



Warning Signs for Early Childhood Development



Early Childhood Development is the way that we expect children to develop across a range of areas during the early years of their life. Development during these early years is important for healthy mental and physical participation and learning at home, in school, in the community, and in relationships, through the early years and impacting in the school years and into adulthood. When infants and toddlers are delayed in achieving certain developmental milestones, there can be significant impacts on their ability to achieve learning outcomes at school and build healthy and meaningful relationships.

Areas of Early Childhood Development:

Speech: Making sounds and sound patterns that enable people to communicate with spoken words.

Language: Sharing thoughts, ideas, needs, and wants using vocabulary, grammar, and context. Language also includes understanding messages being shared with us.

Interacting with others: Expressing and understanding emotions and interacting appropriately with others around us.

Gross Motor: Moving the whole body to roll over, crawl, walk, sit, or run and join in activities such as playing sport.

Fine Motor: Moving the small muscles such as those in fingers, toes, lips, and tongue, to pick up small objects, button a shirt, or hold a spoon.

If by 18 months of age, your child does not:				
Speech:	Language:	Interacting with Others:	Fine Motor:	Gross Motor:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repeat a syllable to create a string of sounds (e.g. babababa) - Produce five different consonant sounds (e.g. p, b, d, m, n, k) - Produce vowels (a, e, i, o, u) - Produce one syllable words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use 6 to 20 words - Name simple body parts (e.g. 'tummy, nose, mouth') - Copy words and noises - Understand around 50 words - Point to familiar objects - Follow one-step instructions (e.g. 'stand up', 'give it to me') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make eye contact - Turn head towards noise - Respond to their name - Smile/show enjoyment by use of facial expressions (e.g. smiling when being tickled) - Tell the difference between family and strangers - Imitate actions of family - Play peekaboo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring spoon to mouth - Hold and drink from cup independently - Hold pencil with fist or between thumb and first two fingers - Communicate with physical gestures (e.g. pointing) - Paint with fingers or brushes - Control wrist movements (e.g. turning door handles) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sit and crawl independently - Move from squat to stand without help - Seat self on chair - Walk independently with stability - Kneel upright without support 

If by 3 years of age, your child does not:

Speech:	Language:	Interacting with Others:	Fine Motor:	Gross Motor:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce more than 6 consonant sounds (e.g. p, b, d, t, m, k, n) - Produce all vowels (e.g. a, e, i, o, u) - Use tone correctly - Almost always produce the first sound in the word - Be understood most of the time by family and friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a range of nouns (e.g. spoon); verbs (e.g. run); adjectives (e.g. yellow, big); prepositions (e.g. in) - Regularly use small sentences with 2-3 words together - Learn new words easily - Ask questions - Understand combination of 'noun-verb' and 'noun-verb-adjective' - Follow simple 2-part instructions (e.g. come sit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notice someone new - Show interest in and enjoy playing with toys - Take turns with others during play - Show interest in other children (i.e. notice/look) - Show interest in playing with other children and begin to attempt interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve in holding and using crayons and pencils- using thumbs and fingers, not fists - Eat without assistance and enjoy engaging in family meals - Uses one hand consistently in most activities - Dress self with supervision (e.g. managing large buttons) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk and run independently - Throw and catch a big ball - Use a tricycle - Use their whole body to kick a ball with force - Sit in a chair during meal times - Balance on one foot for a few seconds 

Do not 'wait and see', contact a Speech and Language Therapist if you have concerns about your child's development.

Some children are at higher risk for developing more slowly than other children. These include children with:

- Poor nutrition (decreased intake of a range of healthy foods)
- Limited exposure to a language rich environment
- Hearing difficulties
- Learning, emotional and/or physical delays and/or difficulties
- Poor sleep routines (not getting enough sleep for their age)

Further information and location of speech pathologists can be found at:

<http://trinhfoundation.org/our-resources/locations/>



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This resource was developed by students from the University of Newcastle Speech Pathology program, in coordination with the Speech Therapy team at Da Nang University of Medical Technology and Pharmacy and Trinh Foundation Australia.



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