

Early Childhood Social Development Milestones

The first six years of a child's life are the most important period of social development.

If you notice that these or other milestones are not being achieved please call us so we can help!

0-3 Months

- Is not upset with everyday sounds
- Is usually happy when not hungry or tired
- Enjoys varied playful movement experiences, e.g. bouncing on knees
- Does not demonstrate frequent or long bouts of being upset
- Enjoys playful face-to-face interaction with people
- Coos in response to playful interaction
- Notices and responds to sounds

4-6 Months

- Enjoys playful interactions with others, e.g. peek a boo
- Is vocalizing in response to playful interaction
- Turns head toward sounds
- Maintains eye contact with familiar people during playful interaction
- Enjoys playing with toys of varied textures
- Enjoys musical toys
- Raises hands to be picked up
- Enjoys various types of movement, such as being gently swung

7-9 Months

- Is interested in interacting with others
- Enjoys playing with toys of varied textures
- Enjoys playing with musical toys
- Is interested in playing with colorful objects
- Raises hands towards adult to be picked up
- Maintains eye contact with people during playful interaction
- Enjoys moving to explore the environment when placed on floor
- Enjoys various types of movement, such as being gently swung in the air by parents

10-12 Months

- Maintains eye contact with people during playful interactions
- Raises hands to be picked up
- Turns head in response to name being called
- Points to objects of interest by 12 months
- Enjoys playing with toys of varied textures
- Enjoys playing and banging musical toys
- Enjoys various types of movement, such as being gently swung in the air by parents
- Frequently explores the environment when placed on floor
- Enjoys moving to get a desirable toy

13-18 Months

- Is interested in interacting with people (plays patty cake)
- Maintains eye contact with people during playful interactions
- Is interested in imitating others
- Is able to locate objects you are pointing to
- Claps hand together in response to social play
- Enjoys playing with new toys
- Eagerly explores the environment when placed on the floor
- Enjoys being swung and gently thrown in air
- Enjoys exploring and playing at the playground
- Enjoys swinging on playground swings

19-24 Months

- Is able to participate in small groups with other children
- Is interested, aware, and able to maintain eye contact with others
- Is able to play in social situations after a transition time
- Points to objects of interest
- Is able to locate objects you are pointing to
- Explores varied environments, such as a new playground
- Enjoys swinging on playground swings
- Enjoys being swung and gently thrown in air
- Enjoys playing with new toys in varied ways
- Usually plays with toys without mouthing them
- Enjoys playing with musical toys

2-3 Years

- Explores varied environments, such as a new playground
- Enjoys swinging on playground swings
- Is able to play in social situations after a transition time
- Enjoys swinging, being thrown in air, and roughhousing
- Is able to locate objects of interest
- Is able to locate objects you are pointing to
 - Usually plays with toys without mouthing them
- Enjoys sitting to listen or look at book
- Is able to participate in messy activities that result in dirty hands

4-6 Years

- Is able to initiate and play with another child of the same age
- Interested in exploring varied environments, such as new playground or friend's house
- Is able to play in new social situations
- Enjoys playing with variety of toys intended for children of the same age
- Is aware of risky and unsafe environments and behavior
- Participates in crafts/activities that involve wet textures, such as glue
- Enjoys rough but safe play with peers, siblings, or parents
- Usually does not bring non-food objects to mouth
- Is able to play with one toy or theme for 15 minute periods of time



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