

Developmental Milestones Table

Age	Social-Emotional Development
Between birth and 2 months, infants may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuss or cry to tell you they need something • Begin to quiet more often when comforted, but may still have times when they cannot stop crying • Feel safe when their needs are met • Smile to show pleasure • Begin to recognize familiar voices • Look at faces and prefer familiar faces • Establish eye contact for a few seconds • Calm down when spoken to or picked up • Seem happy to see you when you walk up to them
By 2 to 4 months, infants may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cry in different ways to signal what they need • Starts to cry less • Learn how to self-soothe • Enjoy when you talk to, sing and play with them • Smile, especially at other people and when you smile at them • Copy some facial expressions • Like the sound of your voice
By 4 to 6 months, infants may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have different cries for different needs • Start to settle themselves back to sleep during the night, but still needs you to comfort them • Show emotions with their face, body, voice and actions • Form an attachment to their main (primary) caregivers; begin to know who is a stranger • Look at your face and smile • Make sounds, laugh and enjoy being copied • Be aware of and prefer familiar faces • Start to look at you when you call their name • Enjoy being near people • Respond to people's voices and facial expressions • Play with people • Look at themselves in the mirror

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By 6 to 12 months, infants may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show fear or anxiety over people and situations that didn't bother them before • Show pleasure when you return • Look for comfort when upset • Start to read other people's emotions • Enjoy games such as 'peek-a-boo' and 'pat-a-cake' • Enjoy being around people but may be anxious around strangers • Play purposefully with toys • Participate in clapping when prompted • Lift arms to family member • Laugh in response to play • Distinguish between friendly and angry voices • Manipulate and explore objects • Manipulate a rattle
By 12 to 18 months, toddlers may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a favourite toy or blanket for comfort and security • Need and want independence • Resist limits • Have mood swings and tantrums • Develop a fear of strange objects and events • Feel anxious when separated from family members (separation anxiety) • Like to watch and be with other children • Copy what others do, such as clapping hands and sweeping with a broom • Show concern for others • Respond to facial expressions • Extend toys to others • Manipulate and explore objects • Place doll with head upright and vertical to the ground



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By 18 to 24 months, toddlers may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and play from the secure base of the family member or caregiver • Have tantrums when frustrated or tired • Recognize emotions in themselves and others • Show affection • Have more fears and anxieties • Get frustrated when they're not able to do things which can lead them to hit, slap or bite • Find comfort in routines • Feel strong ownership and keep toys to themselves • Find it hard to share and take turns • Play beside, but not with, other children • Try to comfort others • Recognize themselves and their family in pictures • Have toy preferences • Identify self in mirror • Imitate adult behaviour • Like repetitive actions, such as putting objects in and out of boxes and scribbling on many pages • Imitate a pretend play action (e.g., giving a drink) • Demonstrate play related to their body (e.g., sleeping, eating) • Spontaneously perform an action with a doll (e.g., hug doll) • Use a similar looking object for the needed object (e.g., uses paper as a blanket) • Look for hidden objects • Engage in imaginative play • Say "hi", "bye" and "please" without prompting



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By 24 months (2 years), older toddlers may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-awareness, the realization that they are individuals and are separate from other people • Test limits/ boundaries you set • Struggle with their emerging independence • Want and need to do things for themselves • Change from wanting to be big to wanting to be little • Have poor impulse control • Find it hard to stop doing activities they're enjoying • Be more able to understand and manage their emotions— as their language improves, respond less with physical actions, such as hitting or biting • Learn to read others' emotions and feelings • Dawdle or take their time doing things • Show interest in pretend play with others • Engage in parallel play—playing next to, but usually not with, other children • Like to please others • Be interested in observing and imitating other people • Have a strong sense of ownership • Begin cooperative play • Treat doll or teddy as if it is alive • Begin to use symbols in their play, such as a stick becoming a sword • Reflect less frequently experienced life events in their play (e.g., visiting the doctor) • Engage in detailed and logical play actions • Use or plan storylines in their play • Have an awareness of a family member's approval or disapproval of their actions • Express emotions • Verbalize their desires/feelings (e.g., "I want a drink") • Obey and respect simple rules



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By 3 to 4 years old, preschoolers may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get better at being able to identify and name their own feelings • Use words more often to express their feelings • Fear real and imaginary things such as the dark, thunderstorms and monsters • Exaggerate the truth • Talk about body functions • Develop a sense of humour • Begin to share and take turns • Strike out at others less, name-call more • Enjoy playing with other children • Use imagination and themes in pretend play • Have an imaginary friend • Like to talk • Enjoy group activities and games • Play with mechanical toys • Take turns with other children • Play with 2 or 3 children in a group • Use play themes that expand beyond personal experience (e.g., fireman rescuing people) • Talk about their feelings • Feel shame when caught doing the wrong thing
By 4 to 5 years old, most pre kindergarten/ kindergarten children may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become more competitive • Enjoy games with rules • Feel more empathy for others • Have a best friend • Have more adults in their lives that influence them, such as their teachers and coaches • Have a better sense of right and wrong • Begin to talk to themselves out loud to get calm • Respond negatively to being corrected • Be easily upset by things that are not fair or 'not right' • Begin taking turns and negotiating • Play together with shared aims of play with others • Prefer playing with other children than playing by themselves • Play imaginatively (e.g., playing in the housekeeping centre, dressing up, cooking) • Enjoy playing games with simple rules (e.g., hide and seek) • Change the rules of a game as the activity progresses • Play with others to achieve a common goal – for example, working together to build one big sandcastle

