

# Growth and Developmental Milestones

Babies need more than food and water to grow up healthy. Among other things, they need love, understanding, guidance, and security. They need you to help them learn about their world, develop skills, and adjust to their changing needs.

Playing an active role in your baby's development can be exciting, enriching, and rewarding. You may notice daily changes in appearance, behavior and language, and you will realize that your baby's successful development depends greatly on your participation in the process.

As you observe your baby's growth, keep in mind that no two children are exactly alike. There are "typical" stages of growth, however, your baby may develop at a different pace than another baby. Your baby may develop quickly in one area, and not as quickly in another.

If you believe your baby is having difficulty in a developmental area, don't panic. Many challenges related to development can be helped through **early intervention**—a system of services offered to enhance a child's potential for growth and development and the family's ability to meet their child's special needs.

The information contained in this brochure is not intended to be comprehensive. It may be useful as a general guide to what your baby may be doing at a particular age. Keep it handy and refer to it often. For information about early intervention services, contact the **Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program**, 410-767-0261 or 1-800-535-0182.

## Birth–2 months

### Physical Development

- Barely lifts head to clear surface
- Keeps hands tightly fisted

### Speech Development

- Coos and makes grunting sounds
- Babbles

### Social Development

- Sleeps a lot
- Cries a lot
- May have erratic sleeping and feeding patterns
- Quiets in response to parent's face and voice

## 2 months

### Physical Development

- Lifts head while lying on stomach
- Has smooth motions
- Relaxes fist, unfolds fingers
- Waves hands and kicks feet when on back

### Speech Development

- Coos and gurgles increasingly, especially when talked to
- Cries differently for different needs

### Social Development

- Begins to smile, show excitement and distress
- Turns to familiar voices
- Quiets when held, talked to, or rocked
- Enjoys being tickled
- Maintains brief eye contact while being fed
- May suck thumb or finger to quiet self

## 4 months

### Physical Development

- Can see across a room
- Sits erect when supported
- Rolls over from tummy to back
- Reaches for toys with one hand
- Holds objects
- Reaches for feet and brings them to mouth
- Turns head to localized sounds
- Follows people with eyes

### Speech Development

- Laughs, squeals, and babbles
- Coos and gurgles with joy
- Says "ooh" and "ahh"

## Birth–2 months

### Social Development

- Loves to play with own feet
- Sees colors rather than black and white
- Fusses when wanting to be picked up and held
- Can tell the difference in family members
- Reaches out hands and arms to play
- Smiles

## 7 months

### Physical Development

- Sits up by self for a short time
- Holds toys and feeds self pieces of food
- Stands when held, takes some of the weight on own legs
- Reaches for objects, transfers them from hand to hand
- Begins teething, which may disturb sleep

### Speech Development

- Combines vowel sounds
- Imitates sounds
- Responds to "no" and own name
- Uses body language to initiate interaction

### Social Development

- Plays alone
- Plays longer with people and toys
- Enjoys other children
- Grows more responsive to sound
- Withdraws from strangers, clings to familiar caregivers

## 10 months

### Physical Development

- Crawls using different crawling styles
- Crawls over objects
- May stand leaning against an object
- Picks up small objects with thumb and fingers

### Speech Development

- Says "bye-bye," "dada," and "mama"
- Uses voice to get attention

### Social Development

- Is becoming more independent—may be more interested in playing alone than being held
- Imitates gestures and use of objects
- Crawls around to look for parents
- Likes to play "peek-a-boo"

## 12 months

### Physical Development

- Begins to change from a crawl to a tottering walk with legs wide apart
- Feeds self finger foods
- May begin to use a spoon
- Squats

### Speech Development

- Uses "Dada" and "Mama" to refer to specific persons
- May have a vocabulary of 3 to 10 "real" words
- Adds gestures to own body language

### Social Development

- Loves an audience
- Scribbles with crayons
- Has more variety in play
- Exhibits stronger likes and dislikes
- Flirts with and kisses self in mirror
- Plays with dolls and stuffed animals
- Points to objects in books and identifies them
- Understands simple words and phrases like "Come to Daddy."

