

Language Development learning to talk



Missouri's Foundation For Child Abuse Prevention

0 to 6 weeks

- Turns toward parents' voices
- Cries in different ways to show different needs

1 ½ to 3 months

- Turns in the general direction of sounds
- Makes sounds with saliva
- Coos
- Takes turns making sounds with parent

3 to 5 months

- Understands own name
- Gurgles and coos to show pleasure
- Makes "raspberries" or similar sounds

5 to 8 months

- Understands a few words
- Looks for mom or dad when he hears the words
- Squeals and shrieks
- Babbles (says ba, pa, da, ma and na)

8 to 14 months

- Responds to simple requests
- Understands at least 10 to 15 words
- Points, gestures or makes sounds to communicate
- Says mama, dada and a few other words
- Vocalizes to music

14 to 24 months

- Follows one-step directions
- Names three pictures when asked
- Points to six body parts
- Says at least 30 to 50 words
- Puts words together in a phrase
- Speaks clearly about half the time

24 to 36 months

- Starts and carries on short conversations
- Follows two-step directions
- Says at least 50 to 200 words
- Uses plurals
- Says own name when asked
- Uses four-word sentences
- Most of conversation can be understood by strangers
- Asks what, where and why questions

Preschooler

- Listens responsively to books and stories
- Says a favorite rhyme
- Uses more and more words in a sentence
- Predicts an ending to a simple story
- Names letters





Activities You Can Do at Home to Help Your Child's Language Development

Infant:

- Talk to your baby as much as you can.
- Say nursery rhymes or sing to your baby while changing his diapers or rocking him.
- Give your baby a variety of objects and describe them to him as he explores them.
- Give your baby toys that make noise.
- Listen to your baby carefully and repeat back to him the sounds he makes.

Toddler:

- Read simple books to your child and name the pictures.
- Call your child by his name and use it often so he learns it.
- Talk to your child about what he is looking at or doing.
- Use a mirror and show your child his eyes, nose, mouth, ears and hair. Talk about the parts of his body when you give him a bath.
- Repeat your child's sentences back to him clearly. If he says, "Me wike goggy," say back to him, "Yes, you like the dog."

Two-Year-Old:

- Ask your child questions that can't be answered by a simple yes or no. That way he'll start using longer sentences.
- Give your child lots of time to say what he's thinking. Look at him when he talks to you.
- Bring your child to a library and let him look at books by himself. Read to him every day.
- Use words such as in, out, over, under and in front of when talking to your child. Say, "The ball is under the chair" or "Put the toys in the box."

Preschooler

- Encourage responses and talk throughout the reading experience.
- Do rhymes and finger plays over and over with your child. She is memorizing the words and learning about rhyming.
- Ask him interesting questions that begin with what, how and why. This gives him practice describing objects, events and relationships.
- Point out letters as you read aloud to your child. Label some things in your house with big clear words.

Motor Development growing strong

birth to
preschool



0 to 6 weeks

- Brings fist to mouth
- Follows moving objects briefly with eyes
- Prefers to look at bold patterns

1 ½ to 3 months

- Lifts head when on tummy and turns it to each side
- Bats at overhead objects
- Bring hands together in the middle of the body

3 to 5 months

- Rolls over
- Lifts chest while on stomach and props up on elbows
- Stretches legs and kicks at objects
- Brings objects to mouth and gums them

5 to 8 months

- Transfers objects from one hand to the other
- Sits up without support
- Moves around by rolling over and scooting
- Bangs objects together

8 to 14 months

- Crawls on hands and knees
- Lowers to sit
- Walks with help
- Picks up small objects with thumb and pointer finger
- Turns pages in stiff book

14 to 24 months

- Walks and runs independently
- Kicks, aims, throws and rolls a ball
- Climbs
- Straddles and rides wheeled toys without pedals
- Takes objects apart

24 to 36 months

- Jumps with both feet off floor
- Balances on one foot for 1-2 seconds
- Turns doorknobs
- Holds pencil firmly with three finger grip
- Draws straight lines and copies a circle
- Snips with scissors

Preschooler

- Ride a tricycle
- Aims and kicks a ball
- Draws a person with four parts
- Builds more complex block structures





