

Developmental Milestones by the End of 2 Years

What is child development?

Child development refers to how a child becomes able to do more complex things as they get older. Development is different than growth. *Growth* only refers to the child getting bigger in size. If you are concerned about your child's development, please talk to your child's doctor or call Help Me Grow of Knox County toll free at 1-800-755-GROW (4769). If you are eligible, free services can be provided to develop skills and help your child catch up with their peers.

When we talk about normal development, we are talking about developing skills like:

- **Gross motor:** using large groups of muscles to sit, stand, walk, run, etc., keeping balance, and changing positions.
- **Fine motor:** using hands to be able to eat, draw, dress, play, write, and do many other things.
- **Language:** speaking, using body language and gestures, communicating, and understanding what others say.
- **Cognitive:** Thinking skills: including learning, understanding, problem-solving, reasoning, and remembering.
- **Social:** Interacting with others, having relationships with family, friends, and teachers, cooperating, and responding to the feelings of others.

What are developmental milestones?

Developmental milestones are a set of functional skills or age-specific tasks that most children can do at a certain age range. Your pediatrician uses milestones to help check how your child is developing. Although each milestone has an age level, the actual age when a normally developing child reaches that milestone can vary quite a bit. Every child is unique!

Movement

- Walks alone
- Pulls toys behind her while walking
- Carries large toy or several toys while walking
- Begins to run
- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks a ball
- Climbs onto and down from furniture unassisted

Hand and Finger Skills

- Scribbles spontaneously
- Turns over container to pour out contents
- Builds tower of four blocks or more
- Might use one hand more frequently than the other

Social

- Imitates behavior of others, especially adults and older children
- Increasingly aware of him/herself as separate from others
- Increasingly enthusiastic about company of other children

Language

- Points to object or picture when it's named for him/her
- Recognizes names of familiar people, objects and body parts
- Says several single words (by 15 to 18 months)
- Uses simple phrases (by 18 to 24 months)
- Uses two- to four-word sentences
- Follows simple instructions
- Repeats words overheard in conversation

Cognitive

- Finds objects even when hidden under two or three covers
- Begins to sort by shapes and colors
- Begins make-believe play

Emotional

- Demonstrates increasing independence
- Begins to show defiant behavior
- Episodes of separation anxiety increase toward midyear then fade

Developmental Health Watch

Because each baby develops in his own particular manner, it's impossible to tell exactly when or how your child will perfect a given skill. The developmental milestones will give you a general idea of the changes you can expect, but don't be alarmed if your own baby's development takes a slightly different course. Alert your pediatrician; however, if your baby displays any of the following signs of possible developmental delay for this age range.

- Cannot walk by 18 months
- Fails to develop a mature heel-toe walking pattern after several months of walking, or walks exclusively on his/her toes
- Does not speak at least 15 words by 18 months
- Does not use two-word sentences by age 2
- By 15 months, does not seem to know the function of common household objects (brush, telephone, bell, fork, spoon)
- Does not imitate actions or words by the end of this period
- Does not follow simple instructions by age 2
- Cannot push a wheeled toy by age 2

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