



Help your child reach their developmental milestones

All children deserve a good start to life, and the early years are a critical time for growth. In fact, a child's first 2000 days (or 5 years) are the most important for their long-term development. Their physical, social and emotional wellbeing quickly evolves in this time and they are always learning. Parents and carers are their best first teacher.

You can support your child's development through everyday moments. These can be moments at libraries or parks, or at home playing with their toys, reading books or singing songs.

Explore



Encourage your child to use their senses to feel, listen and look at objects (e.g. sand, leaves, and toys).

Move



Help your child use their body to play and learn, like pushing and pulling objects.

Learn



Talk and problem solve with things like puzzles and blocks.

Imagine



Play out simple ideas. Try to add in new scenarios or roles. Play with dolls or teddies or creatively use boxes as objects (e.g. a car).

Remember your child's health checks!

Regular health checks with a child health nurse or doctor are important for monitoring your child's growth and development. In the first 18 months of life, child health checks are recommended at the following ages:

- 2 months (6-8 weeks)
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 12 months
- 18 months

These health checks are included in your child's Personal Health Record (the red book). Your GP or child health nurse will record the results of each health check and track their milestones in this book.

Flag it early

Milestones matter!

How your child plays, learns, speaks, acts and moves offer important clues about their development.

Questions or concerns?

- Contact your GP
- Call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) and ask to talk to a child health nurse. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the cost of a local call.
- Contact your local Child Health Service

Children's Health Queensland

Milestones checklist for child development Birth to 18 months

Every child achieves developmental milestones as they grow

Developmental milestones are the skills children learn and master as they grow, such as walking, talking, eating, going to the toilet and playing with others. Children typically learn these new skills within a certain age range. For example, most children will achieve the milestone of learning to walk between the ages of 9 and 15 months. If a child hasn't met a milestone by the time most children do, it could be a sign they need extra support.

The Milestones checklist for child development helps parents, carers, teachers and health professionals track how children are growing and learning. It covers four areas of child development:

- Social and emotional
- Language and communication
- Movement and self-care
- Thinking and learning.

Tracking the milestones across these four areas will help you know:

- If a child is reaching milestones at the expected age.
- If a child has not achieved a milestone by the typical age and what to do.
- When a child should see a GP or child health nurse for a developmental screening.

If you have any concerns about your child's development at any time, talk to your GP or child health nurse.

Every child is unique

Every baby grows and develops at their own pace. Some milestones may also look different in children from different cultural groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. If your child's journey looks different, getting advice can help you understand their strengths and challenges and get support early.

Important: This checklist does not cover all possible development milestones in children. If you are concerned about your child's hearing, vision, growth, diet or sleep, speak to your GP or child health nurse.

How to use the checklist

1. Tick the checklist boxes for each milestone as your child can do them.
2. Share the checklist with your child's GP, child health nurse or early childhood educator when talking about their development.
3. Don't wait. Act early if:
 - a. Your child has not met one or more milestones for their age, or
 - b. You notice any of the 'Warning signs at any age'.

It's important to

Flag it early



The Child Development Milestones Checklist was developed by Children's Health Queensland, a specialist statewide hospital and health service delivering world-class, person-centred paediatric care for children and young people across Queensland and northern New South Wales. childrens.health.qld.gov.au

Disclaimer: This information has been produced by healthcare professionals as a guideline only and is intended to support, not replace, discussion with your child's GP or healthcare professionals. The developmental milestones included in this checklist show what most children (75% or more) can do by each age. This checklist is not a screening or diagnostic tool. It is meant to be used to start conversations with your GP or healthcare professionals when seeking support, advice or further screening.

Some information in this resource has been adapted from the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention's online resource Learn the Signs, Act Early.

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Milestones checklist for child development

Has your child reached these milestones by each age?

