

# NC Infant-Toddler Program

the **earlier** you know, the **better** they'll grow



## Developmental Milestones

Children grow, learn and develop at different rates. One may walk earlier than another, while another might talk first. Use this chart as one way to check whether your child is meeting developmental milestones during the first three years. Remember that every child is unique. If you have questions or concerns about how your child sees, hears, moves, communicates, learns, plays or interacts with others, talk with your primary care physician or contact your local Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA). Success in your child's growth and development benefits from EARLY action if you have a concern.

**1 month:** Lifts head when lying on tummy  
Stares/looks at faces  
Responds to sounds

**2 months:** Makes sounds—coos and gurgles  
Follows objects with eyes  
Holds head up for short periods of time  
Notices his/her hands



**3 months:** Recognizes faces  
Holds head steady and upright  
Begins to develop a social smile  
Can bear weight on legs when feet placed on firm surface  
Follows moving objects

**4 months:** Smiles, laughs, and coos when talked to  
Rolls over from back to side or stomach  
Reaches for and bats objects  
Recognizes parent's voice and touch

**5 months:** Reaches, grasps, and puts objects in mouth  
Holds out arms to be held  
Plays peek-a-boo  
Plays with hands and feet

**6 months:** Sits and stands with support  
Rolls over in both directions  
Turns towards sounds and voices  
Imitates sounds

**7 months:** Responds to other's expressions of emotion  
Uses hands to explore, pat, touch, stroke  
Babbles series of sounds



**8 months:** Passes objects from hand to hand  
Pulls self up to standing  
Starts to crawl or scoot

**9 months:** Says "Ma-ma" or "Da-da" to either parent  
Exchanges expressions with you (smile)  
Jabbers or combines syllables  
Responds to own name

**10 months:** Waves bye-bye  
Crawls well on hands and knees  
Drinks from a cup when cup is held

**11 months:** Says "Ma-ma" and "Da-da" to appropriate parent  
Walks holding onto furniture  
Drinks from cup and picks up small objects

**12 months:** Makes sounds and simple gestures  
Uses at least three words  
Lets you know what he/she wants and doesn't want



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**  
Division of Child and Family Well-Being

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**13 months:** Stands well  
Bends over to pick up objects and can take a few steps

**14 months:** Imitates others' activities  
Plays with a variety of toys like blocks, cars, books, stuffed animals and dolls  
Empties containers of contents

**15 months:** Plays with a ball  
Walks well and can stoop  
Listens to stories  
Can point to own body parts

**16 months:** Turns pages of a book  
Forms attachment to a stuffed toy or other object  
May have temper tantrums when frustrated

**17 months:** Learns the correct way to use common objects like a telephone  
Likes pretend games  
Likes riding toys

**18 months:** Can say 10-20 words  
Asks for help  
Uses single words to make his needs/wants known  
Scribbles with a crayon  
Shows affection, kisses  
Follows simple directions  
Can walk backwards



**19 months:** Uses a spoon or fork  
Can run  
Throws a ball underhand  
Enjoys helping around the house

**20 months:** Can undress him/herself  
Can understand as many as 200 words

**21 months:** Will combine words like "want bottle" and "go bye-bye"  
Can walk up stairs one step at a time  
Sets simple goals like where to put toys

**22 months:** Kicks ball forward  
Follows two-step requests like "get the doll and bring it to me"

**23 months:** Can identify simple pictures in a book  
Refers to self by name—uses "me/mine"  
Can open cabinets and boxes  
Uses "hi", "bye", and "please" if reminded

**24 months:** Will answer simple questions like "What's this?"  
Names at least six body parts  
Uses two to three word phrases  
Kicks a ball  
Goes up and down stairs one step at a time  
Takes turns in play with other children



**At two years of age**, toddlers are increasingly more verbal, using two- to three-word phrases and making requests like "more juice." They have a vocabulary of 50-100 words and understand 250-300 words. They can feed themselves and open cabinets and boxes. They also like to take things apart, explore their surroundings, and imitate their parents and other children. Common socio-emotional behaviors are showing affection, playing independently, and acting shy around strangers. Two-year olds can be very determined to have things their way, thus temper tantrums can occur.

**By three years of age**, children may be very independent. Physically, they can walk up and down steps and put on their own shoes. With the verbal ability to say three-to-five word sentences, they can repeat common rhymes, understand most sentences, and say their names and age. Three-year-olds can play make-believe with toys, animals, and people. They can play simple games with other children, name at least one color correctly, and ride a tricycle. Three-year-olds express a wide range of emotions.

Though exact times for reaching these milestones can vary among children, these milestones can serve as a guide as you watch your child grow and develop.

