

Developmental Milestones

Babies are fun. They make dramatic changes very quickly. Knowing what to expect is useful in selecting activities and toys that are appropriate to your child's developmental age. However, a preemie's age must be corrected to when the child should have been born. There is a lot of room for individual variation, so relax and enjoy! Here are some guidelines for the average baby.

Age range: 18-21 months

Language:

Baby Can:

Expressive Language: He/she can speak about 25 words and combine short phrases. He/she can name pictures. Several wants can be named. Imitative vocabulary is greater at this time than meaningful expressive vocabulary. He/she will refer to themselves by name and your child will ask a lot of "what's that".

You Can:

Describe things to develop and enrich language. When your baby does what you ask, comment and repeat it to reinforce it such as "very good, you did _____".

Baby Can:

Receptive Language: Understand simple directions. He/she can identify several body parts on request. Baby can identify common objects such as articles of clothing and household utensils on request. He/she is beginning to understand the concept of "one".

You Can:

Stimulate receptive language by labeling the objects that you are using with baby. Play with picture books and ask the child to "show me the _____".

Baby Can:

Motor skills: Your child can now turn single pages quite smoothly. He/she can dump a raisin from a bottle without a demonstration. He/she can scribble spontaneously and imitate a crayon stroke. Spoon control is smoother. A three-piece puzzle can be done. Your child can now pucker into a kiss. He/she can walk while holding an additional object. Your child can now jump in place.

You Can:

Encourage drawing with crayons and pencils. Pull toys bring a renewed interest as walking sophistication increases. Puzzles with large geometric shapes are appropriate at this time. Have your child play "fetch" to stoop, bend and retrieve an object. Encourage ball play.

Page 2 Developmental Milestones 18 –21 months

Baby Can:

Activities of daily living: Your child can remove several items of clothing. He/she is very interested in mimicking adult activities. Self-feeding is especially important now. Bladder and bowel dry periods are greater now and real interest in toileting is seen.

You Can:

Encourage mimicry. Have inexpensive toys that represent adult daily activities so the child can cook and clean along with you. Give your child independence in feeding. If your child shows interest, a potty chair at this time is very useful.