



Development Stages

Age Range

What they do

What they need

Birth to 3 months

At this age, children begin to smile, track people and objects with eyes, prefer faces and bright colors, reach, discover hands and feet, lift head and turn toward sound, and cry, but are often soothed when held.

Protection from physical danger, adequate nutrition, adequate health care, (immunization, oral rehydration therapy, hygiene), motor and sensory stimulation, appropriate language stimulation, responsive, sensitive parenting.

4 to 6 months

At this age, children smile often, prefer parents and older siblings, repeat actions with interesting results, listen intently, respond when spoken to, laugh, gurgle, imitate sounds, explore hands and feet, put objects in mouth, sit when propped, roll over, scoot, bounce, grasp objects without using thumb.

Protection from physical danger, adequate nutrition, adequate health care, (immunization, oral rehydration therapy, hygiene), motor and sensory stimulation, appropriate language stimulation, responsive, sensitive parenting.

7 to 12 months

At this age, children remember simple events, identify themselves, body parts, familiar voices, understand own name, other common words, say first meaningful words, explore, bang, shake objects, find hidden objects, put objects in containers, sit alone, creep, pull themselves up to stand, walk, may seem shy or upset with strangers.

Protection from physical danger, adequate nutrition, adequate health care, (immunization, oral rehydration therapy, hygiene), motor and sensory stimulation, appropriate language stimulation, responsive, sensitive parenting.

1 to 2 years

At this age, children imitate adult actions, speak and understand words and ideas, enjoy stories and experimenting with objects, walk steadily, climb stairs, run, assert independence, but prefer familiar people, recognize ownership of objects, develop friendships, solve problems, show pride in accomplishments, like to help with tasks, begin pretend play.

In addition to needs from previous years, children at this age require support in the following: acquiring motor, language, and thinking skills, developing independence, learning self-control, opportunities for play and exploration, play with other children. Health care must also include deworming.

2 to 3 1/2 years

At this age, children enjoy learning new skills, learn language rapidly, are always on the go, gain control of hands and fingers, are easily frustrated, act more independent, but still dependent, act out familiar scenes.

In addition to needs from previous years, children at this age require opportunities to do the following: make choices, engage in dramatic play, read increasingly complex books, sing favorite songs, work simple puzzles.

3 1/2 to 5 years

At this age, children have a longer attention span, act silly & boisterous, may use shocking language, talk a lot, ask many questions, want real adult things, keep art projects, test physical skills and courage with caution, reveal feeling in dramatic play, like to play with friends, do not like to lose, share and take turns sometimes.

In addition to needs from previous years, children at this age require opportunities to do the following: develop fine motor skills, continue expanding language skills by talking, reading, and singing, learn cooperation by helping and sharing, experiment with pre-writing and pre-reading skills.

5 to 8 years

At this age, children grow curious about people and how the world works, show an increasing interest in numbers, letters, reading and writing, become more and more interested in final products, gain more confidence in physical skills, use words to express feeling and to cope, like grown-up activities, become more outgoing, play cooperatively.

In addition to needs from previous years, children at this age require opportunities to do the following: develop numeracy and reading skills, engage in problem-solving, practice teamwork, develop sense of personal competency, practice questioning and observing, acquire basic life skills, attend basic education.