

# Developmental Checklists Birth to Five



the **early childhood** direction center

2006

**If you are concerned about your child's development,  
contact the CNY ECDC for information on screening, evaluation, and assessment.**

The CNY Early Childhood Direction Center

Syracuse University, 805 S. Crouse Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13244-2280

Phone: 315-443-4444 Toll-free: 1-800-962-5488 Fax: 315-443-4338

E-mail: [ecdc@syr.edu](mailto:ecdc@syr.edu) website: <http://ecdc.syr.edu>

Adapted by First Look and The Early Childhood Direction Center from: Shelov, S. P., & Hannemann, R. E. (1994). The American Academy of Pediatrics: Caring for Your Baby and Young Child Birth to Age 5: The Complete and Authoritative Guide. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Pub.

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST - 1 TO 3 MONTHS

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE  
OBSERVED

## MOVEMENT

- ✓ Raises head and cheek when lying on stomach (3 mos.)
- ✓ Supports upper body with arms when lying on stomach (3 mos.)
- ✓ Stretches legs out when lying on stomach or back (2-3 mos.)
- ✓ Opens and shuts hands (2-3 mos.)
- ✓ Pushes down on his legs when his feet are placed on firm surface (3 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## VISUAL

- ✓ Watches face intently (2-3 mos.)
- ✓ Follows moving objects (2 mos.)
- ✓ Recognizes familiar objects and people at a distance (3 mos.)
- ✓ Starts using hands and eyes in coordination (3 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HEARING AND SPEECH

- ✓ Smiles at the sound of voice (2-3 mos.)
- ✓ Cooing noises; vocal play (begins at 3 mos.)
- ✓ Attends to sound (1-3 mos.)
- ✓ Startles to loud noise (1-3 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

- ✓ Begins to develop a social smile (1-3 mos.)
- ✓ Enjoys playing with other people and may cry when playing stops (2-3 mos.)
- ✓ Becomes more communicative and expressive with face and body (2-3 mos.)
- ✓ Imitates some movements and facial expressions

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **DEVELOPMENTAL RED FLAGS (1 TO 3 MONTHS)**

- ✓ Doesn't seem to respond to loud noises
- ✓ Doesn't follow moving objects with eyes by 2 to 3 months
- ✓ Doesn't smile at the sound of your voice by 2 months
- ✓ Doesn't grasp and hold objects by 3 months
- ✓ Doesn't smile at people by 3 months
- ✓ Cannot support head well at 3 months
- ✓ Doesn't reach for and grasp toys by 3 to 4 months
- ✓ Doesn't bring objects to mouth by 4 months
- ✓ Doesn't push down with legs when feet are placed on a firm surface by 4 months
- ✓ Has trouble moving one or both eyes in all directions
- ✓ Crosses eyes most of the time (occasional crossing of the eyes is normal in these first months)

---

### **COMMENTS:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST - 4 TO 7 MONTHS

CHILD'S NAME:

DATE OF BIRTH:

PARENT OR GUARDIAN:

DATE  
OBSERVED

## MOVEMENT

- ✓ Pushes up on extended arms (5 mos.)
- ✓ Pulls to sitting with no head lag (5 mos.)
- ✓ Sits with support of his hands (5-6 mos.)
- ✓ Sits unsupported for short periods (6-8 mos.)
- ✓ Supports whole weight on legs (6-7 mos.)
- ✓ Grasps feet (6 mos.)
- ✓ Transfers objects from hand to hand (6-7 mos.)
- ✓ Uses raking grasp (not pincer) (6 mos.)

## VISUAL

- ✓ Looks for toy beyond tracking range (5-6 mos.)
- ✓ Tracks moving objects with ease (4-7 mos.)
- ✓ Grasps objects dangling in front of him (5-6 mos.)
- ✓ Looks for fallen toys (5-7 mos.)

## LANGUAGE

- ✓ Distinguishes emotions by tone of voice (4-7 mos.)
- ✓ Responds to sound by making sounds (4-6 mos.)
- ✓ Uses voice to express joy and displeasure (4-6 mos.)
- ✓ Syllable repetition begins (5-7 mos.)

## COGNITIVE

- ✓ Finds partially hidden objects (6-7 mos.)
- ✓ Explores with hands and mouth (4-7 mos.)
- ✓ Struggles to get objects that are out of reach (5-7 mos.)

## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

- ✓ Enjoys social play (4-7 mos.)
- ✓ Interested in mirror images (5-7 mos.)
- ✓ Responds to other people's expression of emotion (4-7 mos.)

