

AGES & STAGES : 2-6 YEARS



AGES & STAGES

This section will list the developmental milestones & activities at different ages. Children born prematurely (less than 37 weeks), will need to be corrected for pre maturity till they are 2 years old. Your doctor will help you to calculate the corrected age.

MY ADVENTURE
BEGINS!



CONTENT

Developmental Milestones & Activities based on Ages and Stages

Page

- 01 2 - 3 Years: Toddler
- 08 4 - 6 Years: Preschooler
- 14 Reading & Recommended Books For 0-6 Years
- 16 Special Needs Children
- 17 Activities For Children Who Are At Risk Of Developmental Delays

Pointers:

- * Refer to sections on your child's age
- * Ensure your child's development by level
- * Carry out recommended activities and observe the development of your child
- * This book is only a general guide. Your child may reach these levels earlier or a little later than indicated in the section. If your child's development seems to be lagging, seek advice from the clinic, doctors, and professionals.

TODDLER

LEARN ABOUT FOLLOWING A HEALTHY DIET FOR YOUR CHILD. YOUNG MINDS ARE VERY RECEPTIVE TO LEARNING MATH AND LOGIC BETWEEN AGES 1 TO 4



PARENTAL TIP

ALWAYS STAY POSITIVE!





Always have a positive attitude and **use positive words in front of your child**. Children under the age of three naturally think positive and will ignore negative words. For example, he will interpret "Do not open the door" as "Open the door". Instead, you should say "Close the door".








When a toddler exclaims "Mine!" it may seem that he is selfish and resistant to sharing, but it actually shows a cognitive achievement of selfhood and starting to understand other people as separate from himself.




NUTRITION




This is the recommended diet for children over one year old.

Type of Food	Daily Food Portion for Children Ages 2-3 Years	
	No. of Portions	Food Example
Grains/Cereal	3 – 4	Morning: 1 slice of bread Afternoon: ½ cup of rice Night: ½ cup of pasta/cereal
		Example of 1 Portion
		 1 slice of bread  1/2 cup of rice  1/2 cup of pasta  1/2 cup of cereal

Type of Food	Daily Food Portion for Children Ages 2-3 Years	
	No. of Portions	Food Example
Vegetables	1	Afternoon: ½ cup of rice Night: ½ cup of cooked green vegetables
		Example of 1 Portion
		 100g cooked green vegetables  150g uncooked leafy vegetables

Type of Food	Daily Food Portion for Children Ages 2-3 Years	
	No. of Portions	Food Example
Fruits	3 – 4	Afternoon: ½ apple Night: ½ cup of fruit juice
		Example of 1 Portion
		 1 small apple / banana  30g dried fruits  1 cup of fruit juice

Type of Food	Daily Food Portion for Children Ages 2-3 Years	
	No. of Portions	Food Example
Milk	1.5 – 2	Morning: ½ cup of milk Afternoon: ½ cup of yoghurt Night: ½ cup of milk
		Example of 1 Portion
		 250ml milk / formula milk  1 cup yoghurt  56g processed cheese

Type of Food	Daily Food Portion for Children Ages 2-3 Years	
	No. of Portions	Food Example
Meat and Others	1	Afternoon: 1 boiled egg Night: 45g cooked fish
		Example of 1 Portion
		 90g meat / fish  150g cooked nuts  2 eggs

GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING









DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

AGE	DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES	CAUSES FOR CONCERN
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeds self with a spoon, with some spilling • Engages in parallel play(playing alongside peers), pretend play • Mainly dry by day • Speaks in 2 word phrases, names familiar objects and pictures • Understands 2 step related instructions • Builds a tower of 6 blocks, holds pencil in palm, copies lines • Walks up and down the stairs with support • Jumps, kick and throws a ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows no single words • Does not walk easily • Does not seem to know or respond to family members • Does not amuse himself for short periods of time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts on clothing • Joins in with other children to play • Speaks in 3 word phrases • Knows name, age and sex • Draws simple straight or circular lines • Balances on 1 foot without support, pedals tricycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No two-word spontaneous phrases • Has trouble expressing emotions • Often refuses to do simple tasks • Seems overly fearful, even in safe situations

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

	1 ½ - 2 YEARS
	Tear it Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let him tear a piece of paper into smaller pieces and drop them in the bottle. • Tearing and crumpling provide fine-motor/hand-muscle exercise.
	Fun with Words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play make-believe with your child. • Pretend to talk on the phone or stuffed animal, or go shopping. Nursery Rhyme Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the child to new rhymes by singing repeatedly throughout the day so he becomes familiar with them. • Hold his hands and do the movements with him.
	Symbolic Play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your child use toys or props to imitate adult actions. • Talk about what you are doing and interpret the child's actions into words: <i>"You're giving the baby some dinner. Baby is hungry."</i> Creative Visualisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your child sit on the chair, make vehicle noises, and pretend to drive. • Gradually reduce interacting directly to let your child focus and play for a minute or two alone.
	Roll Away <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show your child how to put the ball at the top of the board and let it roll down. • Place targets such as boxes or bottles at the bottom of the ramp and aim the ball at them. • Does he try different size of balls or stick to just one?
	Matching Objects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold up one of your child's shoes during dressing and let him find the other shoe. Spot the Toy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your child help you find pictures of his toys in a book. • See if your child can generalize from the picture and find the object that serves the same function in the room.

