

Child Development Training

Babies and Children have milestones they should meet in order to be considered “on track” for normal development. As a respite provider for PPRS there are many ways to help foster development in all children, even developmentally delayed babies and children, one of the biggest things you can do is be aware of what normal development looks like according to the CDC chart.

All children develop at their own rate, some meet milestones faster than others, however if you notice a baby or child is seriously behind in meeting milestones listed below it could mean they have developmental delays.

As a PPRS respite provider you will most likely be working with babies and children that have therapists, caseworkers, and parents that are already working on delayed milestones, always follow their guide and instructions of the service plan first and foremost. This training has been developed to give you a general knowledge of milestone, their time frames, and activities you can do to help.

What most babies do at Two Months

Social and Emotional

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

Language/Communication

- Coos, makes gurgling sounds
- Turns head toward sounds

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Pays attention to faces
- Begins to follow things with eyes and recognize people at a distance
- Begins to act bored (cries, fussy) if activity doesn't change

Movement/Physical Development

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

What can you do to help foster development at Two Months?

- Cuddle, talk and play with baby during feeding, dressing and bathing
- Help baby learn to calm his or her self. (It is ok to let them suck on their fingers)
- Help baby get into a routine. Always follow the parents or caregivers schedule.
- Act excited when baby smiles and makes sounds
- Pay attention to the baby's different cries so you learn to know what he/she wants
- Play peek-a-boo
- Talk, read and sing to the baby
- Copy the babies sounds sometimes, but also use clear language

- Lay the child on his/her tummy if able and put toys near the child
- Encourage the baby to lift his/her head by holding a toy at eye level

What most babies do at Four Months

Social and Emotional

- 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

Language/Communication

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

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Lets you know if he 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
- Watches faces closely
- Recognizes familiar people and things at a distance

Movement/Physical Development

- 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

What can you do to help foster normal development at Four Months?

- Hold and talk to the baby. Smile and be cheerful while doing so
- Help establish steady routines for sleeping and feeding
- Copy the babies sounds while using normal language as well.
- Have quiet times when you read or sing to the baby
- Give age appropriate toys to play with such as rattles or colorful pictures
- Play games such as peek-a-boo
- Provide safe opportunities for the baby to reach for toys and explore his/her surroundings
- Put toys or rattles in the baby's hand and encourage him/her to hold it

What most babies do at Six Months

Social and Emotional

- 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

Language/Communication

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

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Looks around at things nearby
- Brings things to mouth
- Shows curiosity about things and tries to get things that are out of reach
- Begins to pass things from one hand to the other

Movement/Physical Development

- 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

What can you do to help foster normal development at Six Months?

- Play on the floor with the baby every shift if possible
- Learn to read the baby's moods. If he/she is happy keep doing what you are doing, if he/she is upset take a break and comfort the baby.
- Use "reciprocal play" – when the baby smile you smile, when the baby makes sounds you copy them
- Repeat the baby's sounds and say simple words with those sounds. For example: if the baby says, "bah" , say bottle or book
- Read books to the baby every chance you get
- When the baby looks at something, point at it and talk about it
- When the baby drops a toy on the floor pick it up and give it back to the baby. This teaches them cause and effect
- Point out new things to the baby and name them

- Put toys just out of reach to encourage the baby to roll over to get the,
- Read colorful picture books. Make sure to show the baby and point to the pictures as you read.

What most babies do at Nine Months

Social and Emotional

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

Language/Communication

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

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Watches the path of something as it falls
- Looks for things she sees you hide
- Plays peek-a-boo
- Puts things in his mouth
- Moves things smoothly from one hand to the other
- Picks up things like cereal o’s between thumb and index finger

Movement/Physical Development

- Stands, holding on
- Can get into sitting position
- Sits without support
- Pulls to stand
- Crawls

What can you do to help foster normal development at Nine Months?

