

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES: Your Child at Two Years



What are developmental milestones?

Developmental milestones are skills that are achieved by most children by a certain age. They include physical, social, emotional, cognitive and communication skills that are appropriate for the child's age. Milestones give important clues to a child's health and well-being. Any child who is delayed in their milestones should be further evaluated by a health or developmental professional.

- **Social and Emotional milestones** include how children learn about their own emotions and the emotions of others. These milestones also involve learning how to interact and play with other people.
- **Language and Communication milestones** involve language, speech, and nonverbal communication (for example, hand gestures or facial expressions). These milestones include a baby's babbling, first words, and even the art of listening to others and holding a conversation.
- **Movement/Physical development** involves both gross-motor skills and fine-motor skills. Gross motor skills are typically the first to develop. Gross motor skills include the ability to support their head, sit up, stand, crawl and walk. Fine-motor skills involve precise movements such as grasping a spoon, picking up small objects, and drawing.
- **Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving) milestones** are centered on a child's ability to think, learn and solve problems. Cognitive milestones include an infant learning how to react to different facial expressions and a preschooler learning to say the alphabet.

As a parent, you spend the most time with your child and know them the best. If your child is not meeting these milestones for his or her age, or if you think there could be a problem with the way your child plays, learns, speaks, or acts, it is important to tell your health care provider so they can assess your child's development. Discuss any concerns with your primary care provider at your child's 2-year well child exam.

Your Child at 2 Years Old

This is what most children do at this age:

Social/Emotional

- Copies others, especially adults and older children
- Gets excited when with other children
- Shows more and more independence
- Shows defiant behavior (doing what he has been told not to)
- Plays mainly beside other children, but is beginning to include other children, such as in chase games

Language/Communication

- Points to things or pictures when they are named
- Knows names of familiar people and body parts
- Says sentences with 2 to 4 words
- Follows simple instructions
- Repeats words overheard in conversation
- Points to things in a book

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Finds things even when hidden under two or three covers
- Begins to sort shapes and colors
- Completes sentences and rhymes in familiar books
- Plays simple make-believe games
- Builds towers of 4 or more blocks
- Might use one hand more than the other
- Follows two-step instructions such as "Pick up your shoes and put them in the closet."
- Names items in a picture book such as a cat, bird, or dog

Movement/Physical Development

- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks a ball
- Begins to run
- Climbs onto and down from furniture without help
- Walks up and down stairs holding on
- Throws ball overhand
- Makes or copies straight lines and circles

Tell your doctor if you notice any of these signs of developmental delay for this age. Every community should also have an early childhood intervention program that can help assess your child.

Reference and Resources

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/developmentalscreening.pdf

<http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/> (Texas Early Childhood Intervention services)

To refer a child to Texas Early Childhood Intervention Services for developmental evaluation and developmental support services, call: 1-800-628-5115

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