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

	2 - 2½ YEARS	2½ - 3 YEARS
	<p>Big & Small Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate big and small steps and explain the concept of “big” and “little”. <p>Hit the Target</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your child roll balls toward a target. This also develops their eye-hand coordination. 	<p>Soak & Squeeze</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put several small sponges in the water with a few plastic cups and bowls. Show your child how she can fill a sponge with water and then squeeze out the water into a bowl.
	<p>Follow Me</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up items on the floor to match your directions: “Stand on the paper. • Crawl under the blanket.” Use other actions, such as hopping, jumping, and tiptoeing. <p>Guess who?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your child open pages one at a time to reveal parts of the picture underneath. • Have him guess who it is. • Provide some language: “Who could this be? Who has yellow feathers? 	<p>When I Wake Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to your child your routine from the time you get up to the time you go to sleep. <p>Walk The Line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a long strip of masking tape on the floor. • Show your child how to walk on the line, putting one foot in front of the other. • Count the number of steps. Make a zigzag line next. • Use words like “straight,” “crooked,” “long,” and “short.”
	<p>Let's Do It Together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use collaborative activities to encourage interaction: setting the table for lunch and sweeping the floor. <p>Care for Animals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your child about how animals get hurt: how they cut their paws or break their wings. 	<p>Story Hands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your child, “It’s story time.” take his hand. Give the pinky finger a massage and say, “This little finger wanted to learn how to ride a two-wheel bicycle.” Go to the next finger and give it a massage, saying, “This finger was a little scared he might fall off.”
	<p>Building Towers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help your child create roads, trains, and other items using assorted blocks and boxes. 	<p>I Spy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your child what she sees when you are walking outside or driving in a car.
	<p>Matching Shapes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play a shape-matching game. • Hold up a shape from a pile of basic shapes and ask your child to find one just like yours. • Only use circle, square, and triangle shapes. <p>Action Words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use everyday routines to teach the meaning of action words. • Tell your child what you or other family members are doing during daily activities. “I’m washing my hands.” <p>Just “One”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use objects that come in pairs to emphasize the concept of one. • When your child is looking for her shoes, say, “You only found one shoe. Where is the other one?” 	<p>Listening & Talking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help your child, who will tend to talk about the present, learn new words to talk about what she did in the past and will do in the future: “Yesterday you went down the slide at the park. That was fun.” Or, “Tomorrow we’re going to the store”. <div>  <p>TODDLERS (24-36 MONTHS) Books with simple stories, rhyming books they can memorize, and pop-up books. Pick books about counting, alphabets, shapes or sizes, animals, and vehicles.</p> </div>

PRESCHOOL

AT THIS STAGE, THE CHALLENGES YOU WILL GO THROUGH AS PARENTS WILL BE DIFFERENT BECAUSE YOUR CHILD HAS DEVELOPED HIS OWN PERSONALITY



PARENTAL TIP

SET ACHIEVABLE GOALS

Set achievable goals according to their ability. Focus on what they can do instead of what they cannot do.



Corporal punishment can hinder intellectual development - there is a correlation between spanking and a lowered IQ.



PARENTAL TIP

SAYING "NO"

Although positive attitudes and words are important, we need to say "no" or "do not" to redirect the child's behavior if:

- He is doing something dangerous to himself or others.
- He is doing something that causes public nuisance such as knocking toys loudly or screaming.
- He damages property such as drawing on walls or the floor, and tearing books.

CHARACTER BUILDING

Inculcate positive attitude and behaviour in your child by role modelling altruism, tolerance, kindness at home.

Observe the following:

- Each practice is based on religious practices and in support of a peaceful and harmonious family.
- Rules at home must be clear, easy to understand, and obeyed. The rules must be obeyed by every family member so that it is fair for the children and they would be happy to obey.
- Assign tasks to children from young such as cleaning up toys after play. Do it in a way that is fun.



CARE & NUTRITION

Your child is able to express whether he is hungry or not and will choose his food.

However, you should control the child's food intake:

- Set a schedule for eating and snacking.
- Do not force your child to finish food on the plate.
- Do not use food as a reward.
- Do not use food as a sign of affection.