- Pay attention to the way the baby reacts to new situations and people: try to continue to do things that make the baby happy and comfortable
- As he/she moves around more stay close so the baby knows you are near
- Continue with routines, they are very important now
- Play Games: like “your turn, my turn”
- Say in words what the baby is feeling. For example: “You are so happy today, or, “ You are so sad, let’s see what we can do to make you feel better”
- Describe what the baby is looking at. For Example, “Look at the red, round ball”
- Copy the baby’s sounds and words
- Ask for behaviors that you want. For example, instead of saying, “Don’t stand” say “Time to sit”
- Teach cause and effect by rolling balls back and forth, pushing toy cards and trucks, and putting blocks in and out of a container.
- Provide ample room for the baby to move around and play in a safe environment
- Put the baby close to things so he/she can pull up on them safely. Never leave a baby this age standing alone without you nearby.

What most children do at One Year

Social and Emotional

- Is shy or nervous with strangers
- Cries when mom or dad leaves
- Has favorite things and people
- Shows fear in some situations
- Hands you a book when he wants to hear a story
- 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”

Language/Communication

- 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

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging, throwing
- Finds hidden things easily
- Looks at the right picture or thing when it’s named
- Copies gestures

- Starts to use things correctly; for example, drinks from a cup, brushes hair
- Bangs two things together
- Puts things in a container, takes things out of a container
- Lets things go without help
- Pokes with index (pointer) finger
- Follows simple directions like “pick up the toy”

Movement/Physical Development

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

What can you do to help foster normal development at One Year?

- Give the child time to get to know you, play with his/her favorite toy, stuffed animal, or blanket to help gain trust.
- In response to unwanted behaviors just a firm no is sufficient. Never yell, spank, or give long explanations.
- Give the child lots of hugs and praise for good behavior
- Spend more time encouraging wanted behaviors than punishing unwanted behaviors. (4 times as much encouragement for wanted behaviors as redirection for unwanted behaviors)
- Talk to the child about what you are doing. For example: “ I am washing your hands with a washcloth because they are dirty”
- Try to read with the child every shift
- Build on what the child says. For example: If the child points to a truck and says, “T”, say “Yes, that is a big blue truck”
- Name pictures in books and body parts
- Provide toys baby can push or pull in a safe area.

What most babies do at Eighteen Months

Social and Emotional

- Likes to hand things to others as play
- May have temper tantrums

- May be afraid of strangers
- Shows affection to familiar people
- Plays simple pretend, such as feeding a doll
- May cling to caregivers in new situations
- Points to show others something interesting
- Explores alone but with parent close by
- Knows what ordinary things are for; for example, telephone, brush, spoon
- Points to get the attention of others
- Shows interest in a doll or stuffed animal by pretending to feed
- Points to one body part
- Scribbles on his own
- Can follow 1-step verbal commands without any gestures; for example, sits when you say “sit down”

Language/Communication

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

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

Movement/Physical Development

- Walks alone
- May walk up steps and run
- Pulls toys while walking
- Can help undress herself
- Drinks from a cup
- Eats with a spoon

What can you do to help foster normal development at Eighteen Months?

- Provide a safe, loving and fun environment
- Describe the child’s emotions. For example “ You are happy when we read this book.”
- Encourage empathy. For example: If you see another sad child, encourage him/her to give him a hug or a pat to make the other child feel better.
- Copy the child’s words but correctly.
- Use words that describe feelings or emotions
- Use simple clear phrases
- Ask simple questions
- Play with blocks, balls, puzzles, and toys that teach cause /effect and problem solving
- Encourage child to drink from a cup and use a spoon. No matter how messy.

What most children do at Two Years

Social and Emotional

- Copies others, especially adults and older children
- Gets excited when with other children
- Shows more and more independence
- 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

Language/Communication

- 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
- Points to things in a book

- Walks up and down stairs holding on
- Throws ball overhand
- Makes or copies straight lines and circles

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Finds things even when hidden under two or three covers
- Begins to sort shapes and colors
- Completes sentences and rhymes in familiar books
- 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

Movement/Physical Development

- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks a ball
- Begins to run
- Climbs onto and down from furniture without help

What can you do to help foster normal development at Two Years?

