

# Understanding Developmental Delay

## A Gift for Educators Resource

Developmental delay means a child is not reaching expected milestones in one or more areas (speech, motor skills, social skills, thinking, or self-help) at the typical age. It is not a label of limitation — it is an invitation to provide the right support at the right time.

Common areas affected:

- Speech and language
- Gross or fine motor skills
- Social or emotional development
- Cognitive or adaptive skills

Strengths often seen: determination, sweetness, unique ways of connecting, and the ability to make giant leaps with consistent support.

Simple ways to support at home or school:

- Celebrate every small step forward — progress is progress
- Use visual schedules, picture cards, and hands-on activities
- Collaborate with therapists (speech, OT, PT)
- Focus on the child's interests to motivate learning

Every child develops at their own beautiful pace. Our job is to walk beside them with patience, encouragement, and joy.