## 15 months

### Physical Development

- Stands and walks alone
- Uses a spoon to feed self
- Picks up things from a walking position

### Speech Development

- Uses simple words and phrases
- Says some words spoken by parents

### Social Development

- Says "no" and refuses food
- Is more aware of surroundings
- Is growing more independent
- Is very active

## 18 months

### Physical Development

- Runs stiffly
- Uses whole arm when playing ball
- Feeds self, eats with a spoon, tries a fork
- Takes off shoes, hat, mittens
- Loves to lug, tug, dump, push, and pull
- Goes up and down stairs without help

### Speech Development

- Knows names of objects
- Uses personal pronouns

### Social Development

- Loves to explore
- Often refuses foods
- Likes to listen to music and dance to rhythms

## 24 months

### Physical Development

- Undresses self (large items such as pajamas)
- Begins to kick
- Handles a cup well
- Takes things apart and puts them together again

### Speech Development

- Speaks more clearly
- Replaces “baby” language with short sentences
- Likes to talk to self
- Repeats words others say
- Combines words and actions

### Social Development

- Identifies with surroundings
- Enjoys helping Mommy and Daddy
- May enjoy cleaning up after playing
- Is very active
- May have periodic temper tantrums
- May point to named body parts



## 36 months

### Physical Development

- Swings and climbs
- Jumps in place
- Walks backward
- Peddles tricycle

### Speech Development

- Talks in short sentences, uses plurals
- Sings short songs
- Language is understood by others besides parents
- Says own name
- Increasingly uses “no”
- Announces fears and dislikes

### Social Development

- Feeds self well with spoon and fork
- Drinks from a straw
- Strings large beads
- Dresses self well
- Begins to identify gender roles
- Explores environment outside of home

## Tips for Parents

- Babies learn to talk when they hear others. Talk, sing, and read to your baby.
- Babies like physical contact. Touch, rock and hold your baby.
- Babies sense tension. Responds to your baby’s cries quickly and tenderly. Be sensitive when talking to your baby and to others in his presence.
- Nature stimulates babies’ interest in the outside environment. Take frequent outdoor walks with your baby. The fresh air is also helpful.
- Provide toys that are appropriate for your child’s age and development. Mobiles, colorful boxes, push/pull toys, large blocks, big balls and musical instruments are all good ideas.
- Handle your baby with care. Babies and young children should NEVER be shaken!



### Maryland State Department of Education

#### Division of Special Education/

#### Early Intervention Services

200 West Baltimore Street, 9th Floor

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Phone: 410-767-0261

Toll free: 1-800-535-0182

Fax: 410-333-8165

---

#### Charlene M. Dukes, Ed.D.

President, Maryland State Board of Education

---

#### Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.

State Superintendent of Schools

---

#### Marcella E. Franczkowski, M.S.

Assistant State Superintendent  
Division of Special Education/  
Early Intervention Services

---

#### Martin O’Malley

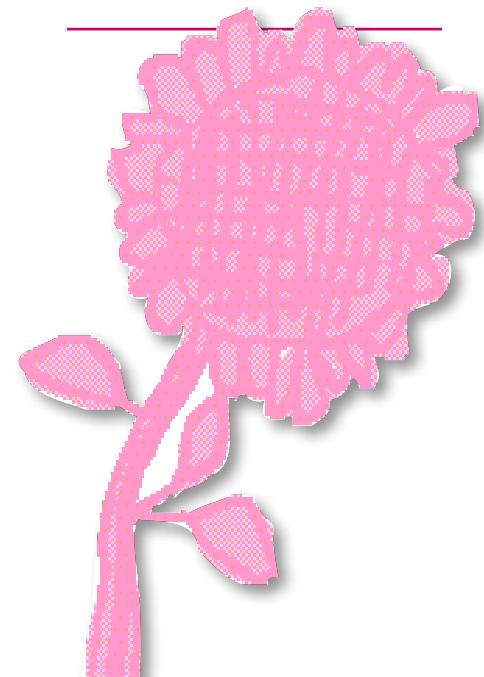
Governor

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. For inquiries related to departmental policy, please contact the Equity Assurance and Compliance Branch at 410-767-0246 Voice, 410-333-8165 Fax, or 410-333-6442 TDD.  
• This document was developed and produced by the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, IDEA, Part C, Grant #H181A020124, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Education or any other federal agency and should not be regarded as such. The information is copyright free. Readers are encouraged to copy and share, but please credit the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, Maryland State Department of Education. • In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) this document is available in alternative formats, upon request. Contact the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, 410-767-0261 Voice, 410-333-8165 Fax.

01/13

# Growth & Developmental Milestones

## A GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE THREE



Division of Special Education/  
Early Intervention Services