



# Early Childhood Development

## Stages of Development

Every child has a different pattern and timing of growth. There are sequences of growth and change that occur during the first nine years of life. As children develop, they need different types of stimulation and interaction to exercise their evolving skills and to develop new ones. At every age, meeting basic health and nutritional needs are essential.

Approximate Age	What Children Do	What Children Need
Birth to 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Begin to smile</li> <li>▪ Track people and objects with eyes</li> <li>▪ Prefer bright colors</li> <li>▪ Reach, discover hands and feet</li> <li>▪ Lift head and turn toward sound</li> <li>▪ Cry, but often soothed when held</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protection from physical danger</li> <li>▪ Proper nutrition</li> <li>▪ Regular health care</li> <li>▪ Motor and sensory stimulation</li> <li>▪ Language stimulation</li> <li>▪ Responsive parenting</li> </ul>
4 to 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Smile often</li> <li>▪ Prefer parents and older siblings</li> <li>▪ Listen intently, respond when spoken to</li> <li>▪ Laugh, gurgle and imitate sounds</li> <li>▪ Explore hands and feet</li> <li>▪ Put objects in mouth</li> <li>▪ Sit when propped, roll over, scoot and bounce</li> <li>▪ Grasp objects without using thumb</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protection from physical danger</li> <li>▪ Proper nutrition</li> <li>▪ Regular health care</li> <li>▪ Motor and sensory stimulation</li> <li>▪ Language stimulation</li> <li>▪ Responsive parenting</li> </ul>
7 to 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify themselves, body parts and familiar voices</li> <li>▪ Understand own name, other common words</li> <li>▪ Say first meaningful words</li> <li>▪ Explore, bang, shake objects</li> <li>▪ Find hidden objects, put objects in containers</li> <li>▪ Sit alone</li> <li>▪ Creep, pull themselves up to stand</li> <li>▪ Walk</li> <li>▪ May seem shy or upset with stranger</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protection from physical danger</li> <li>▪ Proper nutrition</li> <li>▪ Regular health care</li> <li>▪ Motor and sensory stimulation</li> <li>▪ Language stimulation</li> <li>▪ Responsive parenting</li> </ul>
10 to 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Waves bye-bye with intent</li> <li>▪ Crawls well, cruises with confidence</li> <li>▪ Picks up objects with any part of thumb and finger</li> <li>▪ Says Mama and Dada to right parent</li> <li>▪ Plays games with hands (patty-cake and peek-a-boo)</li> <li>▪ Walks holding onto hand or furniture or takes few steps alone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protection from physical danger</li> <li>▪ Proper nutrition</li> <li>▪ Regular health care</li> <li>▪ Motor and sensory stimulation</li> <li>▪ Language stimulation</li> <li>▪ Responsive parenting</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Imitates others' behavior</li> </ul>	
1 to 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Always on the go</li> <li>▪ Show pride in accomplishments</li> <li>▪ Like to help with tasks</li> <li>▪ Begin pretend play</li> <li>▪ Imitate adult actions</li> <li>▪ Speak and understand words and ideas</li> <li>▪ Enjoy stories and experimenting with objects</li> <li>▪ Walk steadily, climb stairs and runs</li> <li>▪ Asserts independence, but prefer familiar people</li> <li>▪ Recognize ownership, "mine"</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to the above, support in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring motor, language and thinking skills</li> <li>▪ Developing independence</li> <li>▪ Learning self-control</li> <li>▪ Play and exploration</li> <li>▪ Social development (play with other children)</li> </ul>
2 to 3 1/2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enjoy learning new skills</li> <li>▪ Learn language rapidly</li> <li>▪ Likes to help with tasks</li> <li>▪ Gain control of hands and fingers</li> <li>▪ Gets easily frustrated</li> <li>▪ Act more independent, but still dependent</li> <li>▪ Sharing/taking turns</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to the above, opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make simple choices</li> <li>▪ Engage in dramatic play</li> <li>▪ Read with an adult</li> <li>▪ Sing favorite songs</li> <li>▪ Work simple puzzles</li> </ul>
3 to 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have a longer attention span</li> <li>▪ Act silly, boisterous, may use shocking language</li> <li>▪ Talk a lot, ask many questions</li> <li>▪ Likes to keep art projects &amp; display on fridge</li> <li>▪ Test physical skills and courage with caution</li> <li>▪ They do not like to lose</li> <li>▪ Like to play with friends</li> <li>▪ Share and take turns sometimes</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to the above, opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop fine motor skills</li> <li>▪ Continue expanding language skills by talking, reading, and singing</li> <li>▪ Learn cooperation by helping and sharing</li> <li>▪ Experiment with pre-writing and pre-reading skills</li> </ul>
5 to 8 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grow curious about people and how the world works</li> <li>▪ Show an increasing interest in numbers, letters, reading and writing</li> <li>▪ Become more and more interested in final products</li> <li>▪ Gain more confidence in physical skills</li> <li>▪ Use words to express feeling and to cope</li> <li>▪ Likes to do grown-up activities</li> <li>▪ Become more outgoing, play cooperatively</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to the above, opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop math and reading skills</li> <li>▪ Engage in problem solving</li> <li>▪ Practice teamwork</li> <li>▪ Develop sense of personal competency</li> <li>▪ Practice questioning and observing life skills</li> </ul>
9 to 12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More graceful with movements and abilities</li> <li>▪ Jumps, skips, and chases</li> <li>▪ Dresses and grooms self completely</li> <li>▪ Can use tools (i.e., hammer, screwdriver)</li> <li>▪ Remainder of adult teeth will develop</li> <li>▪ Likes to sew and paint</li> </ul>	<p>In addition they will also be developing more relationships and other things such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enjoy boy/girl scouts</li> <li>▪ Become more interested in boy-girl relationships</li> <li>▪ Like and respect parents</li> <li>▪ Friends are very important, may have a best friend</li> <li>▪ Like competition and games</li> </ul>