- Praise the child for being a good helper. For example: If the child is helping prepare lunch or pick up his/her toys.
- At this age children still play next to (not with) each other and don't generally share well. For play dates give the child lots of toys to play with. Give the child attention or praise when he/she follows instructions. Spend more time paying attention to good behaviors.
- Teach your child to identify and say body parts, animals, and other common things.
- Do not correct the child when he/she says a word incorrectly. Just repeat it yourself correctly, "That is a ball"
- Encourage the child to use words instead of noises or pointing. For Example: if the child says "Milk" prompt them to say, "May I have milk"
- Help the child do puzzles with shapes, blocks, or farm animals. Name each piece when they put them in place

What most children do at Three Years

Social and Emotional

- Copies adults and friends
- Shows affection for friends without prompting
- Takes turns in games
- Shows concern for crying friend
- 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

- Dresses and undresses self

Language/Communication

- Follows instructions with 2 or 3 steps
- Can name most familiar things
- Understands words like "in," "on," and "under"
- Says first name, age, and sex
- 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
- Carries on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences

- Copies a circle with pencil or crayon
- Turns book pages one at a time
- Builds towers of more than 6 blocks
- Screws and unscrews jar lids or turns door handle

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Does puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces
- Understands what “two” means

Movement/Physical Development

- Climbs well
- Runs easily
- Pedals a tricycle (3-wheel bike)
- Walks up and down stairs, one foot on each step

What can you do to help foster normal development at Three Years?

- Encourage getting along with others with siblings, or play.
- Work with the child to solve a problem when he/she is upset
- Talk about the child’s emotions. For example, “I can tell you are mad because you threw the puzzle piece.”
- Set and follow rules and limits for the child according to their parent, caregiver, and/or service plan.
- Give child instructions of only 2 or 3 steps: For example, “Please go to your room and get your coat and shoes”
- Try to read to the child every shift if possible, ask the child to point to things in pictures and repeat words after you
- Give child an activity box with paper, crayons, and coloring books if available. Color and draw lines and shapes with the child.
- Play counting games. Count body parts, stairs, books, and toys.

What most children do at Four Years

Social and Emotional

- Enjoys doing new things
- Plays “Mom” and “Dad”

- Is more and more creative with make-believe play
- Would rather play with other children than by himself
- Cooperates with other children

- Often can't tell what's real and what's make-believe
- Talks about what she likes and what she is interested in

Language/Communication

- 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"
- Tells stories
- Can say first and last name

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

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

What can you do to help foster normal development at Four Years?

- Play make believe with the child. Let him/her be the leader and copy what they are doing
- Suggest the child pretend play for an upcoming event that he/she might be nervous about
- Give the child simple choices when possible. Let the child choose what to eat for snack, playtime, or what to wear. Limit the choices to 2 or 3.
- During times the child is playing with other children let them solve their own problems, but be nearby if needed.
- Encourage the child to always use words, share toys, take turns.
- Give the child toys to build imagination like dress-up clothes, kitchen sets, blocks, and play vehicles.
- Always use good grammar when speaking to the child.
- Take time to answer the child's "Why?" questions.
- If the child likes music and is able, play their favorite music and dance with them or encourage singing.

What most children do at Five Years

Social and Emotional

- Wants to please friends
- Wants to be like friends
- More likely to agree with rules
- Likes to sing, dance, and act
- Is aware of gender
- Can tell what's real and what's make-believe
- Shows more independence (for example, may visit a next-door neighbor by himself [adult supervision is still needed])
- Is sometimes demanding and sometimes very cooperative

Language/Communication

- Speaks very clearly
- Tells a simple story using full sentences
- Uses future tense; for example, "Grandma will be here."
- Says name and address

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- 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

Movement/Physical Development

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

What can you do to help foster normal development at Five Years?

- Give child more freedom to choose activities and problem solve on their own
- The child may start to talk back or use swear words as a way to feel independent. Do not give much attention to this behavior. Instead redirect the conversation.
- If the parents/caregiver have started teaching the child their address and phone number review these with the child on a shift
- When reading to the child see if they can predict what will happen in a story
- Encourage the child to 'read' by looking at the pictures and telling the story in a book.

- Play with toys that encourage the child to put things together
- Teach child concepts like morning, afternoon, evening, today, tomorrow, and yesterday.

Through normal communication and play as a respite provider you can help children meet their milestones, grow, and learn. Not all children will be able to do all the suggestions on this list, but take the time to know what the child CAN do. Whether it is because of a physical disability, a mental disability, or sensory disability please never forget that every child can learn and grow.

**Most charted material was provided by the CDC website and changed to fit a respite provider instead of a parent. You can get more information at www.cdc.gov/milestones*