Bedtime & Naptime

At this age, your child needs to sleep between 11-12 hour, including naps. Establishing a bedtime routine is important in helping your child get enough sleep.

Myopia Prevention

Your child is more likely to develop myopia if:

- You and/or your spouse suffer from myopia.
- Your child is always involved – visual activities within a close distance, e.g. reading and playing games on handheld devices like mobile phones.
- Encourage your child to take short breaks of 3 to 5 minutes after 30 to 40 minutes.
- Look out of a window or go outdoors to relax their eyes.
- Play a sport, go for family walks to enjoy fresh air and sunlight.
- Outdoor time may help delay the onset or progression of myopia.
- Limit the amount of games they play on mobile phones or other devices.

Learning & Play Time



DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

AGE

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

CAUSES FOR CONCERN

4-5 years

- Names a friend
- Rote counts 1-10
- Speaks fluently with correct grammar (5 years)
- Asks questions like what, why and how. Able to answer to the same questions
- Uses five- to six-word sentences, narrates stories
- Identifies four or more colours
- Copies a cross, square (4 years), triangle (5 years)
- Can draw a person with 3-6 body parts
- Pedals a bicycle with /without stabilizers
- Hops on one leg, climbs well
- Walks/runs forward and backward with balance
- Tries to solve problems from a single point of view and identify solutions to conflicts
- More likely to agree to rules

- Is unable to run, jump, or climb easily
- Is extremely aggressive and hostile toward peers
- Clings and gets very upset when parent leaves
- Does not speak full sentences or speak clearly enough for strangers to understand
- Seems shy and very fearful with other children
- Never shares or takes turns
- Regularly has difficulty caring for own toilet needs

6 years

- Reads short words and sentences
- Takes pride and pleasure in mastering new skills
- Has more internal control over emotions and behaviours
- Shows growing awareness of good and bad

- Is frequently sad, worried, afraid, or withdrawn
- Is easily hurt by peers
- Bullies other children
- Develops unrealistic fears (phobias)



PARENTAL TIP

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Through routines, the child will learn how to be disciplined. Disciplining your child is not about correcting wrong behaviours, but encouraging proper behaviour.

- While reading, discuss and storytell with your child on the pros and cons of a situation.
- Eat meals together. It is a good time to talk about the day. Children can be taught how to interact.
- Ensure regular sleeping and waking times. All members must practice this so that the child knows there are no exceptions.
- Explain the importance of hygiene by showing how to bathe and clean up after oneself from young.

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

3 - 3½ YEARS

3½ - 4 YEARS



Bowling

- Let your child bowl.
- Count how many objects he knocks over and how many are left.
- Let him help stack them again.

Beautiful Nature

- Take a nature walk and collect various items from outdoors: leaves, rocks, pieces of bark, or seashells.
- Use them to create a painting.



Clap A Word

- Explain that a syllable is a separate sound or beat in a word. "Cat," for example, has only one syllable.
- Say "Cat" and clapping one time. "Elephant" has three syllables.
- Illustrate by saying "el-e-phant" and clapping each beat.

Name Game

- Write an alphabet on a paper in capital and small letters.
- Ask your child to list names of things and animals that start with the letter.

I Spy

- Using simple materials like toilet paper tube or paper, have them look at the world through the tube.
- Stop on something and have them describe what they see.



My favourite is...

- Invite your child to draw a picture of his favourite activity, such as going to the park, or building with blocks.
- If he has trouble thinking of something, ask him to remember something/someone that makes him feel special or happy.
- Have your child, after he finishes his drawing; complete the sentence, "My favourite activity is"

Why the Face

- Read aloud a book about feeling angry, sad, happy, and excited.
- Talk about the character and what made her angry for example.
- Draw a happy face on top of a chart paper; ask him to list things that make him happy.
- Ask what he can do to feel happy.
- Draw an unhappy face and repeat the process. Also ask your child what he can do if he sees a friend who is unhappy or angry.



Nature Collages

- Write the name of a colour with a matching marker on each of the plastic bags.
- Select colours found in nature, like brown and green.
- Go on a nature walk to find materials in nature that are the same colour as marked on the bag.
- Encourage the child to collect leaves, twigs, rocks, fruits, and tree bark to put in her bag.

Hide-and-Seek

- Tell your child there is an animal in the room, but it isn't here anymore.
- Talk about its size, what it might eat, and so on.
- Ask her to guess the animal.



Sink or Float?

- Fill a table or bucket with water.
- Show your child each item to be dropped into the water.
- Ask the child to predict which items will sink and which ones will float and explain why.

Colourful Bugs

- Introduce your child to books about insects and caterpillars. Plan a trip to The Butterfly Park.
- Talk about the life of a caterpillar and how caterpillars turn into butterflies. Read The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle.
- Cut out five to ten circles from the poster board to create the caterpillar's body.

