

CHILD DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

0-72 MONTH CHECKLIST



meeting 
milestones 

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Watches an object move slowly through line of sight
- Brings hands to mouth
- Looks back and forth between two objects
- Inspects own hands
- Mouths toys
- Sees black and white objects from 8-12 inches away

Social- Emotional

- Looks at adults face
- Enjoys and needs lots of physical contact
- Recognizes familiar faces and objects
- Stops crying when talked to, picked up, or comforted
- Expresses feelings such as anger, excitement, and hunger
- Shows comfort when picked up

Adaptive

- Forms a tight seal around nipple when sucking
- Swallows liquids with no difficulties
- Coordinates sucking, swallowing, and breathing
- Enjoys baths

0-3 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Startled by loud noises
- Cries when hungry or uncomfortable
- Turns head towards voice
- Makes noises other than crying
- Differentiated cry for fatigue, hunger, and pain
- Coos when spoke to by caregiver
- First smile
- Makes eye contact

Physical Development

- Bears weight through feet when held in standing (8wks+)
- When laying on back, brings hands together
- When laying on stomach, raises head and chest briefly
- Rotates head from cheek to cheek on tummy
- Pushes through forearms on tummy
- In supported seating position, reaches for and grasps an object
- Holds small objects in each hand, one at a time
- Rolls from side to back
- Fair head control when held (8wks+)
- Stretches and kicks legs on back
- Opens and closes hands

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Repeats arm and leg movements to cause an action to occur again
- Explores objects in a variety of ways
- Pulls clothes from face
- Intentionally drops an object and watches it fall
- Shakes a rattle placed in hands
- Brings feet & hands to mouth to play
- Reaches with either hand and can hold a toy
- Tracks toys while on back

Social- Emotional

- Comforts self (i.e. sucking thumb or hand)
- Expresses desire to be picked up
- Smiles at or pats own image in the mirror
- Interacts differently with caregivers and strangers
- Initiates social contact
- Becomes aware of new environments

Adaptive

- Swallows puree foods
- Shows definite likes and dislikes of various foods
- Sucks hand and thumb

3-6 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Laughs out loud
- Briefly stops activity when name is called
- Vocalizes pleasure and displeasure
- Imitates sounds
- Makes noises when talked to
- Starts to babble
- Coos to music

Physical Development

- Transfers an objects from one hand to the other
- Bangs two objects together
- Sits for at least 5 seconds with hips supported
- Rolls from back to stomach
- Rolls from back to side
- Good head control & able to hold in midline
- Straightens arms & bear weight on palms during tummy time
- Supports whole weight on legs
- Begins to pivot to left and right while on belly

- Uses tongue to move food around in mouth
- Closes lips when swallowing
- Recognized bottle and places hands on it

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Imitates familiar actions (i.e. claps hands)
- Finds objects that are partially hidden
- Transfers objects from one hand to the other to pick up second toy
- Moves to get toy
- Persists in effort to obtain object
- Plays with a single toy for about 2-3 minutes
- Smiles at reflection in mirror
- Able to hold and play with a toy in sitting

Social- Emotional

- Extends arms to familiar person
- Show preference to certain toys, activities, or places
- Expresses affection
- Responds differently to children and adults
- Enjoys playing peek-a-boo
- Looks at family members when named

6-9 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Responds with appropriate gestures to “up”, “bye bye” or other routines
- Produces three or more consonants
- Moves body to music
- Uses word for parent or caregiver discriminately
- Pitch and intonation vary
- Babbling using a variety of sounds
- Says “mama” or “dada”

Physical Development

- Sits independently
- Walks sideways while holding onto furniture
- Picks up small objects using thumb and forefinger
- Uses arms to move forward on belly
- Pokes with index finger
- Pull to stands alone while holding onto something (i.e. furniture)
- Moves from back to sitting without assistance
- Gets from sitting to crawling position
- Bounces in standing (7mo+)
- Army crawls & pivots on belly

Adaptive

- Closes lips to remove food from spoon
- Sleeps through the night
- Holds or supports bottle to drink
- Purposely pulls off socks
- Feeds self finger foods

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Looks at picture in a book
- Rolls wheeled toys
- Touches adults to have that person start or continue interesting game or interaction
- Removes rings from ring stack toy
- Realizes objects continue to exist even when they cannot be seen

Social- Emotional

- Imitates facial expressions, actions, and sounds
- Repeats activity that elicits positive response from others
- Brings toys to share with caregiver
- Plays well for a brief time in groups of two or three children
- Uses blanket or soft toy for comfort

Adaptive

- Chews texture foods
- Drinks from sippy cup independently
- Cooperates in dressing and undressing
- Drinks from open cup or glass held by adult
- Cooperates with hand washing
- Starts to finger feed

9-12 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Follows simple spoken commands (“give daddy the ball”)
- Responds to “where” questions
- Can point to five or more familiar animals, persons, or toys
- Spontaneously says familiar greetings and farewells
- Briefly stops activity when told “no”
- Imitates simple gestures and sounds

