

# Developmental Milestones to be reached by the end of 4 years

## What is child development?

*Child development* refers to how a child becomes able to do more complex things as they get older. Development is different than growth. *Growth* only refers to the child getting bigger in size. When we talk about normal development, we are talking about developing skills like:

- **Gross motor:** using large groups of muscles to sit, stand, walk, run, etc., keeping balance, and changing positions.
- **Fine motor:** using hands to be able to eat, draw, dress, play, write, and do many other things.
- **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.

## Movement

- Hops and stands on one foot up to five seconds
- Goes upstairs and downstairs without support
- Kicks ball forward
- Throws ball overhand
- Catches bounced ball most of the time
- Moves forward and backward with agility

## Hand and Finger Skills

- Copies square shapes
- Draws a person with two to four body parts
- Uses scissors
- Draws circles and squares
- Begins to copy some capital letters

## Language

- Understands the concepts of "same" and "different"
- Has mastered some basic rules of grammar
- Speaks in sentences of five to six words
- Speaks clearly enough for strangers to understand
- Tells stories

## Cognitive

- Correctly names some colors
- Understands the concept of counting and may know a few numbers
- Approaches problems from a single point of view
- Begins to have a clearer sense of time
- Follows three-part commands
- Recalls parts of a story
- Understands the concept of same/different
- Engages in fantasy play

## **Social**

- Interested in new experiences
- Cooperates with other children
- Plays "Mom" or "Dad"
- Increasingly inventive in fantasy play
- Dresses and undresses
- Negotiates solutions to conflicts
- More independent

## **Emotional**

- Imagines that many unfamiliar images may be "monsters"
- Views self as a whole person involving body, mind and feelings
- Often cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality

## **Developmental Health Watch**

Because each child develops in his own particular manner, it's impossible to tell exactly when or how he'll perfect a given skill. The developmental milestones will give you a general idea of the changes you can expect as your child gets older, but don't be alarmed if his development takes a slightly different course. Alert your pediatrician, however, if your child displays any of the following signs of possible developmental delay for this age range.

- Cannot throw a ball overhand
- Cannot jump in place
- Cannot ride a tricycle
- Cannot grasp a crayon between thumb and fingers
- Has difficulty scribbling
- Cannot stack four blocks
- Still clings or cries whenever his parents leave him
- Shows no interest in interactive games
- Ignores other children
- Doesn't respond to people outside the family
- Doesn't engage in fantasy play
- Resists dressing, sleeping, using the toilet
- Lashes out without any self-control when angry or upset
- Cannot copy a circle
- Doesn't use sentences of more than three words
- Doesn't use "me" and "you" appropriately

Excerpted from [\*Caring for Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5\*](#), Bantam 1999

If you are concerned about your child's development, please see your child's doctor and

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