

Questionnaire (Carey and McDevitt, 1978), the Infant Behavior Questionnaire (Gartstein and Rothbart, 2003), and the Early Infancy Temperament Questionnaire (Medoff-Cooper, Carey, and McDevitt, 1993). In discussing test results to parents, it is best to avoid descriptors (such as “difficult”); instead, infants can be described in terms of characteristics (such as “intense” or “less predictable”).

## **Childrearing Practices Related to Temperament**

With knowledge of the infant's temperament, nurses are better able to (1) provide parents with background information that will help them see their child in a better perspective, (2) offer a more organized picture of their child's behavior and possibly reveal distortions in their perceptions of the behavior, and (3) guide parents regarding appropriate childrearing techniques.

Knowledge of the developmental sequence allows the nurse to assess normal growth and minor or abnormal deviations. It also helps parents gain realistic expectations of their child's ability and provides guidelines for suitable play and stimulation. Parents who lack knowledge of child growth and development may set inappropriate behavioral expectations for their child. Emphasizing the child's developmental rather than chronologic age strengthens the parent–child relationship by fostering trust and lessening frustration. Therefore, thorough understanding and appreciation of children's growth and development are essential.

Because of the complexity of the developmental process during the first 12 months, Table 9-1 is presented to help organize and clarify the data already discussed. Although all milestones are important, some represent essential integrative aspects of development that lay the foundation for achievement of more advanced skills. These essential milestones are designated by a black dot (•) in the table. The table represents the average monthly age at which various skills are attained. It must be remembered that although the sequence is the same, the rate will vary among children.

## **Coping with Concerns Related to Normal Growth and Development**