Physical Development

- Scribbles spontaneously
- Walks three or more steps with assistance
- Can stay standing if holding on
- Independent standing for 3-5 seconds
- 4-point crawls (emerges after 3-4 weeks of army crawling)
- Holds crayon or pencil in adaptive fashion
- Moves from standing to sitting in coordinated fashion
- Demonstrates controlled starts and stops in walking
- Transitions from bear crawl to stand (11mo+)
- Throws toys
- Walks with both hands held

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Looks at picture book with adult
- Places a small object into small container
- Demonstrates use of everyday items
- Combines two related objects during play (i.e. bowl & spoon)
- Manages three or four toys by setting one aside when given a new toy
- Understands colors
- Identifies themselves in mirrors

Social- Emotional

- Separates from caregiver in familiar setting without crying
- Attempts to comfort others in distress
- Wants to do many things without help
- Enjoys simple make-believe
- When faced with novel situation, look to caregiver for reassurance

Adaptive

- Stirs with a spoon
- Fusses when diaper needs changed
- Helps with simple household tasks
- Tries to wash own hands and face
- Can use a straw
- Turns pages in books

12-18 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Follows directions about placing an item "in" and "on" another
- Has a word, sound, or sign for drink
- Points to at least three body parts when asked
- Indicates "yes" or "no" in response to questions
- Throws temper tantrums
- Understands pointing
- Uses 10-15 words
- Uses pointing or gestures to communicate

Physical Development

- Uses one hand consistently in most activities
- Can squat then stand again maintaining balance
- Creeps backwards down steps
- Climbs low play equipment
- Scribbles on paper and uses one hand to hold paper in place when drawing
- Walks independently
- Throws ball
- Begins to run (stiff legs and eyes focused on the ground)

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Shows pride in accomplishments
- Listens quietly to story, music, movie, or TV
- Sings familiar songs
- Uses “please” and “thank you”- may need to be reminded
- Asks for assistance when having difficulty
- Expresses range of emotions

Social- Emotional

- Spontaneously names five or more objects
- Uses a substitute object to represent real one (i.e. uses stick as a brush)
- Can match items to corresponding pictures
- Inserts shapes into matching slots
- Matches animals to sounds each makes
- Stacks six to seven blocks
- Plays independently

Adaptive

- Removes loose clothing such as a jacket or shirt without assistance
- Uses handle or knob to open doors
- Puts on simple clothing independently

18-24 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Names familiar characters seen on TV or in movies
- Uses two-word phrases (“more milk”)
- Can point to 15 or more pictures of common objects when they are named
- Knows the names of at least two friends
- Can identify at least six body parts
- Identifies animal sounds
- Tries to sing along to simple songs

Physical Development

- Can walk backwards
- Imitates circular, vertical, and horizontal strokes
- Throws a ball overhand with relative accuracy
- Walks upstairs with alternating feet
- Kicks a ball
- Squats to pick up a toy and return to standing without falling
- Stands on tip toes

- Uses spoon independently
- Puts familiar objects away
- Unzips zippers

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

24-30 MONTH CHECKLIST

- Repeats finger play with words and action
- Can tell own age
- Understands “one”, “one more” and “all”
- Matches simple shapes (circle, square, and triangle)
- Identifies rooms in own home
- Names pictures in books
- Imaginary play
- Listens to short stories

Social- Emotional

- Looks at people when speaking with them
- Usually takes turns
- Recognizes when another person is happy or sad
- Avoids common dangers
- Claims certain articles as being his or her own

Adaptive

- Takes off own shoes, socks, and loose pants
- Sits on the toilet for at least 1 minute supervised
- Washes and dries hands and face

Communication

- Whispers
- Identifies common objects described by their use (“show me what you eat with”)
- Uses sentences of three or more
- Understands negatives (“which is not...”)
- Uses some regular plurals (boys)

Physical Development

- Walks swinging arms and legs in cross pattern (like adult)
- Catches balls, trapping against chest
- Jumps in place with feet together
- Rolls, pounds, and squeezes clay
- Uses adult grasp when holding a pencil

- Shows care when handling an infant or small animal
- Uses a fork to stab food
- Independent in daily routines

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Understands “big” and “little”
- States whether boy or girl
- Stacks rings on peg in order of size
- Can count to five
- Completes three to four piece puzzles
- Can match objects by color, shape, and size
- Builds bridge using three blocks

Social- Emotional

- Shows affection to younger children by hugging and kissing
- Repeats rhymes, songs, or dances for others
- Changes activities when requested
- Interacts appropriately with others during group activities
- Shows independence (i.e. doesn't want to hold hands)

Adaptive

- Can pour milk/juice with some assistance
- Daytime control of toileting needs, occasional accidents
- Gets drink of water unassisted
- Brushes teeth independently
- Knows where own possessions are kept

30-36 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Can describe what he or she is doing
- Responds to “who” and “whose” questions
- Asks “what” or “where” questions
- Understands “besides” and “under”
- Uses 200 words by age 3

