

Childhood Development - When to talk to your child's doctor.

Learn to see when your child is growing normally or if support is needed.

As your child grows, they will begin to reach what are often called “developmental milestones” at certain ages. This may include crawling, talking, and walking.

Because children grow at their own pace, they don't always reach these developmental milestones at the same age. Your child may learn some of these earlier or later than other children.

If your child is just 1 or 2 months behind what is typically seen, it's usually normal, but worth being aware of. However, if your child is several months behind in 1 or more basic skills, you will want to talk to your child's doctor. It is important to discover the possibility of and reason for a delay earlier than later.

Typical developmental milestones

Milestones reached by age 1 for most children:

- Expressing emotions with sounds or cries
- Crawling or scooting around
- Sitting and standing up on their own
- Reacting to other people's emotions by smiling, laughing, or crying
- Able to say a few single words (e.g., “Hi,” “dog,” “mama”)

Milestones reached by age 2 for most children:

- Drinking from a sippy cup and using a spoon
- Scribbling with crayons or markers
- Following simple directions
- Walking on their own
- Using two-word phrases (e.g., “Go bye-bye?” or “Good doggy”)

Milestones reached by age 3 for most children:

- Running and jumping
- Building tall towers with blocks
- Using 2–3-word phrases
- Asking questions to find out more information

Finding out about developmental delays

Your child's doctor works with you to find out if your child has a delay. They use tools developed by children's doctors to help guide their findings. If needed, they can also refer you to another doctor who works with different types of delays.

When it comes to developmental delays, finding out early is important.

Early steps can help

Talk and work with your child's doctor early to help reduce any delays in your child as they grow. Some options may include:

- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech therapy
- Help with any problems they may have with hearing or sight
- Special education services

How can any of this help? Speech therapy can help if your child is having trouble talking or forming words. Physical therapy can help if your child is struggling with balance and coordination.