Primary to Secondary

- Experiment with using the primary colours to create secondary colours.
- Try to get your child to predict the effect of mixing two colours together using colour pencils, crayons and coloured water.



Young minds are very receptive to learning math and logic between ages 1 to 4!

Focus on "What"

- When you ask "what" questions, you're starting a conversation and exploring right along with your children.
- "What" questions focus on what is happening, and what they observe.

Observe this

- Get them to blow air on their hands and to wave their hands in the air. Ask them, "What do you feel?" and "Can you hold air?"
- Line up floating toys in water. Use a straw to blow a toy across the water. Repeat the activity. Ask, "What happened when you blew on the toy?"



READ ALL ABOUT IT

"I Wonder Why the Wind Blows"
by Anita Ganeri

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

4 - 4½ YEARS

4½ - 5 YEARS



Crossing Seas

- Have your child stand on the balance beam, plank or a line on the floor.
- Imagine that the surrounding area is the “sea” and encourage the child to “walk across the sea” along the beam —forwards, sideways, and backwards.

Body Shaping

- Have your child lie on his back in an open space large enough for him to move freely.
- Have the child place his legs out in front of him to make an “L” shape (later, try making different letters with the body). Point toes in and out slowly.



Opposites

- Draw pictures or cut out photos from magazines.
- Discuss opposites: Black-White, Run-Walk, High-Low, Sit-Stand, Laugh-Cry.

Telling Tale

- Write a word on a piece of paper and give it to your child to make up a story as she uses the word in a sentence.
- Give your child more new words to continue the story.

Mystery Objects

- Place a variety of objects in a bag.
- Invite them to feel each object and guess what the item is.
- Use a variety of objects familiar and new.

Tasting With My Nose

- Hold his nose and chew an orange. “Can you taste anything?”
- Let go of your nose and take a breath. Can you taste anything now?”



Helping With Chores

- You can teach your children responsibility by having them help with simple tasks around the house.

Tying & Knotting

- Teach your child how to tie or knot different things in different ways. For example, tying shoelaces, plastic bags, and your child’s hair.



Thinking Cap

- Read the book out loud.
- Talk about the story: What did he want to do? Why was it hard for him?
- Make a “thinking cap” to remind the child to “think, think, think.”

Wind Wordplay

- Talk with your child about the various kinds of winds, such as a gentle breeze, a light steady wind, and gale winds that occur during a hurricane.
- Be sure to use the words light and strong.
- Move as though the child is a very gentle breeze, and then a light wind, until it’s of gale force.

Plan a Vacation

- Plan an imaginary vacation with her.
- Ask how you would get there, what you would bring, and what you would do once you arrived.



Animal Habitats

- Encourage your child to sort the animal cards according to the habitat (or home) in which that animal generally lives.
- For example, the farm, woods, jungle, or ocean.

Measure the Treasure

- Give your child a piece of string.
- Explain she is going on a scavenger hunt to find an item that is approximately the same length as her string.
- Show the child how to measure length by matching the end of her string with the edge of an object.



PRESCHOOLERS (36 TO 60 MONTHS):

Books with simple text that they can memorize or read, about things like size or time, and simple “science” books about things and how they work. Find books with topics the child is interested in! It is about preparing them for kindergarten at this stage.



Little Engineers

- Use mixed sets of building materials.
- Try mixing building blocks with Legos, or foam bricks with cans.
- Challenge them; “How tall can you build?”



READ ALL ABOUT IT

“Changes, Changes” by Pat Hutchins

How Many Adams [Name of Child]?

- Body measurements. Children can use their bodies as a unit of measurement.
- How many Adams does it take to cross the room?



READ ALL ABOUT IT

Count on Math: Activities for Small Hands and Lively Minds by Pam Schiller and Lynne Peterson

READING

Let's Start A Culture Of Reading At Home!



The type of books you read to your child contributes to the depth of their learning!

(Refer to "Selecting Books Tip" in Developmental Activities for your child's age.)

What Can You Do?

1 Point out pictures and name them out loud to make the association between words and their meanings.

2 Physically play with books. Let your little one pick books up, flip them from front to back, and turn the pages.

3 Read in silly voices, change between loud and soft.



4 Trace words with your fingers as you read. Talk about letters. Point them out in books and talk to your child about them; "the word ball starts with a 'b'."

5 Read the same book over but keep topics diverse.

6 Sign up your child for membership with the library near your house.

Practice "Dialogic" Reading

Actively involve your child in reading by asking him questions and encouraging discussion. Let your child be the storyteller!

After reading the book a few times, use the PEER sequence as a guide:

P

Prompts the child to say something about the book
"What does a dog say?"

