

Your Child's Development

Rolling over, saying a first word, pointing to a picture in a book, these are all developmental milestones, or things most children do by a certain age. As children grow and develop, they will reach many milestones in how they play, move, learn, and speak. As a parent, watching your little one learn a new skill is exciting and rewarding, but those observations are also a great way to make sure they are meeting their developmental milestones.



Developmental Monitoring

Developmental monitoring refers to the frequent, yet informal ways that parents, grandparents, caregivers, etc. make sure that a child is progressing and meeting their developmental milestones. The monitoring of a child's development starts at birth and continues until the child is at least five years old. These simple observations can help you to recognize and celebrate your child's progress, as well as help you to notice if something is delayed or missing in their development. If you do have a concern, it is important to act early. Talk with your child's doctor and child care provider about your concerns and ask about a developmental screening.

Developmental Screening

A developmental screening takes a closer look at your child's development. Unlike monitoring, which is more informal, a developmental screening uses a research-based tool, usually a questionnaire, to gather information about how your child plays, learns, speaks, acts and moves. Parents or caregivers can attain questionnaires from a doctor, teacher, child care provider, home visitor or other trained professional. It is recommended that children be screened at 9 months, 18 months, 24 or 30 months or whenever there is a concern. The reason for a screening is to determine if your child's development is on track or if they might benefit from some extra help. If you or your doctor have concerns following a screening, discuss with them the possibility of a referral for further evaluation.

Resources

- YoungStar Early Childhood Inclusion Webpage
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/eci/ifspipec-connections>
- CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early.
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>



Unsure of what developmental milestones you should be looking for? The CDC has Milestone Checklists for all ages, beginning at 2 months and going through 5 years.
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>