language
- Matches similar objects
- Distinguish between "you" and "me"
- Understand words and commands and respond appropriately
- Recognize and identify familiar objects in storybooks with assistance

### Social/Emotional

- Recognize themselves in pictures or the mirror and smile or make faces at themselves
- Expresses negative feelings
- Shows intense feelings for caregiver and shows affection for other people
- Play by themselves and initiate their own play
- Shows a strong sense of self through assertiveness and directing others

## By 36 months....



### Physical

- Climbs well
- Kicks ball
- Runs easily
- Makes vertical, horizontal, and circular strokes with crayon or pencil
- Builds a tower of six or more blocks
- Walks up and down stairs with alternating feet
- Pedals tricycle

### Language

- Follows 2 to 3 step commands
- Uses 4-5 word sentences
- Can be understood by strangers most of the time
- Can say name, age, and gender
- Understands relational concepts (on, in, under)
- Uses pronouns and some plurals

### Cognitive

- Makes mechanical toys work
- Matches objects and pictures
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Sorts objects by shape and color
- Can complete 3-4 piece puzzles
- Understands the concept of 2

### Social/Emotional

- Imitates adults and playmates
- Spontaneously shows affection for familiar playmate
- Can take turns in games
- Separates easily from parents
- Objects to major changes in routine
- Understands concepts of "mine" and "his/hers"



## By 4 years....

### Physical

- Hops and stands on one foot for 20 seconds
- Can walk up and down stairs without support
- Kicks ball forward
- Throws ball overhand
- Catches bounced ball most of the time
- Draws a person with 2-4 body parts
- Uses scissors
- Begins to copy some capital letters
- Draws circles and squares

### Language

- Understands the concept of same and different
- Has mastered some basic rules of grammar
- Speaks in sentences of

5-6 words

- Tells stories
- Speaks clearly enough for strangers to understand

### Cognitive

- Correctly names some colors
- Begins to have a clearer sense of time
- Can follow 3 step directions
- Engages in fantasy play
- Understands the concept of counting and may know a few numbers

### Social/Emotional

- Cooperates with and shows interest in other children
- Dresses and undresses self
- Negotiates solutions to

conflicts

- Is more independent
- Interested in new experiences
- Engages in imaginary play and sees many unfamiliar images as "monsters"
- Often cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality
- Views self as a whole person involving body, mind, and feelings



## By 5 years....

### Physical

- Hops
- Somersaults
- Swings and Climbs
- May be able to skip
- Uses fork, spoon, and sometimes table knife
- Dresses and undresses without assistance
- Draws most shapes

### Language

- Says name and address
- Uses future tense
- Tells longer stories
- Recalls part of a story

### Cognitive

- Can count 10 or more objects
- Correctly names at least four colors
- Knows about things used everyday in the home (e.g., money, food, appliances)

### Social/Emotional

- Wants to please friends
- Wants to be like his or her friends
- More likely to agree to rules
- Likes to sing, dance, and act
- Sometimes demanding; sometimes eagerly cooperative
- Able to distinguish fantasy from reality