E

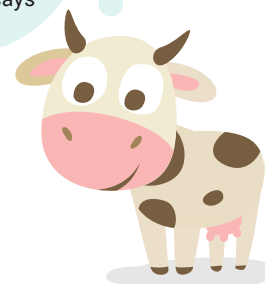
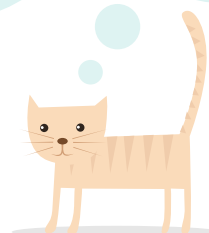
Evaluates the child's response
"That's right, a dog says woof woof!"

E

Expands the child's response
"And a cat says meow!"

R

Repeats the prompt
"What does a cow say?"



Local Reading & Language Resources

1

National Library



2

Literary Award Website The Book Council



3

Pintar Kata App

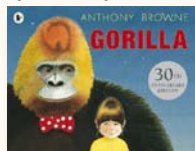
Pintar Kata ("Smart in Vocabulary") app is a game that encourages learning vocabulary, and can be downloaded on both iOS and Android devices from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store respectively.



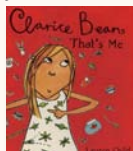
NLB Recommended Books for 0-6 Years

Top Picks for Children

Gorilla
by Anthony Browne



Clarice Bean, That's Me
by Lauren Child



Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus
by Mo Willems



The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food
by Stan Berenstain



D.W., the Picky Eater
by Tolon Brown



I Will Not Ever Never Eat a Tomato
by Lauren Child



For Picky Eaters (3-6 years old)

I Don't Want to Go to School!
by Stephanie Blake



Potty Animals: What to Know When You've Gotta Go!
by Hope Vestergaard

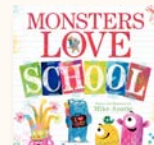


Milestones

Splat the Cat
by Rob Scotton

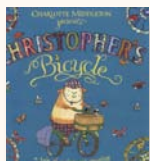


Monsters Love School
by Mike Austin



Starting School

Christopher's Bicycle: A Tale of Cycling and Recycling
by Charlotte Middleton



Recycling Is Fun
by Charles Ghigna

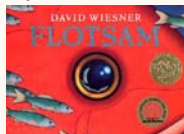


The Bear with the Sword
by Davide Cali & Gianluca Foli



Conversation and the World Around Us

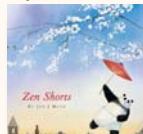
Flotsam
by David Wiesner



The Hello, Goodbye Window
by Norton Juster

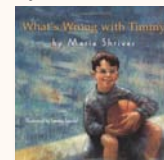


Zen Shorts
by Jon Muth



Caldecott Medal Honor Books (3-6 years old)

What's Wrong with Timmy?
by Maria Shriver



Waiting for May
by Janet Morgan Stoeke

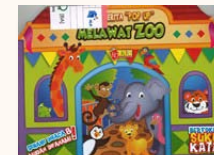


Relationships Between Siblings (3-6 years old)

Mengapakah Awak Tersenyum
by Ummu Shahzeb



Melawat Zoo



Si Kucing Kecil



Malay Books



When to seek Medical Advice

It's important to identify any developmental delays or disabilities early so that your child can receive help on time. This will help maximize your child's potential in the long run.

1. Too shy, scared and aggressive.
2. Too restless being away from parents or guardians.
3. Cannot focus on a something for 5 minutes or more and have superficial interest in things most of the time.
4. Do not want to play with other children and do not make eye contact.
5. Cannot pronounce his/her full name.
6. Never daydream, or unable to tell the difference between fantasy and reality.
7. Always feel sad and restless and unable to show range of emotions.
8. Cannot organise more than eight boxes of construction.
9. Have trouble holding a pencil or crayon.
10. Have trouble eating, sleeping, toileting, dressing, brushing teeth, washing or drying hands without assistance.

If your child is able to do the things mentioned in the list above but suddenly unable to do so, please refer to a professional / doctor immediately.



Some Of The Red Flags To Be Aware Of Include

- Not meeting the expected milestones on the health booklet
- No responsive smile at 3 months
- Significant head lag at 4-5 months
- Seems floppy/very stiff
- Not sitting without support at 10 months
- Reaches for objects with one hand at <1 yr (early hand dominance)
- Not walking independently at 18 months
- No single words at 18 months, especially if there is no communicative intent developed
- Doesn't imitate actions/words at 2 years
- Does not use spontaneous (Non- echoed/non imitated 2 word phrases by 24 months
- Has lost any language/Social skills
- No use of social gestures such as indicating for needs/sharing interests at 12 months
- Does not respond to affection
- Playing on his/her own (solitary play) after 2 years of age
- No alphabet or number recognition by 5 years of age

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE AT RISK OF DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS

Note

The activities do not go beyond 36 months as the crucial months to identify any risks of delays are below 3. Above 3 years, the child usually would have started to receive some forms of intervention as the delays would have been noticed.

