

Age Development Guidelines

Children develop physically, socially, and mentally at various rates. The following are guidelines to milestones in a child's development. Remember, these are GUIDELINES! Some children may be on the higher or lower end of the scale. Never make a parent feel that his/her child is lacking in some way if the child has not yet achieved according to this or any schedule.

1 - 2 months old

- Holds head up briefly when on stomach
- Tries to hold head steady when in sitting position
- Follows moving object with eyes (close 8 - 14 inches)
- Can focus on close face or object (8 - 14 inches)
- Smiles when smiled at or talked to
- Makes soft cooing sounds
- May look at own hands

3 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Has good head control
- Makes eye contact; can focus well
- Begins to recognize various family members
- Smiles easily and spontaneously
- Gurgles and coos in response to sounds
- When on stomach, can raise chest supported by arms (Our experience is that not too many can do this.)
- Reaches for an object
- Brings hands together
- Responds to source of sound by turning head and neck
- Innate grip reflex

4 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Interested in and may smile at reflection in mirror
- Is quieted by music
- Laughs when tickled
- Vocalizes to initiate socializing
- May roll over – from back to stomach or vice versa
- Grasps a toy by tips of fingers
- Bears some weight on legs
- Sits with support

5 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Follows an object in an arc about 6 inches above face for 180 degrees
- Rolls over one way
- Keeps head level when body is pulled to sitting position
- Sits without support (may be slumped over a bit)
- Objects if you take away a toy
- Has memory span of 5 - 7 seconds
- Imitates several tones
- Reaches for toys

6 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Sits without support
- Pulls to standing position when holding on to someone or something
- Works to get to a toy that is out of reach
- Looks for a dropped object
- Passes a cube from one hand to the other
- Makes an “airplane” (While on stomach - stretches arms and legs, lifts head and arches back)
- Brings feet to mouth
- Can grasp large ring
- Blows raspberries

7 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Feeds self cracker
- Babbles, combining vowels and consonants (ga-ga, ba-ba, ma-ma, da-da)
- Gets into sitting position from stomach
- Picks up tiny objects with any part of thumb and finger
- Vocalizes pleasure and displeasure
- Turns and twists body in all directions
- May be cutting first teeth
- Demonstrates abrupt mood changes
- Inspects objects for a long period of time
- Turns when name is called

8 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Shows humor and teases
- Learning the meaning of “no” by tone of voice used
- May creep or crawl
- Pushes up on hands and knees and rocks back and forth
- Holds two objects simultaneously, one in each hand, and may bang together
- Has more concentrated attention, greater interest in detail
- Understands that objects do not disappear when hidden
- Can pick his/her name out of conversation
- Plays patty cake (clap hands) or waves bye-bye
- Likes to play peek-a-boo

9 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Pushes away undesirable objects
- Does not like to be on his/her back
- Attached to parents; may be wary of strangers
- Pats, smiles at and kisses own image in mirror
- Does not like confinement
- Can hold and manipulate one object while watching another
- Stands with hands free while leaning against something
- Tastes everything
- Can recall past events

10 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Wants to play near parent
- Deliberately chooses toy for play
- May be sensitive to other children; cries when they cry
- Initiates play
- Claps hands and bangs
- Crawls with one hand full (with object in hand)
- Can climb
- Uncovers toy when hidden
- Grows bored with repetition of same game, activity or other stimuli
- Can follow simple instructions
- Is becoming afraid of heights; aware of vertical space
- Plays ball – will roll ball back with you

11 months (Tiny Tykes)

- Grows aware of self, seeks social approval
- Shows moods – looks hurt, sad, happy, angry
- Cruises around furniture
- Enjoys variations of peek-a-boo
- Walks holding on with both hands (“cruising”)
- Climbs up and down from chairs
- Sits down from standing position
- Responds to music by rocking, bouncing, swaying, humming
- Begins to prefer one hand and side of body
- Is interested in fitting things together

12 months (Tiny Tykes/Waddlers)

- Enjoys hide-and-go-seek and rolling ball back and forth
- Cruises furniture and may let go
- May lean over while standing
- May stand on tiptoes
- Squats and stoops
- Turns pages of book, but not necessarily one at a time
- May pull off socks and shoes
- Experiments with means to attain goal; may use small chair as walker

13 months (Waddlers)

- Walks alone or is a fast crawler
- May be able to run, climb stairs, and walk backwards
- Tries to kick a ball
- May be able to throw an object
- Laughs at funny things
- Starts pretending
- Can follow simple directions
- Separation anxiety lessened
- Dances
- Learns by exploring
- Typically does not like to be on his/her back
- Engages in “parallel play” – Plays side-by-side with friends, but not necessarily interacting with one another

