

# Normal development in children

It is interesting to compare the growth and development of your child with the age at which the average child reaches a specific stage, called a milestone. The following guidelines represent an average age that these milestones are usually reached.

## Interesting facts

Vision is present at birth and matures gradually to adult vision at about 12 months.

Hearing is present at birth; if not, the first 12 months are critical to correct it.

## Normal development in children

Milestone	Age
Lifts chin up	4 weeks
Notices sudden constant sounds (e.g. vacuum cleaner)	4 to 5 weeks
Social smile	6 weeks
Smiles readily	2 months
Vocalises when talked to	2 months
Follows moving person with eyes	2 months
Laughs	3 months
Coos	3 months
Recognises mother	3 months
Responds to loud noise	3 months
Squeals in delight	3 months
Grasps and plays with rattle	3 to 4 months
Turns to voice	3 to 4 months
Lifts head	3 to 4 months
Rolls over (prone to supine)	4 months
Sits with support	4 to 6 months
Rolls (supine to prone)	5 months
Reaches and grasps	5 to 6 months
Transfers objects from hand to hand	5 to 8 months
Turns towards soft sound	6 months
No head lag when pulled up to sit	6 months
Turns instantly to voices across room	6 to 7 months
Feeds self biscuit/rusk	6 to 8 months
Laughs, squeals and chuckles	6 to 8 months
Sits without support	6 to 9 months
Babbles	6 to 9 months
Stands holding on	6 to 10 months
Crawls	7 to 9 months
Plays 'peek-a-boo'	8 to 9 months
Says mama/dada (inappropriate)	8 to 9 months
Anxious with strangers	8 to 9 months
Waves goodbye	8 to 12 months
Pulls up to stand	9 to 10 months
Understands 'no'	9 to 10 months
Cruises	10 to 11 months
Finger feeds	10 to 12 months
Walks alone or with one hand held	10 to 15 months
Says mama/dada (appropriate)	10 to 18 months
First word	11 to 12 months
Follows one-step command	12 to 14 months
Understands several words	12 to 15 months

Speaks single words	12 to 15 months
Points to parts of the body	14 to 24 months
Helps with dressing	14 to 24 months
Pulls off socks	15 to 20 months
Climbs stairs	15 to 20 months
Combines two words	15 to 24 months
Uses a spoon	15 to 24 months
Builds tower of 2 blocks	16 to 18 months
Points to animal pictures	20 to 24 months
Uses a fork	21 to 24 months
Scribbles spontaneously	24 to 26 months
Builds tower of 4 blocks	24 to 26 months
Kicks ball forward	24 to 26 months
Pretend play	24 to 26 months
Runs well	24 to 30 months
Buttons up	24 to 30 months
Speech all understandable	26 to 30 months
Walks up stairs: alternate feet	30 months
Names one colour	30 months
Unbuttons	30 months
Rides tricycle	2½ to 3 years
Bowel control	2 to 4 years
Bladder control	2 to 4 years
Names four colours	3½ to 4 years
Gives first and last names	4 years
Draws person with three parts	4 years
Ties shoelaces	5 years
Dresses without supervision	5 years
Strings sentences together	5 years
Fluent speech	5 years
Can skip	5 years

A good sign of healthy development is a child who is alert, is interested in objects, relates well to others and is explorative. If your child does not appear to reach these milestones at the listed age there may be no reason to be unduly concerned, as every individual is different and there is a large variation in reaching milestones. If you have any concerns speak to your doctor or infant welfare nurse.



The normal child can sit without support from 6 to 9 months (average 8 months).