Development during the 0-3 years is the most vital. But academic delay, like dyslexia is identified only after 4-5 years and above. It is recommended to have activities- mainly language stimulation activities all the way along, even for ages 3 years and above.



Gross Motor



Fine Motor



Oral Motor



Visual Attention

0 - 6 MONTHS

"Tummy Time"

- Important to be done everyday from birth to at least 10 months old. Adults must supervise closely for babies below 4 months old.
- Position baby lying on the tummy, with head turned to one side, arms bent and placed right under the shoulders close to the body, and legs bent at the knees and hips.
- As baby gets older about 3 months, he will be able to lift up the head off the floor.
- Do this everyday for about 10 mins at least each time, several times in a day when baby is awake. Baby can lie downwards on the mattress or parent's chest/lap.



Flying

- Lay your baby tummy down across your lap, and place your hands around his midsection so he's fully supported.
- Then gently lift him up and move him up, down, back, and forth, like a rocket jetting into space.

Rolling

- At 4/5 months, encourage rolling to the sides while lying on the back, by placing objects of interest to the sides.
- The rolling should be done with chin tucked close to chest and legs bent close to the chest to turn.
- Head and body should NOT be arching backwards – this could indicate weakness.
- At about 6 months, encourage rolling from lying on tummy to the back.

Batting

- Place hanging homemade mobiles (made up of different textures, weight, colours and sound making ability) directly above baby, within reach, so that he can bat and swipe them randomly, to help build tactile system.
- After 4 months, baby can look, reach and grasp objects.



Visual Tracking (Eyes)

- 3 mths onwards - Position interesting objects in midline within baby's eye level in either lying on the tummy or the back, and move the object from middle to the side and back to the middle.
- Repeat this movement to the other side and in diagonal directions, to work on achieving control movement of the head over the body.



Changing Diapers

- Instead of lifting both legs up into the air, turn the baby towards left to slide the diaper underneath then turn right to pull it from the underside to position it neatly before sticking it on.



Feeding

- When baby is either latching on to the breast or suckling from milk bottle, bring both hands to midline close to the breast/bottle and baby's mouth.
- When he gets stronger, he can be guided to hold the bottle.
- Mouthing – Do not stop baby from mouthing hands or objects.
- This is a vital milestone for fine and oral motor development. Encourage more mouthing by giving different textured objects.



Swaddling

- Swaddling is encouraged for all babies, especially premature babies, to provide deep pressure tactile input to organize baby and develop baby's tactile processing system.
- Swaddle a few times a day, just like tummy time. Swaddle with arms bent and tucked in midline, close to chest and chin and legs bent at the hips and knees. Do not pull the limbs straight out when swaddling baby.



Animated Expressions

- Use lots of animated facial expressions and your voice, when holding baby close to your face to engage baby's attention and build rapport.
- Your own expressions and voices are more engaging than a musical toy as you can react according to your baby's responses.



Screen Time

- Children below age of 2 years old are highly encouraged NOT to be exposed to screens such as TV, iPad and handphone.
- Substitute the 2D world with 3D objects such as your facial expressions or objects of interest.



6 - 12 MONTHS

Encourage lots of playtime on tummy during this age period.

Reaching and Grasping 🖐️👁️

- While on tummy, place objects of interest (of different textures) all around within reaching distance to encourage baby to reach out with 1 hand and support the body with the other hand.

Object Manipulation 🖐️

- Give different size objects for baby to learn grasping using palms and thumb and fingers and using two hands together (bilateral hand integration).

Pushing up onto 4s 🧘

- Place objects of interest slightly higher than baby's eye level, so that he can push up and assume 4-point kneeling position to look at or reach for it.

Crawling

- At around age 8 months, place objects of interest further away for baby to creep or crawl towards it.

Note

Do not place babies into devices such as baby walkers, exersaucers, baby jumpers and Bumbo seats as these may impede gross motor development.

Rising to Stand 🧘

- Place objects of interest on a sturdy furniture (sofa/ table) and encourage baby to pull self-up to get the objects and go onto half kneeling.

Cruising 🧘

- Encourage baby to cruise around furniture to get from one point to another by placing objects of interest on different corners of the furniture.

Note

Babies should start to walk unsupported earliest at 11 months.



While playing classical music is not likely to help brain development, having children play or sing the music can increase visual, motor, attention, and mathematical skills.

Intro to solid foods

- At around 6 mths onwards, babies with stronger body who can control his head and body when in sitting position, with minimal support, can be introduced to puree and solid finger food for oral motor development.
E.g.: raw or steamed carrots/ broccoli, baby rusk biscuits, avocado puree for spoon feeding, etc.
- Introduce different tastes, textures and temperatures as the baby grows from 6 to 12 months old.