## **DEVELOPMENTAL RED FLAGS (4 TO 7 MONTHS)**

- ✓ Seems very stiff, tight muscles
- ✓ Seems very floppy, like a rag doll
- ✓ Head still flops back when body is pulled to sitting position (by 5 months still exhibits head lag)
- ✓ Shows no affection for the person who cares for them
- ✓ Doesn't seem to enjoy being around people
- ✓ One or both eyes consistently turn in or out
- ✓ Persistent tearing, eye drainage, or sensitivity to light
- ✓ Does not respond to sounds around them
- ✓ Has difficulty getting objects to mouth
- ✓ Does not turn head to locate sounds by 4 months
- ✓ Doesn't roll over (stomach to back) by 6 months
- ✓ Cannot sit with help by 6 months (not by themselves)
- ✓ Does not laugh or make squealing sounds by 5 months
- ✓ Does not actively reach for objects by 6 months
- ✓ Does not follow objects with both eyes
- ✓ Does not bear some weight on legs by 5 months

---

### **COMMENTS:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST - 8 TO 12 MONTHS

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE  
OBSERVED

## MOVEMENT

- ✓ Gets to sitting position without assistance (8-10 mos.)
- ✓ Crawls forward on belly
- ✓ Assumes hand and knee position
- ✓ Creeps on hands and knees
- ✓ Gets from sitting to crawling or prone (lying on stomach) position (10-12 mos.)
- ✓ Pulls self up to standing position
- ✓ Walks holding on to furniture
- ✓ Stands momentarily without support
- ✓ May walk two or three steps without support

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## HAND AND FINGER SKILLS

- ✓ Uses pincer grasp (grasp using thumb and index finger) (7-10 mos.)
- ✓ Bangs two one-inch cubes together
- ✓ Puts objects into container (10-12 mos.)
- ✓ Takes objects out of container (10-12 mos.)
- ✓ Pokes with index finger
- ✓ Tries to imitate scribbling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## COGNITIVE

- ✓ Explores objects in many different ways (shaking, banging, throwing, dropping) (8-10 mos.)
- ✓ Finds hidden objects easily (10-12 mos.)
- ✓ Looks at correct picture when image is named
- ✓ Imitates gestures (9-12 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## LANGUAGE MILESTONES

- ✓ Responds to simple verbal requests
- ✓ Responds to "no"
- ✓ Makes simple gestures such as shaking head for no
- ✓ Babbles with inflection (8-10 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE  
OBSERVED

**LANGUAGE MILESTONES (cont)**

- ✓ Babbles “dada” and “mama” (8-10 mos.)
- ✓ Says “dada” and “mama” for specific person (11-12 mos.)
- ✓ Uses exclamations such as “oh-oh”

---

---

---

**SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL**

- ✓ Shy or anxious with strangers (8-12 mos.)
- ✓ Cries when mother or father leaves (8-12 mos.)
- ✓ Enjoys imitating people in his play (10-12 mos.)
- ✓ Shows specific preferences for certain people and toys (8-12 mos.)
- ✓ Prefers mother and/or regular care provider over all others (8-12 mos.)
- ✓ Repeats sounds or gestures for attention (10-12 mos.)
- ✓ Finger-feeds himself (8-12 mos.)
- ✓ Extends arm or leg to help when being dressed

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**DEVELOPMENTAL RED FLAGS (8 TO 12 MONTHS)**

- ✓ Does not crawl
- ✓ Drags one side of body while crawling (for over one month)
- ✓ Cannot stand when supported
- ✓ Does not search for objects that are hidden (10-12 mos.)
- ✓ Says no single words (“mama” or “dada”)
- ✓ Does not learn to use gestures such as waving or shaking head
- ✓ Does not sit steadily by 10 months
- ✓ Does not show interest in “peek-a-boo” or “patty cake” by 8 mos.
- ✓ Does not babble by 8 mos. (“dada,” “baba,” “mama”)

**COMMENTS:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST - 12 TO 24 MONTHS

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE  
OBSERVED

## MOVEMENT

- ✓ Walks alone (12-16 mos.)
- ✓ Pulls toys behind him while walking (13-16 mos.)
- ✓ Carries large toy or several toys while walking (12-15 mos.)
- ✓ Begins to run stiffly (16-18 mos.)
- ✓ Walks into ball (18-24 mos.)
- ✓ Climbs onto and down from furniture unsupported (16-24 mos.)
- ✓ Walks up and down stairs holding on to support (18-24 mos.)

