

# Cognitive Developmental Milestones for Children



A reference guide on multidirectional cognitive development for children aged up to 3 years

(Information extracted from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention<sup>1</sup>)

	Emotional / Social Milestones	Language / Communication Milestones	Learning / Thinking / Problem-solving Milestones
<b>2 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starts to smile at people</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tries to look at parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Makes soft murmuring sound</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Turns head towards sounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pays attention to faces</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begins to trace things with eyes</li> </ul>
<b>4 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Smiles ad lib especially at people</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys playing with people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starts to babble</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cries in different ways to express different feelings, e.g. hunger, pain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes familiar faces and things at a distance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Traces moving things with eyes from side to side</li> </ul>
<b>6 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Loves to play especially with parents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Loves to look at self in a mirror</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Makes vowel sounds when babbling, e.g. “eh”, “ah”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Responds when being called own name</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shows curiosity and approaches things that are out of reach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starts to transfer things from one hand to another</li> </ul>
<b>9 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wants to stay close with familiar adults</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has own favorite toys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Makes many different sounds, e.g. “mama”, “baba”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Points at things with fingers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Searches for things as seen being hidden</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transfers things smoothly from one hand to another</li> </ul>
<b>12 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gets attention by repeating sounds or actions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has own favorite people and things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tries to repeat words you said</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses simple gestures, e.g. shaking head for “no”, waving hand for “goodbye”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finds out hidden things easily</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Puts things into and takes things out of a container</li> </ul>
<b>18 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wants to stay close with caregivers in unfamiliar situations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shows others something interesting by pointing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Says a few single words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Says and shakes head for “no”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Points to one of the body parts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Scrawls on his/her own</li> </ul>
<b>24 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Imitates others especially adults and older children</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Feels excited when getting along with peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Says 2 to 4 words in a sentence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Points to named things or pictures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finds out hidden things even under 2 to 3 covers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starts to distinguish shapes and colors</li> </ul>
<b>36 Months Old</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cares about a crying friend</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns when playing games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Talks by using 2 to 3 sentences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carries out instructions with 2 or 3 steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plays toys with buttons, knobs and moving parts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Completes puzzles with 3 to 4 pieces</li> </ul>



# Red flags for cognitive developmental problem<sup>2</sup>

## Emotional / Social Concerns

- Poorly developed age-appropriate playing skills
- Difficult in interacting with peers appropriately

## Communication Concerns

- Poorly expressed with language and gestures for communication
- Difficult in understanding language in words, gestures and pictures

## Cognitive Concerns

- Poorly developed basic concepts towards shapes, colors and body parts
- Difficult in learning new tasks

**A detailed follow-up evaluation should be established as early as possible if any signs of cognitive developmental delay are observed in children during growth period.**

**References:** 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Developmental milestones. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/>. Accessed on 21Jan2016.  
2. Red Flags Committee. Red flags - for children birth to six years. A quick reference guide for early years professionals. 2007.

For more nutritional information, please view <https://Singapore.wyethnutritionsc.org>

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WYE-PM-018-JAN-16-SG2019