Messy play with food

- Encourage self-feeding using fingers and utensils too. Messy food play is encouraged to develop tolerance to tactile input.

Note

If a child rejects messy play, he could be tactile defensive. It may not necessarily be underlying sensory processing difficulties; as exposure to these activities also affects how a child reacts to it. Seek help from a professional to identify, only if it persists.



- Position baby in sitting on a firm surface and talk to baby within his eye level.



Babies use facial expressions of adults to decide how they feel.

1 - 1½ YEARS

Clean Up!

- Sing Barney's Clean Up song and encourage your child to pick up the toys and put into the boxes, after play.
- Do it regularly as a routine to indicate 'finish playtime'.
- This is the 'intro to chores' for babies.

Song:

*Clean up, clean up
Everybody, Every where
Clean up, clean up
Everybody do your share*

Feeding Using Utensils

- Although child still depends on you to feed him, give him a set of empty bowl and spoon/fork for him to practise feeding himself with utensil.
- You can dip his spoon in the sauce/gravy and let him bring it to the mouth himself for clearance using his lips.
- Also, continue finger feeding too using fruits.

Jack and Jill up the Hill

- Find slopes for your child to climb or bear crawl up to the top then walk down.
- If using a slide, encourage your child to slide down in sitting, lying on the back and lying on the tummy positions.
- Recommended to do this in barefoot for optimal sensory input and muscle action.

Bubble time

- Blow bubbles into the air and encourage child to run around and pop the bubbles! Child can use the hands first, followed by a bat or a net.

Stack and Crash

- Give your child large regular objects (blocks, boxes, beanbags, etc) which he can stack up to make a short tower and then crash it by pushing the tower down.
- You can take turns with your child to stack the objects, encouraging the child to wait for his turn, attend to what you are doing, and then complete his turn to stack.

Magic Token

- Using buttons or coins of different sizes, encourage your child to take it from you, using his thumb and index fingers, and then slot it into a box with hole/slit (e.g.: coin box) to watch it disappear!

Scarf Dance

- Switch on the music and encourage your child to swing and wave the different coloured and textured scarves all around, making different sound effects with each movement.
- You can also use simple words like "up", "down", "in", "out", "fast", "slow" when moving the scarves around.

Rhyme Machine

- Make your own rhymes/tunes when trying to get your child's attention to participate in daily activities such as sitting down to remove shoes and socks.

Song ("My Darling, Clementine"):

*Take off your shoes
Take off your shoes
Take off your shoes, my dear child
Pull the strap here
Pull the strap here
Pull the strap here
My dear child*

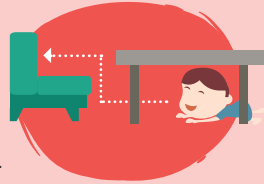


Infant TV watching is linked with poor language development - two or more hours per day of screen time before age one is associated with a six-fold increase in language delay.



Mini obstacle course

- Within the home environment, set up 2-3 steps obstacle course using furniture for child to problem solves his way through the obstacles.
- E.g.: Crawl under the table, and then climb up the sofa, to fetch a toy or object.
- Let him identify ways to use his body to go through the course with minimal help from you.



Up Down steps

- Encourage your child to climb up and down the steps holding the railings for support.
- This helps to build strength and depth perception using different heights.

Stamping Fun!

- Cut out different shapes of sponges for washing dishes.
- Paste several old newspapers or mahjong papers vertically on the wall.
- Using the sponge stamps, dip it in colours and encourage your child to stamp on the paper on the wall to create his own masterpiece.

Note

Doing it vertically helps to build shoulder stability and arms strength.

Doodle fun

- You can give crayons for doodling on the vertical paper instead of stamping.
- Draw horizontal and vertical lines of different sizes and wait for your child to imitate those lines.
- Allow him to use either hands to doodle and do not restrict to just one hand.



Stringing

- Good for bilateral hand integration.
- Using a thick string with hard end or a wooden stick, encourage child to string through a bead or button using 1 hand to hold the string/stick and the other hand to hold the bead/button.



Blow Bubbles (Oral Motor)

- Allow your child to blow bubbles by placing the bubble wand close to his mouth for him to blow through.
- If this is too challenging, capture 1 bubble on the wand and place that bubble close to child's lips for him to blow it away.
- You can use a short straw placed in between child's lips and the other end, close to the bubble wand to encourage more lip rounding.

Open and close

- Using a variety of locking mechanism, encourage child to use two hands to unlock and lock the mechanism.
- E.g.: zip/unzip a zipper and Ziplock bag, pull apart and press down Velcro strap, unlock lid of locked Tupperware, screw/unscrew jar lid.