## HAND AND FINGER SKILLS

- ✓ Scribbles spontaneously (14-16 mos.)
- ✓ Turns over container to pour out contents (12-18 mos.)
- ✓ Builds tower of four blocks or more (20-24 mos.)

## LANGUAGE

- ✓ Points to object or picture when it's named for them (18-24 mos.)
- ✓ Recognizes names of familiar people, objects, and body parts (18-24 mos.)
- ✓ Says several single words (15-18 mos.)
- ✓ Uses two-word sentences (18-24 mos.)
- ✓ Follows simple, one-step instructions (14-18 mos.)
- ✓ Repeats words overheard in conversations (16-18 mos.)

## COGNITIVE

- ✓ Finds objects even when hidden under 2 or 3 covers
- ✓ Begins to sort shapes and colors (20-24 mos.)
- ✓ Begins make-believe play (20-24 mos.)

## SOCIAL

- ✓ Imitates behavior of others, especially adults and older children (18-24 mos.)
- ✓ Increasingly enthusiastic about company or other children (20-24 mos.)
- ✓ Demonstrates increasing independence (18-24 mos.)
- ✓ Begins to show defiant behavior (18-24 mos.)



✓ Episodes of separation anxiety increase toward midyear, then fade

---

---

## DEVELOPMENTAL RED FLAGS (12 TO 24 MONTHS)

- ✓ Cannot walk by 18 months
- ✓ Fails to develop a mature heel-toe walking pattern after several months of walking, or walks exclusively on 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 24 mos.
- ✓ Does not follow simple one-step instructions by 24 mos.

---

### COMMENTS:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST - 24 TO 36 MONTHS

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE  
OBSERVED

## MOVEMENT

- ✓ Climbs well (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Walks down stairs alone, placing both feet on each step (26-28 mos.)
- ✓ Walks up stairs alternating feet with support (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Swings leg to kick ball (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Runs easily (24-26 mos.)
- ✓ Pedals tricycle (30-36 mos.)
- ✓ Bends over easily without falling (24-30 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## HAND AND FINGER SKILLS

- ✓ Makes vertical, horizontal, circular strokes with pencil or crayon (30-36 mos.)
- ✓ Turns book pages one at a time (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Builds a tower of more than 6 blocks (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Holds a pencil in writing position (30-36 mos.)
- ✓ Screws and unscrews jar lids, nuts, and bolts (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Turns rotating handles (24-30 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## LANGUAGE

- ✓ Recognizes and identifies almost all common objects and pictures (26-32 mos.)
- ✓ Understands most sentences (24-40 mos.)
- ✓ Understands physical relationships (on, in, under) (30-36 mos.)
- ✓ Can say name, age, and sex (30-36 mos.)
- ✓ Uses pronouns (I, you, me, we, they) (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Strangers can understand most of words (30-36 mos.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE  
OBSERVED

**COGNITIVE**

- ✓ Makes mechanical toys work (30-36 mos.)
- ✓ Matches an object in hand or room to a picture in a book (24-30 mos.)
- ✓ Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people (24-36 mos.)
- ✓ Sorts objects by color (30-36 mos.)
- ✓ Completes puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces (24-36 mos.)
- ✓ Understands concept of "two" (26-32 mos.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

**SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL**

- ✓ Separates easily from parents (by 36 mo.)
- ✓ Expresses a wide range of emotions (24-36 mos.)
- ✓ Objects to major changes in routine (24-36 mos.)

---

---

---

**DEVELOPMENTAL RED FLAGS (24 TO 36 MONTHS)**

- ✓ Frequent falling and difficulty with stairs
- ✓ Persistent drooling or very unclear speech
- ✓ Inability to build a tower of more than 4 blocks
- ✓ Difficulty manipulating small objects
- ✓ Inability to copy a circle by 3 years old
- ✓ Inability to communicate in short phrases
- ✓ No involvement in pretend play
- ✓ Failure to understand simple instructions
- ✓ Little interest in other children
- ✓ Extreme difficulty separating from primary caregiver

**COMMENTS:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST - 3 TO 4 YEARS

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE  
OBSERVED

## MOVEMENT

- ✓ Hops and stands on one foot up to 5 seconds
- ✓ Goes upstairs and downstairs without support
- ✓ Kicks ball forward
- ✓ Throws ball overhand
- ✓ Catches bounced ball most of the time
- ✓ Moves forward and backward
- ✓ Uses riding toys

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HAND AND FINGER SKILLS

- ✓ Copies square shapes
- ✓ Draws a person with 2-4 body parts
- ✓ Uses scissors
- ✓ Draws circles and squares
- ✓ Begins to copy some capital letters
- ✓ Can feed self with spoon