Activities You Can Do at Home to Help Your Child's Motor Development

Infant

- Lay your baby on his tummy when he is awake. (Always put your baby to sleep on his back.) Make sure he's on a firm surface and has lots of space to move around. Put brightly colored toys in front of him and talk to him so he'll look up at you. Tap the toys to get his attention.
- Carry your baby around so he'll begin holding his head up.
- Give your baby lots of chances to move around on his own. Avoid putting your baby in a car seat when he's not in a car. Limit the use of an exersaucer or baby carrier to a few minutes at a time. Do not use a walker. They are not safe and do not help babies learn to walk.
- Give your baby rattles and other toys he can hold on to and pass from hand to hand.
- Offer your baby your fingers to hold on to. Put a favorite toy on the edge of a chair so he'll try to pull up to reach it. Put your baby on the floor whenever possible so he can move around.
- Move stable pieces of furniture together so your baby will try to move along them. Put a favorite toy or book just out of his reach on a couch or table so he'll try to move toward it. Hold your baby's hands as he tries to take steps.

Toddler

- Give your toddler chances to practice crawling up the stairs. Always stay right by him in case he slips.
- Give your toddler finger foods (Cheerios, small chunks of cooked vegetables, squares of cheese), so he can practice picking them up with his thumb and index finger.
- Show your toddler how to scribble using a large crayon. Give him the crayon, and let him try to draw.
- Stack things with your toddler. You can show him how to stack blocks, empty boxes or plastic containers.
- When you read board books to your child, let him turn the pages.



Activities You Can Do at Home to Help Your Child's Motor Development

Two-Year-Old

- Give your child lots of opportunities to run and play outside. Bundle him up in cold weather and take him to a park or other area where there is plenty of room to move around. Play games, such as chase, to help him be active.
- Toss a large, lightweight ball, such as a beach ball, to him. Roll it on the ground, and show him how to kick it.
- Put him in front of a small chair or step, and see if he can take a few steps backward to sit down.
- Make sure he has chances to play with riding toys. Help him get on and off of them, and see if he can make them move with his feet. Have him put his feet on the pedal while you push.
- Show your child how to use preschool safety scissors. Grasping the scissors with his thumb up will make it easier. Let him make single snips along the edge of the paper.

Preschooler

- Make sure the tricycle fits your child. His feet should reach the pedals at all points, and his hands should reach the handlebars when he is seated.
- Help your child set up 'targets', such as a laundry basket or trash can turned on its side. Stand near the target so you can return the ball after he tries to 'score.'
- When he draws a picture of a person, talk about what he drew. Ask him what else he might add to his person.
- Take turns adding blocks to a building.

Intellectual Development learning to learn



0 to 6 weeks

- Gazes at faces
- Imitates facial expressions of parents

1 ½ to 3 months

- Observes surroundings for longer periods of time
- Combines two actions (sucking and looking around)

3 to 5 months

- Stares at objects
- Explores objects with hands, fingers and mouth
- Becomes bored with objects seen frequently

5 to 8 months

- Experiments by throwing, dropping and shaking objects
- Explores everything with her mouth
- Empties containers and explores what's inside
- Looks for objects that she drops, or that are partially covered

8 to 14 months

- Closely examines small objects
- Repeats actions that have interesting effects
- Can find a hidden object
- Places a round shape in a sorter
- Moves things out of the way to get to a toy
- Takes things apart

12 to 24 months

- Figures out ways to overcome obstacles
- Places triangles and squares in a shape sorter
- Sorts objects
- Explores cabinets and drawers
- Pretends with toys

24 to 36 months

- Pretends to be an animal or person
- Matches like pictures or objects
- Names at least one color
- Completes simple puzzles
- Understands the meanings of 1 and 2

Preschooler

- Understands the concepts of 'same' and 'different'
- Names basic colors
- Understands opposites
- Stays with a task for longer periods of time





Activities You Can Do at Home to Help Your Child's Intellectual Development

Infant:

- Hold your baby about 8 to 12 inches away from your face. Smile at her and talk to her.
- Put a few safe objects in a container for your child to explore.
- Read books to your child. Point to the pictures as you name them.
- Give your baby different textures to touch, such as satin, sandpaper, foil and cotton balls.

Toddler:

- Keep board books down low where your child can reach them.
- Put plastic food storage containers, measuring cups, dish towels or other safe objects in a low drawer or cabinet for your child to explore.
- Provide simple puzzles and blocks for your child to play with.
- Stack a few blocks for your child. Have her knock them down.
- Allow your child to explore and play at her own pace. Let her take the lead in deciding what to play.

