

CHILDREN DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW



Children’s Development follows a pattern. All development happens in same order, but at different rates.

From simple to complex - simple actions are learnt and build upon.

From head to toe - physical control and coordination progresses starts from the head and works down the body

From inner to outer - physical development progresses from actions near the core body to more complex ones further away.

All areas of development are linked together.

From general to specific - development progresses from general to specific ones.

Age	Brain Development	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	Language Development	Social Development	Emotional Development
Birth – 18 months	Synapse formation is rapid in first year of life. Areas of greatest growth are sensori-motor in the visual cortex and later in the frontal lobes.	By 1 month baby start controlling their head and facial expressions, they can make jerky arm and leg movement and can grasp with their hands. They focus they gaze at 20 -25 cms and will turn to look at bright objects. At 3 months they gain control of their head, chest and back, start to hold things, are attracted to movement and can turn to look at a sound source. Use arms to prop. At 6 months babies can roll over, powerful grasp bear most of their own weight, kick vigorously, reaches for objects with whole hand, stretching, moving and explore objects by putting them in their mouths. At 7 months, sits in tripod,	Piaget sensori-motor stage (birth to 2 years). Physically explores environment to learn about it, repeats movements to master them, which also stimulated brain cell development. Babies develop concepts - abstract ideas based on their senses. By 5 months they are curious and interested in environment. They babble and imitate sounds. By 9 months, they discriminate between parents and others, trial and error problem solving. They take an increased interest in their surroundings and may tests objects for their properties. By 9 months they can judge the size of an object by 2 feet away, look for a lost or	Babies make eye contact and cry to indicate needs. They often imitate adults’ movements. By 3 months they make a variety of sounds and laugh. They respond to voices and may respond to their name. By 6 months they raise their arms to be picked and babble first using monosyllables. By 9 months they will obey the command ‘no’ and imitate an adult sounds. By 1 yr they understand simple instructions, speak 2 to 6 words recognisable words. They know their own name, By 18 mths they can name body parts, use 6 - 40 words and understand many more, echo the last part of what is said, use gestures alongside	Attachment: baby settles when parent comforts; toddlers seeks comfort from parent, safe-base exploration. Children learn to trust other based on the consistency of caregivers. Babies gaze at faces (particularly when feeding) and smile in response to adults. Babies enjoy cuddles and being held. By 5 months they are responsive to social stimuli, facial expressions of emotion. By 6 months they may offers toys to others and are more aware of other people’s feelings e.g. copying a sibling crying. By 9 months a baby will play alone but prefer to be near adults. They are more socially interactive, play games with caretakers. At 12 months they enjoy socialising and will help with	From birth to 1 years, they learn fundamental trust in self, caretakers and the environment. By 1 month a baby begins to show their temperament. By 6 months they can recognise emotions in other and will show distress when mother leave. At 9 months babies will show definite likes and dislikes and often need a comforter. At 12 months they are likely to have fluctuating moods, are affectionate with familiar people but shy with strangers. By 16 months they are aware when others are fearful or anxious for them, they alternate between clinging and resistance may easily frustrated. Terrible two’s may begin, wilful, stubborn tantrums!

