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## Your Child's Growth: Developmental Milestones

Your child's growth is a complex and ongoing process. Young bodies are going through a number of physical and mental changes. While it may be easy to recognize common childhood diseases, developmental problems may go unnoticed.

No two children develop at the same rate. But, medical experts have been able to gauge "normal" stages of growth for different age groups. Parents can use these "developmental milestones" as guidelines to judge when something might be wrong and help is needed.

Observe your child over a 1 month period when you apply any of these "milestones." This will allow you to take into account any days when your child is upset or under stress. Remember, a "no" answer to any of these questions does not necessarily mean that your child has a problem with development. Most children go through some rough spots while growing up.

Plan to talk to your pediatrician during your next office visit if:

- you note or suspect any major changes from the "milestones" or
- your child does not do many of the things suitable for his or her age.

### 3 Months

YES  NO When your baby is lying on his/her back, does he/she move each arm and leg equally well? Check No if your child makes jerky or uncoordinated movements with one or both of his/her arms or legs or uses only one arm all the time:

YES  NO Does your child make sounds such as gurgling, cooing, babbling, or other noises besides crying?

YES  NO Are your child's hands frequently open?

YES  NO When you hold your child in the standing position, can he/she support his/her head more than a moment?

### 6 Months

YES  NO Have you seen your baby play with his/her hands by touching them together?

YES  NO Has your baby rolled over at least two times, from his stomach to his/her back or

back to stomach?

YES  NO Does your baby respond to sounds?

YES  NO Does your baby see small objects like crumbs?

## 9 Months

YES  NO When your child is playing and you come up quietly behind him/her, does your child sometimes turn his/her head as though he/her heard you? Loud sounds do not count. Check Yes only if you have seen him/her respond to quiet sounds or whispers.

YES  NO When you hold your baby under the arms, can he/she bear some weight on his/her legs? Check Yes only if your child tries to stand on his/her feet and supports some weight?

YES  NO When your child is on his/her stomach, can he/she support his/her weight on outstretched hands?

YES  NO Does your baby hold his/her bottle?

## 12 Months

YES  NO When you hide behind something or around a corner and then reappear again, does your baby look for you or eagerly plan for you to reappear?

YES  NO Does your baby make "ma-ma" or "da-da" sounds? Check Yes if your baby makes either sound.

YES  NO Does your baby crawl on hands and knees?

YES  NO Does your baby pull up to stand?

YES  NO Does your baby say one word?

YES  NO Does your baby walk holding on to furniture?

YES  NO Is your baby able to localize sounds by turning his/her head?

## 18 Months

YES  NO Can your child hold a regular cup or glass without help and drink from it without spilling?

YES  NO Can your child walk all the way across a large room without falling or wobbling from side to side?

YES  NO Does your child walk without support or help?

YES  NO Does your child say two words?

YES  NO Does your child take off his/her shoes?

YES  NO Does your child feed himself/herself?

## 2 Years

YES  NO Can your child say at least three specific words, other than "da-da" and "ma-ma", that mean the same thing each time they are said?

YES  NO Can your child take off clothes such as pajamas (tops or bottoms) or pants? (Diapers, hats, and socks do not count.)

YES  NO Does your child run without falling?

YES  NO Does your child look at pictures in a picture book?

YES  NO Does your child tell you what he/she wants?

YES  NO Does your child repeat words others say?

YES  NO Does your child point to one named body part?

## 3 Years

YES  NO Can your child name at least one picture when you look at animal books together?

YES  NO Can your child throw a ball overhand (not sidearm or underhand) toward your stomach or chest from a distance of 5 feet?

YES  NO Can your child answer simple questions?

YES  NO Does your child help put things away?

YES  NO Does your child know his/her sex?

YES  NO Can your child name one color?

## 4 Years

YES  NO Can your child pedal a tricycle at least 10 feet forward?

YES  NO Does your child play hide-and-seek or other games where he/she takes turns and follows rules?

YES  NO Can your child name pictures in books or magazines?

YES  NO Can your child tell you the action taking place in a picture?

YES  NO Does your child use action (verbs) words?

YES  NO Does your child play with an imaginary companion?

## 5 Years

YES  NO Can your child button some of his/her clothing or his/her doll-clothes? (Snaps do not count.)

YES  NO Does your child react well when you leave him/her with a stranger or babysitter?

YES  NO Can your child name three colors?

YES  NO Can your child lace shoes?

YES  NO Can your child walk down stairs alternating feet?

YES  NO Can your child broad jump?

YES  NO Can your child point while counting three different objects?

YES  NO Can your child name a coin correctly?

## 6 Years

YES  NO Can your child dress himself completely without help?

YES  NO Can your child catch a small ball on a bounce, such as a tennis ball, using only his/her hands? (Large balls do not count.)

YES  NO Can your child copy a circle?

YES  NO Can your child tell his/her age correctly?

YES  NO Can your child repeat four numbers in the proper sequence?

YES  NO Can your child skip with both feet?

Parents are in the best position to note these aspects of their child's behavior. These subtle clues signal that your child's development is on schedule or that something may be wrong. A "no" answer to any of the questions may be a warning sign; make sure to bring it to your pediatrician's attention. Remember, these milestones are an aid, and not a test.

If you have any questions, plan to discuss them with your pediatrician. Pediatricians are trained to detect and treat developmental problems in children. Many problems, if detected early, can be treated by your pediatrician and successfully managed.

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