Two-Year-Old:

- Play pretend games with your child. Give her old adult hats, shoes and shirts to dress up in. Find a large cardboard box to use as a house.
- Talk with your child about the colors, sizes and shapes of objects. Ask her to give you the big green ball or the round red plate.
- Count the steps with your child as you climb stairs together.

Preschooler

- Play simple card games, such as Go Fish and Concentration.
- Talk about the colors in her clothing, as you help her get dressed.
- Point out examples of opposites in daily life: big/little, high/low, loud/soft.
- Give her uninterrupted time to play with open-ended materials that he enjoys. Praise him for staying with the activity.

Social-Emotional Development

learning to live with others

birth to
preschool



0-6 weeks

- Looks briefly at people's eyes
- Calms when held or massaged
- Likes looking at faces

1 ½ to 3 months

- Smiles at people
- Comforts self by sucking on thumb or pacifier, or in some other way
- Matches parents' facial expressions
- Prefers to look at happy faces

3 to 5 months

- Laughs
- Can fall asleep without help
- Responds to familiar faces by smiling, calming, cooing or moving arms and legs

5 to 8 months

- Shows likes and dislikes
- Cries or looks concerned when parent leaves the room
- Plays peek-a-boo and other simple games
- Plays alone briefly
- Shows wariness or fear of strangers
- Has predictable eating and sleeping patterns

8 to 14 months

- Gives hugs and kisses
- Shows when she is angry, annoyed, proud or surprised

8 to 14 months, continued

- Looks at parent's face to see how to react emotionally to situations
- Sleeps through night
- Tests limits
- Can feed self using fingers

14 to 24 months

- Has temper tantrums
- Asserts independence
- Shows empathy
- May refuse unfamiliar foods
- Weaned from bottle
- Feeds self with spoon
- Shows interest in being around other children
- Takes off some clothing

24 to 36 months

- Sometimes uses words to express emotions
- Shows fear of the dark, monsters, etc.
- Enjoys playing with other children
- May express negative emotions by aggression or whining
- May have imaginary friends
- May be toilet trained, or show interest in learning
- Engages others in social interaction

Preschooler:

- Knows first and last name
- Tends to see the world only from his point of view
- Cooperates with adult requests most of the time
- Dresses independently when asked, including zippers and buttons, but not yet tying
- Plays simple games according to rules
- Controls temper most of the time by redirecting attention in another way



Activities You Can Do at Home to Help Your Child's Social-Emotional Development

Infant:

- Rock, cuddle and hug your baby.
- Let your baby suck on a pacifier or her thumb, fist or fingers.
- Begin offering a small cup with handles to your child at about 7 months of age. Put a little water, breast milk or formula in it. Avoid using a lid so your child will learn to sip without spilling.
- Play simple social games with your baby, such as peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake, so big and chase.
- Hold your child close when she feels insecure. Give her time to get used to new people and places.

Toddler:

- Set limits by letting your child know what she can and cannot do. When she begins to do something she shouldn't, distract her with a book, toy or song.
- Allow your child to have tantrums in a safe place away from your attention. Give her a hug when she calms down.
- Provide child-sized toys such as dishes, pots and pans, broom, tool set and phone so she can imitate the things you do.
- Have your child do simple chores, such as picking up toys or throwing things away. Tell her you are glad to have her help.

Two-Year-Old:

- Give your child the words that go with her emotions. Make faces for different emotions, such as happy, scared, angry, proud and surprised. Tell your child what those emotions are called. Talk about your own feelings.
- Help your child relieve stress through physical activity. Take her outside and run around with her, toss a soft ball or beanbag, dance with her, or provide riding toys. Take walks with her.
- Arrange for your child to play with other children her age.
- Give your child lots of time to practice using a potty chair without pressure. Praise her when she makes an effort to use a potty chair.

Preschooler

- Talk to him about the others in the family who have the same last name.
- Read stories and talk together about how the main characters seemed to think and feel.
- Be respectful in your tone and words when you ask something of your child.
- Let him decide what to wear when possible. Occasionally let her choose her new clothes.
- Enjoy simple games together.
- Teach him and remind him of techniques for controlling his temper: use words to express feelings, start a new activity. Model these to control your own temper.