Flag it
early

	By 2 months	By 4 months	By 6 months	By 9 months	By 12 months	By 15 months	By 18 months
Social and emotional 	☐ Smiles back and seems happy when you talk to or smile at them. ☐ Calms down when spoken to or picked up. ☐ Looks at your face.	☐ Smiles naturally to connect with you. ☐ Chuckles (not yet a full laugh) when you try to make them laugh.	☐ Laughs. ☐ Knows familiar people. ☐ Likes to look at themselves in the mirror.	☐ Looks at you when you call their name. ☐ Looks, reaches or cries for you when you leave. Might be shy, clingy or afraid of strangers. ☐ Shows different expressions like happy, sad, or angry.	☐ Plays games like peek-a-boo or pat-a-cake.	☐ Shows you things they like. ☐ Shows affection with hugs or kisses. ☐ Copies other children when playing. ☐ Claps when excited or blows a kiss. ☐ Hugs toys like a doll.	☐ Points to show you something interesting. ☐ Checks where you are while exploring. ☐ Looks at a few pages in a book with you. ☐ Helps with everyday tasks like dressing or washing their hands.
Language and communication 	☐ Makes sounds other than crying. ☐ Reacts to loud sounds.	☐ Makes cooing sounds like "ooo" and "ahh". ☐ Makes sounds back when you talk to them. ☐ Turns head towards the sound of your voice.	☐ Makes squealing sounds. ☐ Takes turns making sounds with you. ☐ Blows "raspberries".	☐ Makes different sounds like "mama" or "baba". ☐ Lifts arms to be picked up.	☐ Says names for parents or caregivers, like mum. ☐ Waves "bye bye". ☐ Pauses briefly or stops when you say "no".	☐ Says one or two words other than names. ☐ Looks for familiar objects you name. ☐ Follows directions with both gesture and words. ☐ Points to ask for object or for help.	☐ Says at least three words besides names. ☐ Follows one-step directions without any gestures, like pointing.
Movement and self-care 	☐ Moves both arms and both legs. ☐ Opens hands briefly. ☐ Holds head up during tummy time.	☐ Holds head steady when held. ☐ Holds a toy when you put it in their hand. ☐ Swings at toys with their arms. ☐ Pushes up on to elbows in tummy time. ☐ Brings hands to mouth.	☐ Rolls from tummy to back (both ways). ☐ Leans on hands to support themselves when sitting. ☐ Pushes up with straight arms when on their tummy.	☐ Sits without support while using hands to play. ☐ Uses fingers to "rake" food toward themselves. ☐ Moves things from one hand to another. ☐ Gets into a sitting position by themselves.	☐ Pulls up to stand. ☐ Walks holding onto something or someone. ☐ Drinks from a cup (no lid) as you hold it. ☐ Picks up small things between thumb and pointer fingers, like small bits of food.	☐ Takes a few steps on their own. ☐ Uses fingers to feed themselves food. ☐ Stacks at least two small objects, like blocks.	☐ Walks without holding onto anyone or anything. ☐ Scribbles. ☐ Tries to use a spoon to feed themselves. ☐ Climbs on and off a couch without help. ☐ Drinks from a cup, with some spills.
Thinking and learning 	☐ Watches you as you move. ☐ Looks at a toy for several seconds.	☐ Opens mouth when they see the bottle or breast if hungry. ☐ Looks at their hands with interest.	☐ Uses their mouth to explore objects. ☐ Reaches to grab a toy they want. ☐ Closes lips when they do not want any more food. ☐ Looks at nearby things.	☐ Bangs two things together. ☐ Watches an object as it falls.	☐ Explores things in different ways, like shaking or banging. ☐ Puts things in containers, like a block in a cup. ☐ Looks for things when you hide them, like a toy under a blanket.	☐ Tries to use things the right way like a phone, cup or book.	☐ Copies you doing chores, like sweeping with a broom. ☐ Plays with toys in a simple way, like pushing a car.

 Warning signs at any age. See your GP	Strong caregiver concerns	Loss of ANY skills	Lack of response to sound or visual stimuli	Lack of, or limited eye contact	Differences between right and left sides of the body in strength, movement or tone	Obvious low tone (floppy) or high tone (stiff and tense) that significantly affects development and functioning
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Important: The milestones in each age group are the expected age at which they should have developed. If your child has not met a milestone by the listed age, see your GP or child health nurse for advice.