

Developmental Milestones

Some of the major developmental milestones for communication development are presented in the following outline. Particular emphasis is placed on achievements in the developmental areas of cognition, socialization and speech/language.

The New Kid in Town: Birth to One month

- Sees best at 7 ½ inches
- Is alert less than 5% of the day
- Comforted by sound of human voice
- Smiles reflexively
- Cries
- Makes non-crying speech-like sounds, usually when feeding

The Examiner: One to Six months

One Month

- Moves limbs reflexively
- Cries from distress and for assistance
- Human voice calms crying
- Establishes eye-contact with mother
- Smiles spontaneously
- Makes pleasure sounds.

Two Months

- Moves arms; swipes at objects
- Visually prefers human face
- Repeats own actions
- Excites in anticipation of objects or people
- Distinguishes different speech sounds
- Laughs and produces “throaty” guttural sounds called *gooing*.

Three Months

- Swipes at dangling objects
- Has full visual focus
- Visually searches for sounds; turns head when hears a voice
- Explores own body
- Visually distinguishes different people and things.
- Cooing appears – consonant-vowel vocalizations
- Produces predominately vowel sounds

Four Months

- Localizes to sounds
- Stares at place from which objects is dropped
- Recognizes mother in a group
- Discriminates different faces
- Anticipates being lifted; laughs when played with
- Babbles strings of consonants
- Imitates tones
- Smiles at person speaking to her

Five Months

- Begins to play
- Visually follows a vanishing object
- Recognizes familiar objects
- Explores objects by mouthing and touching
- Reacts differently to smiling and scolding
- Discriminates parents and siblings from others
- Displays anger when objects are taken away
- Experiments with different sounds
- Imitates some sounds
- Responds to name
- Smiles and vocalizes to image in mirror

Six Months

- Looks and reaches smoothly and quickly
- Inspects objects
- Enjoys people games, e.g., “peek-a-boo”
- Feeds self finger food
- Explores face of person holding her
- Varies volume, pitch and rate.
- Vocalizes pleasure and displeasure

The Experimenter: Seven to Twelve months

Seven Months

- Visually searches briefly for toy that disappears
- Imitates a physical act only if in her repertoire
- Anticipates some results, e.g., Jack pops up at end of song
- Teases (beginning of humor); laughs at funny expressions
- Raises arms to be picked up
- Plays vocally
- Produces several sounds in one breath
- Listens to vocalizations of others

Eight Months

- Recognizes object dimensions
- Explores shape, weight, texture function & properties of objects.
- Acts positively toward peers
- Shouts for attention
- Listens selectively
- Repeats emphasized syllables
- Imitates gestures and tonal quality of adult speech

Nine Months

- Visually searches briefly for toy that disappears
- Uncovers object if observes act of hiding first
- Anticipates outcome of events and return of persons
- Uses social gestures
- Uses jargon (invented words)
- Imitates coughs, hisses, tongue clicks, raspberries, etc.
- May respond to name and “no”
- Attends to conversation

Ten Months

- Points to body parts
- Attains a goal with a “trial and error” approach
- Search for hidden object but usually in a familiar place
- Displays moods
- Helps dress and feed self
- Becomes aware of social approval and disapproval
- Imitates adult speech if sounds are in repertoire
- Obeys some commands

Eleven Months

- Imitates increasingly
- Seeks approval
- Imitates inflections, rhythms, facial expressions

Twelve Months

- Uses common objects appropriately
- Searches in location where an object was last seen
- Imitates an absent model
- Expresses people preferences
- Expresses a variety of emotions
- Recognizes own name
- Follows simple instructions, especially if accompanied by a visual cue, e.g., (bye-bye)
- Speaks one or more words
- Mixes words with jargon

The Explorer: Twelve to Twenty-Four months

Fifteen Months

- Points with index finger
- Looks for adults when left alone
- Likes music and dancing
- Pushes toys
- Plays in solitary manner but likes to act for an audience
- Begins make-believe play
- Laughs when chased
- Points to clothes, persons, toys and animals named
- Uses jargon and words in conversation
- Has four-to-six word vocabulary

Eighteen Months

- Turns pages; sorts shapes
- Recognizes pictures
- Remembers places where objects are usually located
- Imitates adult object use
- Explores reactions of others; tests others
- Enjoys social play; increased cooperative play
- Responds to scolding and praise
- Little or no sense of sharing
- Begins to use two-word statements
- Has approximately 20-word vocabulary
- Identifies body parts
- Refers to self by name
- Sings or hums spontaneously
- Plays “question-answer” with adults

Twenty-One Months

- Begins to show hand preference
- Fits things together, e.g., easy puzzle
- Knows shapes
- Sits alone with book for short periods of time
- Matches objects with owners
- Hugs spontaneously
- Plays near but not with other children
- Likes rhyming games
- Tries to “tell” experiences
- Understands some personal pronouns
- Uses *I* and *mine*

Twenty-Four Months

- Matches familiar objects
- Comprehends *one* and *many*
- Recognizes upside down pictures in books
- Imagines toys have life qualities
- Engages in pretend play
- Enjoys parallel play; playing near other children and doing similar things.
- Communicates feelings, desires, and interests
- Has 200-300 word expressive vocabulary; names most common objects
- Uses short incomplete sentences
- Uses some prepositions (*in, on*) and pronouns (*I, me, you*), but not always correctly.
- Uses some irregular verb endings (*-s, -ed, -ing* and plural *s*)

The Exhibitor: Three to Five Years

Three Years

- Creates representational art: one shape represents several things
- Matches primary colors and shapes
- Understands the concept of *two*
- Enjoys make-believe play
- Knows age but no concept of length of a year
- Labels some coins
- Plays in groups, talks while playing
- Shares toys for short periods
- Takes turns
- Has 900-1000 word expressive vocabulary
- Creates 3-4 word sentences
- Uses sentences with subject and verb, but simple sentence
- Follows two-step commands

Four Years

- Has established hand preference
- Categories
- Counts rotely to five; understands concept of *three*
- Knows primary colors
- Plays and cooperates with others
- Has 1500-1600 expressive word vocabulary
- Asks many, many questions
- Uses increasingly more complex language
- Recounts stories and the recent past
- Understands most questions, but has some difficulty understanding *how* and *why*
- Relies on word order for interpretation of sentence meanings

Five Years

- ❑ Draws well, colors in lines; creates more recognizable drawings
- ❑ Prints simple words
- ❑ Still lacks eye coordination for sustained reading
- ❑ Knows own left from right, but in others
- ❑ Counts to 13, can show four or five objects, understands concept of *greater than three*
- ❑ Develops time concepts of *today/tomorrow/yesterday, morning/afternoon' night, day/night*
- ❑ Recognizes relationships of parts to whole
- ❑ Enjoys dramatic play; shows interest in group activities, plays purposefully and constructively
- ❑ Has expressive vocabulary of 2,100-2,200 words
- ❑ Discusses feelings
- ❑ Understands *before* and *after*, regardless of word order
- ❑ Follows three-step commands
- ❑ Has developed 90% of grammar

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