		push head and torso up off floor. At 9 months they can sit without support, stand whilst holding on and crawl. By 12 months 50% walking, then more complex motor skills. At 18 months they can walk well, climb onto things.	hidden toy in the right place, recognise pictures and understand daily routines. By 12 months beginning of symbolic thinking, points to pictures in books in response to verbal cues, some may use single words, receptive language. 15 months, learns through complex imitating behaviours, knows objects are used for specific purposes.	words, try to sing and refer to themselves by name.	routines such as dressing. They have stranger danger, separation anxiety. By 18 months they play alone but still prefer to be near a familiar person, are eager to be independent and show they need the toilet by words. They imitate and enjoy parallel and symbolic play.	
Age	Brain Development	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	Language Development	Social Development	Emotional Development
18 months 3 years	Synapses continue to expand and reach about a 1000 trillion. The toddlers brain is twice as active as the adult brain. Structures that are sensitive to language and socio-emotional responses develop. Motor development continues rapidly.	Physically active, can't sit for long. At 2 a child learns to climb up stairs, then down, can run well avoiding obstacles, climb, throw (but not catch), push and pull large wheeled toys, draw circles lines and dots with a preferred hand, listen to conversations with interest, recognise familiar people in photographs (but not themselves). Clumsy at throwing balls. By 3 they can jump from a low step, walk	At 2 children can use two word phrases, use more complex toys and understand sequence of putting toys, puzzles together. Ego-centric, illogical, magical thinking! Explosion of vocabulary, grammar by 70% of people aged 3. They begin to understand the consequences of actions. At 3 they can match 2 to 3 primary colours, begin to understand the concept of time, are fascinated with the	At 2 children talk to themselves but may not be understood by others, speak over 200 words and understand over a 1000, use phrases as telegraphic speech, spend a great deal of time naming things and can follow simple instructions. At 3 they can remember and repeat songs, use personal pronouns and plurals correctly, and will be able to hold simple conversations.	They begin to assert their independence. At 2 they may provide comfort when others cry showing growing empathy. Play: cooperative, imaginative, may involve fantasy and imaginary friends, takes turns in games. Develops gross and fine motor skills, social skills, experiment with social roles, reduces fears. They like to help others but not when it conflicts with their own desires. At 3 they like to do things unaided	At 2 children are beginning to express how they feel, are eager to try out new experiences and are curious about their environment. They may be clingy at times and independent at others, and often feel frustrated when unable to express themselves. At 3 they can think about things from someone else's viewpoint, and often develop fears eg of the dark. Self-esteem is based on what others tell him or her. Increasing ability to control emotions, less emotional

		backwards, sideways, stand on tip toe, balance on one foot, catch a large ball, control a pencil with tripod grasp, and use scissors. Refine complex skills – hopping, jumping, climbing, running. Improving motor skills and hand eye coordination, cut with scissors, draw shapes. Mostly toilet trained.	cause and effect, and can understand the concepts of 'one' and 'lots'. Poor understanding of time, value, sequence of events. Vivid imaginations, some difficulty separating fantasy from reality. Accurate memory but more suggestable than older children. Primitive drawing, can't represent themselves in drawing until 4. Don't realise other have a different perspective.		use the toilet independently, enjoy helping adults, are willing to share toys and begin to take turns, are becoming aware of gender and making friends. Want to please adults, development of conscience, incorporates parental prohibitions, feels guilty when disobedient, curious about his or her bodies, no sense of privacy.	outbursts. Increased frustration and tolerance, better delay gratification. Understands concepts of right and wrong. Self-directed in many activities.
3-6 years	The fastest growth period of the frontal lobe networks. The speed of memory processing increases and problem solving is increased. The brain is at 90% of its adult weight but 6 years old.	At 4 a child has developed a sense of balance and may be able to walk along a line, can bounce a ball and bend at the waist to pick up objects, to up and down stairs one foot per step, spread their hand and bring thumbs into opposition with each finger in turn. Motor and perceptual motor skills better integrated. By 5 they	Piaget's preoperational stage (2-7 years). Can recognise others perspectives. Children learn through their experiences with real objects in the immediate environment. At 4 a child understand the concept of numbers up to 3 and count to 20 by rote, talk about things in the past and future, sort objects into groups, have increased memory	At 4 they can talk fluently, ask questions and understand answers, repeat songs, tell long stories, enjoy jokes and a play on words and may begin to recognise patterns in the way words are formed. Ask many questions – what, why, how. By the 5 they are interest in reading and writing, recognise their name and attempt to write	Children begin planning activities, make up games and initiate activities with others. At 4 the can eat skilfully, wash and dry their hands, brush their teeth, dress themselves (not laces and buttons), be sensitive to others, have a sense of humour and like to be with other children. At 5 they have clear likes and dislikes, can amuse themselves and	At 4 children like to be independent and are strongly self-willed. They try to work out what is 'right' and 'wrong' in behaviour. At 5 they enjoy caring for pets and show sympathy and comfort for hurt friends. At 6 they can compare themselves to other people, they begin to develop concepts such as forgiveness and fairness.