14 - 20 months (Waddlers)

- Walking or close to walking
- May be able to jump
- Understands one-step directions
- Opens doors
- Says 1 - 6 words
- May run
- Can bend over and pick up an object
- Puts objects into containers
- Uses gestures or sounds to indicate desires
- May be able to build a tower of two blocks
- Can walk backwards
- May kick a ball forward
- Can put toys away
- Understands more than s/he can express
- Engages in "parallel play" – Plays side-by-side with friends, but not necessarily interacting with one another

21 months - 2 ½ years (Gymsters)

- Kicks a ball forward
- Throws a ball overhand
- Walks up and down stairs
- Can jump
- Understands two-step directions
- Understands more than s/he lets on
- Builds a tower of 4 - 6 cubes
- Carries on a conversation of 2 - 3 sentences
- Plays make believe
- Increased episodes of separation anxiety toward midyear (of age 2), which then fade
- Imitates behavior of adults and other children
- Enthusiastic about company of other children
- Balances on each foot for one second
- Identifies a friend by name
- More interactive play instead of just parallel play
- Testing authority; mind of his/her own
- Curious
- Active

2 ½ - 3 ½ years (Terrific Tots)

- Demonstrates increasing independence
- Has more self-control
- Walks up and down stairs without help
- Responds to commands; follows directions
- More language ability
- Getting ready for school activities
- Better attention span, yet often limited (2 fast Skill Station rotations)
- Can name at least 6 body parts
- Balances on each foot for 2 to 4 seconds
- Identifies at least 1 - 8 colors
- Builds a tower of 8 - 10 cubes

- Broad jumps (standing long jump)
- May have imaginary playmates
- Throws a ball overhand
- Begins to pedal tricycle
- Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet
- Understands physical relationship (on, in, under)
- Takes turns in games
- Understands concept of “mine” and “theirs”
- Shows aggressive behavior

3 ½ - 5 years 11 months (Preschool Gymnastics and Ninja Jr.)

- Able to participate in structured activities without parent; more independent
- Sensitive
- Imaginative
- Attention span still short; needs to move at a fast pace and have animated classes
- No longer has to concentrate on mechanics of running, walking, or jumping
- Catches a ball
- Interested in structured games
- Hops and stands on one foot for up to 5 seconds
- Moves forward and backward with agility
- Questions everything
- Sense of time becomes clearer
- Understands the concept of same/different
- Less aggressive behavior and calmer play; cooperates with other children
- Interested in new experiences
- Negotiates solutions to conflicts
- Imagines that many unfamiliar images may be monsters
- Often cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality
- Views self as a whole person involving body, mind, and feelings

5 - 10 years (Ninja Training, Beginning Gymnastics, and Gymnastics Level 1 & 2)

- Ability oriented
- Stands on one foot for 10 seconds or longer
- Hops, does somersaults
- Swings, climbs
- May be able to skip
- Emotional highs and lows
- Feels insecure if not in a day-to-day routine
- Elaborates stories
- Becomes bossy
- Wants to please and be liked by friends
- More likely to agree to rules
- Likes to sing, dance, and act
- Distinguishes fantasy from reality
- Likes to be given choices (Confused by more than 2 or 3)
- Make-believe may contain violence
- Sensitive to feelings of others

6 - 8 years (Ninja Training and Gymnastics Level 1 & 2)

- More ability; likes group sports
- Can become competitive when playing games or sports
- May be hard on self when not good at an activity
- Can understand larger concepts
- Most of the same Whiz Kids concepts from above

7 - 10 years (Ninja Training and Gymnastics Level 1 & 2)

- May be hard on self when not good at an activity
- Can be self-conscious about his/her body
- May be much more outspoken
- More ability; likes group sports
- Can become competitive when playing games or sports
- Can understand larger concepts

Most children by age 10:

- Grow about 2.5 in. (6 cm) and gain about 7 lbs. (3 kg) in a year
- Have growth patterns related to gender - Girls are usually taller and weigh more than boys.
- Enjoy being with their friends - They often have a best friend of the same gender.
- Continue to enjoy team and group activities
- Can converse easily with people of all different ages
- Have speech patterns that are nearly at an adult level
- Have developed control of their large and small muscles - They are able to enjoy activities that use these skills, such as basketball, dancing, and soccer.
- Have developed endurance - Many can run, ride a bike, and enjoy activities that require a degree of physical conditioning.
- Continue to advance their fine motor skills, such as those needed for clearer handwriting and detailed artwork