Wipe Away!

- After mealtime, encourage your child to pick up the food pieces from the table surface and into the bowl.
- Give him a wet towel or tissue to wipe the table as best as he could before passing the towel back to you.
- This activity could indicate end of mealtime session.



Brush Teeth

- Allow your child to put the toothbrush in his mouth and try his best to brush his teeth. You can sing a song to pair up with the actions:
*This is the way we brush our teeth,
brush our teeth, brush our teeth
This is the way we brush our teeth,
brush brush, brush*
- Once done, you can just do a quick through brush all around.



Note

If a child rejects brushing, he could be oral tactile defensive. It may not necessarily be underlying sensory processing difficulties; as exposure to these activities also affects how a child reacts to it. Seek help from a professional to identify, only if it persists.

2 - 2½ YEARS



Symbolic Play

- Encourage your child to use simple inanimate object to pretend it to be something else e.g.: an empty cardboard box as a car, a toilet roll as a cup, a banana as a telephone, etc.
- He can pair up these objects with simple actions and create a 1-2 sequence of actions. E.g.: Use a stick as a spoon, stir the 'water' in the 'cup' (toilet roll), and then pretend to drink it first, and then share it with the teddy/doll. You can show him first and wait for him to follow.



Jump in and out

- Taping big coloured circular papers on the floor in a straight line, encourage child to jump in and out of the circles using both feet.

Kick a Ball

- Kicking around a ball is fun for this age. It can be either random or target kicking.
- This can be done on grassy field at the park near your house too. Different textures help to build tolerance to tactile inputs.

Feed the 'Fish'

- Pretending a bean bag as the fish food, get your child to throw the bean bag into a 'pond of fishes', which can be made up of either a hula hoop or cardboard box.
- Increase the target distance away from child after each throw in. Your child can switch between overhand and underhand throw pattern.

Balloon Tapping

- Throw a balloon up in the air and encourage your child to tap it upwards to keep it afloat as long as possible.



PARENTAL TIP

This is the crucial age to build up on communication skill using verbal words AND gestures. At this age, child is more aware of surrounding and should want to explore more. This is when temper tantrums will occur and communicative skills between adult and child and consistency in parenting plays an important part in managing child's emotions.



Infant educational television does not promote intellectual development, because infants respond to things that respond to them.

Put on shoes and socks

- Encourage your child to put on shoes with Velcro strap with minimal help from you. If he is ready, he can help you with pulling up the socks as well.



Feeding

- Your child should be able to tolerate different textured solid foods by this age.
- If he gags or cringes with certain types of food, or swallow the food with minimal chewing, seek professional help to identify any underlying sensory issues that could affect his tolerance to solid food, only if this persists.

Clean up!

- After mealtime, your child can bring his plate to the kitchen sink, stand on a stool, reach for the tap and wash his hands. Good practice to build into routine.

Action songs

- Sing and act out simple action songs for your child to follow, emphasizing on the action and the words use.
E.g.:
*Put your hand in
Put your hand out
Put your hand in
And you shake it all about
And you do the hocky pocky and turn around
That's what it's all about*



2½ - 3 YEARS



Symbolic Play

- Arrange a playdate session with another child.
- Your child should be able to play alongside another child and imitates simple actions of another child.
- Sometimes, his play could imitate actions done by someone he knows, e.g.: doctor with stethoscope examining a 'patient' (doll/adult).



Note

If child is not engaged in simple pretend play actions by this age, please seek professional help to identify any underlying issues affecting the development of play.



Hippety Hop

- Encourage your child to hop on one leg as many times as he can and balance on leg as long as he can.

Punch and Lace

- Using a hole-puncher, encourage your child to punch several holes on a piece of paper. After that, lace through the holes using a thick string until all holes is covered.

Doodling Fun

- Place a big paper on the wall vertically and get the child to follow simple line strokes using crayons and coloured pencils. Do this with paper on the table or floor too.



Play Doh

- Get your child to shape the dough into a ball, pancake and sausage.
- Using a cookie cutter, get him to cut out the shape on the flattened dough.
- Make it interesting. This is a good activity to build the inner muscles of the hands.



Dressing

- Encourage your child to remove and put on clothings as best as he could do first, before helping him to finish the tasks.



Snip, Snip, Snip Away

- You can introduce your child to scissors skills, with close supervision.
- Teach your child how to use the scissors and how to make it open and close in a snipping action.
- Hold a thick paper for your child and allow him to snip the edges of the paper randomly, as many times as he can.
- Recommended to use a blunt end, metal scissors instead a plastic one as it gives better feedback when cutting.

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Yayasan MENDAKI Parenting Toolkit (Nota Keibupaan untuk Kanak-Kanak 0-6 Tahun)

