

Know the Milestones: Monitoring Your Child's Development

A YoungStar Guide for Families

First steps, first words. Learning how to share. They're all developmental milestones—sure signs that your child is growing up a little more every day. Most children reach these milestones at about the same time; those that don't may need a little extra help. Children don't simply grow out of most developmental delays on their own, and some delays are a sign of more serious health concerns.

Paying close attention to the way your child plays, learns, talks and moves—and talking to your pediatrician about the things you notice—is the best way to make sure your child reaches his or her full potential.

Start With a Checkup

By the time children are three years old, their brains are nearly 90% fully developed. That's why recognizing developmental delays early is so important. So take the first step and schedule regular wellness checkups with your pediatrician. A doctor can help you identify the milestones that matter for your child based on his or her age and needs. It's also your chance to ask questions and get the support and guidance every family needs.

Use a Checklist

Before you can track your child's development, you have to know what to look for. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Learn The Signs. Act Early" program can help. Visit [cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones) to learn the important milestones for children 2 months to 5 years old. You can even download the checklists you need for free.

A milestones checklist can make working with your child's doctors and child care providers easier, too. Here's how:

- Step 1:** Download the milestones checklist for your child's age. Consider sharing copies with family members, your child care provider and others who take care of your child.
- Step 2:** Watch how your child plays, learns, talks and moves using the checklist as your guide.
- Step 3:** Check mark the milestones your child has reached. Circle the ones your child is still working on.
- Step 4:** Write down any questions you have.
- Step 5:** Meeting with your pediatrician or child care provider? Remember to bring your checklist along, so you can talk about what you observed.

Now you're prepared to have meaningful, helpful conversations about your child's growth and needs.

Using YoungStar Is Easy

Visit youngstar.wi.gov to compare child care providers and find helpful parenting advice.

Look for the **YoungStar rating window sticker or certificate** when you're interviewing providers.

Call **1-888-713-KIDS (5437)** to get personalized help from a local child care resource and referral specialist.

Want to Learn More?

At youngstar.wi.gov, parents can watch videos, download articles and find useful information on early childhood education, nutrition and more. You can even discover activities that encourage healthy brain development.

What You Can Do

To Help Your Child Grow

Language, logic, fine motor skills, even happiness. They all start with a healthy young brain. And that starts with you. Playing, talking and reading with your child can make a big difference. Add a healthy diet and a safe, nurturing environment—at home and away from home—and you've set the stage for lifelong success. Visit youngstar.wi.gov to learn more.

If You're Concerned

Children develop at their own pace; some early, some late. But you know your child best. So if your child's progress seems to slow down; if there is a loss of skills or you sense something's wrong with the way your child plays, learns, moves or communicates: don't wait. Talk to your pediatrician right away.