		have increase agility and balance, they may be able to ride a wheeled bike, can hop forward and use a knife and fork competently. At 6 they are gaining in strength and agility, can jump from apparatus, catch and throw with accuracy, skip in time to music and write number if letters are similar size.	skill, give reasons and solve problems but often confuse fact with fiction. At 5 they may ask about abstract words, give their full name and address, and produce drawings with good detail.	it, live to be read to and act out stories. Enjoys jokes, singing, rhymes! At 6 they are increasingly influenced by cultural conventions in drawing and writing, and can pronounce the majority of sounds in their own language.	choose their own friends. At 6 the can carry out simple tasks eg peeling, they choose friends mainly because of personality and interests and can hold long conversations.	
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Age	Brain Development	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	Language Development	Social Development	Emotional Development
6-9 years	The synaptic and connections in motor and sensory areas are firmly established and the process of synaptic pruning in these areas	At 7 children may have increased stamina, can catch and throw with one hand and are more competent in their writing. At 8	Piaget's Concrete operational stage (7-11 years) children are less egocentric, develop conservation of number or length skills and an improved ability to arrange objects	At 7 children can express themselves in both speech and writing. At 8 to 9 they use and understand complex sentences, are	Children develop pride in their achievements. At 7 they are completely independent hygiene and dressing skills. At 7 they are completely independent in hygiene and dressing; may form and close friendships (mainly same sex). Rules relied upon to	At 7 years they learn to control their emotion they realise that they can keep thoughts private, begin to think in terms of not just who they are but what they would like to be, may be critical of their own work. At 8-9 years they

	has begun. Because of the activity in higher brain control centres, levels of attentions have increased along the ability to inhibit impulses.	to 9 children have quicker reactions and may play sport, write and draw with increased dexterity and begin to join letters.	according to a characteristic. They can recognise the difference between behaviour and intent. At 6 children begin to develop concepts of quantity, are able to distinguish between reality and fantasy. At 8 to 9 they can plan ahead and evaluate can handle abstract ideas.	highly verbal and enjoy telling jokes. Most children are fluent speakers, readers and writers of their language. Increasing influence of peer influences, coded language.	guide behaviour and play, and provide child with structure and security moving to strict adherence of rules. At 6-9 they begin to understand the motives behind another's actions, are easily embarrassed, can be argumentative and bossy but also generous and responsive, friendship may change rapidly, they begin to sense loyalty to a group and enjoy secrets. By 9 rules can be negotiated	have a growing sensitivity and begin to realise that others experience feelings of anger, fear and sadness similar to their own, they are discouraged easily and take pride in their competencies. Self-esteem based on ability to perform and produce. Alternative strategies for dealing with frustration and expressing emotions. Have questions about pregnancy, intercourse.
12 -16 years	Maturation and pruning continues. Brain developing with increase reaction times and coordination.	Puberty usually begins between the ages of 9 -12 in girls and 11-14 in boys.	Piaget's Formal Operational Stage. Thinking shifts from the concrete to the abstract; they approach problems in a systematic fashion and display metacognition. They can accurately recognise and consider others viewpoints. Concrete operations: accurate perception of events, rational, logical thought, concrete thinking, reflect upon self and attributes, understands concepts of space, time,	Adolescents approach problems in a systematic fashion, use imagination when solving problems and have developed a legible style of handwriting.	Children are more independent, begin to look to the future in terms of career, families, relationships, etc. Takes on more responsibilities at home. Less fantasy play, more team sports, board games. Young (12 – 14) psychologically distance themselves from parents; identify with peer group, social status largely related to group membership, social acceptance depends on conformity to observable traits or roles. Need to be independent from adults, ambivalent about sexual relationships, sexual behaviour is exploratory.	Greater interest in sexual activity. Young (12 – 14) self-conscious about physical appearance and early or late development. Body image rarely objective, may over-react to parental questions or criticisms, risky behaviour, rely on peer support. Adolescents may alternate between behaving like a child and an adult depending on maturity, often feel misunderstood, and can experience wide emotional swings. They become more introspective; develop their own ideas and values

			<p>dimension. Increasingly girls (11 – 14) and boys (13 – 17) think hypothetically, consider possibilities, abstract thinking, introspection and self-analysis. Cognitive development is uneven, and impacted by emotionality.</p>		<p>Adolescents want to be accepted and liked by others; they may become self-conscious or anxious about their physical appearance; develop sexual identity, seek recognition from their peers, develop their skills and are better at resolving conflicts.</p> <p>Middle (15 – 17) friendships based on loyalty, understanding, trust, self-revelation, is first step towards intimacy, conscious about adults to trust, respect honesty and straightforwardness from adults, may become sexually active.</p>	<p>which often challenge those of their parents and teachers. Middle (15 – 17) examination of other values and beliefs.</p>
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Content of this overview was adapted from The Institute for Human Services for The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program October 2007.