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LANGUAGE MILESTONES

- ✓ Understands the concepts of "same" and "different"
- ✓ Has mastered some basic rules of grammar
- ✓ Speaks in sentences of 5-6 words
- ✓ Asks questions
- ✓ Speaks clearly enough for strangers to understand
- ✓ Tells stories

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## COGNITIVE MILESTONES

- ✓ Correctly names some colors
- ✓ Understands the concept of counting and may know a few numbers
- ✓ Begins to have a clearer sense of time
- ✓ Follows three-part commands
- ✓ Recalls parts of a story

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ Understands the concept of same/different

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE  
OBSERVED**

**COGNITIVE MILESTONES (continued)**

- ✓ Engages in fantasy play
- ✓ Understands causality ("I can make things happen")

**SOCIAL MILESTONES**

- ✓ Interested in new experiences
- ✓ Cooperates/plays with other children
- ✓ Plays "mom "or "dad"
- ✓ More inventive in fantasy play
- ✓ Dresses and undresses
- ✓ More independent

**EMOTIONAL MILESTONES**

- ✓ Often cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality
- ✓ May have imaginary friends or see monsters

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DEVELOPMENTAL RED FLAGS (3 TO 4 YEARS)**

- ✓ Cannot jump in place
- ✓ Cannot ride a trike
- ✓ Cannot grasp a crayon between thumb and fingers
- ✓ Has difficulty scribbling
- ✓ Cannot copy a circle
- ✓ Cannot stack 4 blocks
- ✓ Still clings or cries when parents leave him
- ✓ Shows no interest in interactive games
- ✓ Ignores other children
- ✓ Doesn't respond to people outside the family
- ✓ Doesn't engage in fantasy play
- ✓ Resists dressing, sleeping, using the toilet
- ✓ Lashes out without any self-control when angry or upset
- ✓ Doesn't use sentences of more than three words
- ✓ Doesn't use "me" or "you" appropriately

**COMMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

## DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST - 4 TO 5 YEARS

**CHILD'S NAME:**

---

**DATE OF BIRTH:**

---

**PARENT OR GUARDIAN:**

---

**DATE  
OBSERVED**

### **MOVEMENT**

- ✓ Stands on one foot for 10 seconds or longer
- ✓ Hops, somersaults
- ✓ Swings, climbs
- ✓ May be able to skip

---

---

---

---

### **MILESTONES IN HAND AND FINGER SKILLS**

- ✓ Copies triangle and other geometric patterns
- ✓ Draws person with body
- ✓ Prints some letters
- ✓ Dresses and undresses without assistance
- ✓ Uses fork, spoon
- ✓ Usually cares for own toilet needs

---

---

---

---

---

---

### **LANGUAGE MILESTONES**

- ✓ Recalls parts of a story
- ✓ Speaks sentences of more than 5 words
- ✓ Uses future tense
- ✓ Tells longer stories
- ✓ Says name and address

---

---

---

---

---

### **COGNITIVE MILESTONES**

- ✓ Can count 10 or more objects
- ✓ Correctly names at least 4 colors
- ✓ Better understands the concept of time
- ✓ Knows about things used every day in the home (money, food, etc.)

---

---

---

---

### **SOCIAL MILESTONES**

- ✓ Wants to please and be with friends
- ✓ More likely to agree to rules
- ✓ Likes to sing, dance, and act

---

---

---

✓ Shows more independence

---

---



## DEVELOPMENTAL RED FLAGS (4 TO 5 YEARS)

- ✓ Exhibits extremely aggressive, fearful or timid behavior
- ✓ Is unable to separate from parents
- ✓ Is easily distracted and unable to concentrate on any single activity for more than 5 minutes
- ✓ Shows little interest in playing with other children
- ✓ Refuses to respond to people in general
- ✓ Rarely uses fantasy or imitation in play
- ✓ Seems unhappy or sad much of the time
- ✓ Avoids or seems aloof with other children and adults
- ✓ Doesn't express a wide range of emotions
- ✓ Has trouble eating, sleeping or using the toilet
- ✓ Can't differentiate between fantasy and reality
- ✓ Seems unusually passive
- ✓ Can't understand two-part commands and prepositions ("put the cup on the table"; "get the ball under the couch")
- ✓ Can't give his first and last name
- ✓ Doesn't use plurals or past tense
- ✓ Cannot build a tower of 6 to 8 blocks
- ✓ Seems uncomfortable holding a crayon
- ✓ Has trouble taking off clothing
- ✓ Can't brush teeth or wash and dry hands

---

### COMMENTS:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---