Physical Development

- Threads small beads on string
- Snips paper with scissors
- Walks forward heel to toe
- Stands on one foot for a few seconds
- Kicks a stationary ball at least 6 feet

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

36-42 MONTH CHECKLIST

- Understands “same” and “different”
- Matches objects that have the same function (spoon, fork)
- Understands “heavy” and “light”
- Understands “more” and “less”
- Sorts objects by physical characteristics (color or shape)

Social- Emotional

- Shares toys
- Plays board/card games
- Volunteers for tasks
- Quiets down after active play
- Participates in circle games

Adaptive

- Manipulates large buttons or snaps
- Covers mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing
- Hangs clothes in designated location
- Cleans up spills
- Completes simple errands

Communication

- Names primary colors
- Can state full name
- Can answer questions when told a short story
- Uses contractions
- Uses regular past tense forms
- Uses pronouns

Physical Development

- Copies drawing a cross
- Hops forward on one foot
- Hammers pegs
- Runs around objects, turns corners
- Jumps forward with feet together at least 20 inches

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

42-48 MONTH CHECKLIST

- Retells story from picture book
- Can build pyramid of six blocks
- Draws people
- Can copy own name
- Draws a face with at least three features

Social- Emotional

- Returns objects to their appropriate place
- Accepts friendly teasing
- Can explain rules of a game to others
- Expresses anger with words rather than physical actions
- Shows empathy of others

Adaptive

- Dresses independently (aside from shoe tying)
- Serves self at the table
- Often wants privacy in the bathroom
- Can answer “what to do if” questions
- Fastens seat belt independently

Communication

- Uses facial expressions and body language to demonstrate emotions
- Understands passive sentences (“show me the car was pushed by the truck”)
- Makes statement about cause and effect
- Can define at least five simple words
- Can tell how simple objects are used

Physical Development

- Copies a square
- Gallops
- Can jump over low objects
- Glues neatly
- Walks down steps with one handrail using alternating feet
- Hops on one foot
- Stands on one foot for 5 seconds
- Swings independently

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

48-54 MONTH CHECKLIST

- Identifies “first” “last” and “middle”
- Distinguishes between real and make-believe
- Understands the concept of “zero”
- Identifies “half” and “whole” objects
- Names at least 20 letters

Social- Emotional

- Offers item or activity to another in exchange for an item or activity
- Accepts valid criticism
- Asks before using another’s belongings
- Talks about own feelings

Adaptive

- Crosses street safely
- Requests food to be passed at the table
- Knows which shoes goes on which foot
- Puts dirty dishes in sink or dishwasher
- Adjusts water temperature for bath or shower

Communication

- Identifies rhyming words
- Completes simple verbal analogies “ice is cold; fire is ___”
- Can state similarities between objects “how are juice and milk alike?”
- Uses possessives
- Uses sentences of five or more words

Physical Development

- Can cut a straight line
- Balances on one foot
- Swings on swing maintaining own momentum
- Can rapidly touch each finger to thumb
- Turns a somersault

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

54-60 MONTH CHECKLIST

- Draws a person with six recognizable parts
- Matches number of items to correct numeral
- Recognizes a few printed words
- Can predict what will happen next
- Prints first name without a model

Social- Emotional

- Offers assistance to others
- Helps with group projects
- Says "excuse me" to interrupt politely
- Likes competitive games
- Responds with appropriate affect or action in social situations

Communication

- Responds to questions involving time concepts ("when do you eat dinner?")
- Generates complex sentences
- Tells familiar stories without picture cues
- Can give at least three descriptive words that characterize an object
- Participates in group discussion

Physical Development

- Bounces and catches a tennis ball
- Colors within lines
- Can do at least three sit-ups
- Jumps sideways with feet together
- Cuts out a square

Adaptive

- Selects clothing appropriate for temperature and occasion
- Makes own bed
- Completes toileting tasks (pulling bottoms & underwear up/down, going to the bathroom, wiping, flushing toilet) independently
- Combs or brushes hair
- Brushes teeth independently

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive

- Counts up to 20 objects
- Draws 5 or more identifiable objects
- Tells month and day of birth
- Writes first and last name from memory
- States use of at least three body parts ("what do you do with your eyes?")
- Reads 10 or more words

Social- Emotional

- Apologizes if hurt someone's feelings
- Completes pencil/paper games
- Remains calm when small requests are denied
- Answers the phone, remembers a simple message, and delivers it to the correct person
- Works alone on chores for 20 minutes

60-72 MONTH CHECKLIST

Communication

- Uses irregular plurals
- Knows what you do in each season
- Tells simple jokes
- Identifies left and right on own body
- Uses "yesterday" and "tomorrow"
- Can identify at least three units of currency

Physical Development

- Skips
- Copies a diamond
- Cuts out simple geometric shapes
- Drops a ball and kicks it forward before it hits the floor
- Can dribble an 8 to 10 inch ball using one hand

Adaptive

- Makes a simple breakfast and lunch
- Sets and clears table independently
- Uses table knife to spread
- Takes shower or bath independently
- Dusts furniture

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