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By 6 years old, children may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to have fears typical of the preschool years, such as fear of monsters, kidnappers, and large animals. • Want their family members to play with them. Family members are their main source of companionship and affection. A gradual shift begins, though, to fulfilling more of these needs with friends and other people they admire, such as teachers. • Play in ways that include a lot of fantasy and imagination • Like to be the “big kid” and feel as if they are taking care of a younger child • Prefer playing with friends of the same gender • Start to understand the feelings of others, with the encouragement of family members and other caregivers • Develop a sense of humour, and enjoy simple jokes and funny books and rhymes • Use play themes that expand beyond personal experience (e.g., going to space) • Play and negotiate with others during play • Engage in well-organized play • Require positive reinforcement for development of self esteem and confidence • Engage in social reasoning with other children (e.g., changes games if one child doesn't want to play) • Feel that doing things the ‘right way’ becomes very important • Easily embarrass
By 7 years old, children may be able to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become more aware of and sensitive to the feelings of others (show empathy) • Overcome some fears they had when they were younger, but still can be terrified of the unknown. For example, going to a new school can be a tremendous stress for a 7-year-old. Many children also fear being in trouble with their family members or other adults. They are generally worried about the opinions of others. • Develop friendships, usually with other children of the same gender • Play in larger groups sometimes but also need time alone • Enjoy playing in small groups and making up their own games with rules • Enjoy playing co-operative games but have difficulties coping with losing • Enjoy using and understanding rules in play • Have a much better understanding of the relationship between cause and effect • Be sensitive to other people's views and beliefs



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By 8 years old, children may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy being around their friends. The opinions of their friends become increasingly important (peer pressure may become an issue). • Gain a sense of security from being involved in regular group activities, such as 4-H or Scouts • Be more likely to follow rules they help create • Have rapidly changing emotions. Angry outbursts are common. Many children are critical of others, especially of their family members. They may seem dramatic and sometimes rude. • Be impatient. They like immediate gratification and find it hard to wait for things they want. • Be interested in money. Some children may become obsessed with saving and plans about earning and spending money. • Be more invested in free play that focuses on an outcome (e.g., construction blocks, winning/losing, woodworking) • Understand the importance of rules, and the simple reasons behind rules
By 9 years old, children may...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize basic social norms and appropriate behaviour • Be able to control their anger most of the time • Identify and express feelings in a positive manner • Have a sense of achievement • Have caring, solid friendships. • Have gained a strong sense of empathy • Have more stable emotions than in the previous year. Mood swings may still occur, but not as frequently as before. • Experience anxiety from common stressful situations, such as a school performance • Enjoy more responsibility (e.g., walking the dog, getting the mail, doing chores) • Form stronger, more complex friendships and peer relationships • Have more emotionally important friendships, especially of the same gender • Have an increased interest in competitive sports



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By 10 to 12 years old, children may be able to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy rituals, rules, secret codes, and made-up languages • Enjoy being member of a club • Be more independent from family • Show less frequent outbursts of anger • Enjoy being with their friends, often with a best friend of the same gender • Continue to enjoy team and group activities • Have a strong sense of belonging within communities they are involved in • Like and listen to their family members. Some children, though, will start to show irritation with or lack of respect for adults who are in charge. • Develop self-compassion • Show an ability to understand and manage behaviour and reactions to feelings and things happening around them • Get better at controlling their own wants and needs • Understand other people's perspectives and see both sides of a situation • Be better at planning, and sticking with difficult tasks. • Consider how their behaviour affects other people • Have an increased need to be independent and seek more responsibility • Explore their own limits and abilities, as well as the boundaries set by adults • Start to develop a stronger individual set of values and morals • Read and understand other people's emotions • Develop self-identity through clothing styles, music genres etc. • Show more concern about body image, looks, and clothes • Focus on themselves; going back and forth between high expectations and lack of confidence • Look for new experiences, including risky experiences • Show increased resilience to stressful situations • Need encouragement to help navigate difficult emotions and social conflicts • Think more logically • Think about things more abstractly and understand that issues aren't always simple • Solve complex problems in a logical way, and see problems from different perspectives • Understand immediate and long-term consequences of actions

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Source:

<https://www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca/im-a-parent/overview-of-parenting>

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