

### Milestones

Milestones are the markers of time in which your child should achieve certain skills. These skills build upon themselves to help your child advance into more complex abilities, such as rolling over, then sitting up, then crawling, and then walking. The four developmental areas we will look at are Cognitive, Language and Communication, Social and Emotional, and Physical.

### Cognitive Development

At two, a toddler is just trying to understand how the world works—like where food comes from or when something typically occurs in their day. They also understand more complicated concepts of time, such as 'soon or later.' They will also have a simple understanding of cause and effect, such as knowing that putting food on the floor may get it eaten by the dog. As they move closer to age three, they might mix up coincidence with cause, such as thinking that the sun goes down because it's tired, or that Dad caused it to rain because he took his umbrella to work.

### Language and Communication Development

By now, your child has a good understanding of language and comprehends a lot more than they can speak. Experts believe that a two-year-old has a vocabulary of about 50 words. By three-years-old, your child will know about 200!

### Social and Emotional Development

Your child's personality is really emerging! By watching you and your family interact with each other, they are beginning to understand concepts like love, trust, kindness, and empathy. Your love and great care for them has taught them to feel secure. Their separation anxiety should be getting less, and they'll begin feeling more comfortable going to others. They're also likely enjoying playing alongside other children.

### Physical Development

Another big area of change as your child cruises through their second year is their ability to move and get around! They are running and climbing and are much more coordinated. They can climb up and down stairs on their own, one big step at a time, but will soon master stairs like a pro! They can stand on their toes, and will begin balancing on one foot for a second. While your busy two-year-old is giving their big muscle movements a workout, they are also working on their fine motor skills. While learning to catch with outstretched arms, they are also learning to coordinate hands and eyes to throw a ball to you. Those agile little fingers can also imitate circular and vertical strokes and pull zippers and snaps with little help from you.

### Potty Training

Usually around age two, you can begin potty training. If you feel your child is ready, then you are going to need time and patience to make it happen. Check out other resources that will guide you through this process. Some signs that your child may be ready are: they'll warn you if they need to pee or poo, they complain about their diaper, they are able to pull their pants down or off and put them back on, and finally they are curious about the potty and willing to sit on it.

### Cognitive Milestones

- Is more independent
- Is able to sort shapes and colors
- Knows their first name, age, and gender
- Understands routines

### Physical Milestones

- Climbs, jumps, runs
- May catch a ball/throw a ball
- Walks up and down stairs, holding on
- Copies circular and vertical strokes
- Manages some buttons, zippers, lids
- Makes a tower of six blocks

### When to Call Your Medical Provider

Remember that kids are unique and achieve their milestones each at their own pace. But if your child hasn't hit the following milestones, then you should call your medical provider:

- Doesn't speak
- Doesn't follow simple directions
- Doesn't engage in pretend play
- Doesn't jump or climb
- Has severe separation anxiety
- Can't make strokes with a crayon or a pencil
- Has lost skills they once had
- Shows weakness on one side of their body

Of course, if you are concerned for any reason about your child's development, then call your medical provider.

#### Resources:

1. Kliegman, Robert M. Nelson Textbook of Pediatrics - Volume 2. Saunders, 2015. Accessed 6/4/2020
2. Zitelli, Basil J., et al. Zitelli and Davis' Atlas of Pediatric Physical Diagnosis. Elsevier, 2018. Accessed 6/4/2020
3. "When to Switch a Toddler from Crib to Bed." Sleep.org, Sleep.org, 17 Mar. 2021, [sleep.org/articles/moving-toddler-crib-to-bed/](https://www.sleep.org/articles/moving-toddler-crib-to-bed/). Accessed 12/17/2021

### Social/Emotional Milestones

- Engages in pretend play
- Plays independently alongside other children
- Shows feelings for others and understands relationships
- Expresses feelings, sometimes in tantrums
- Understands right from wrong in simple situations

### Language/Communication Milestones

- Uses words and sentences to communicate
- Knows about 200 words
- Makes a sentence of two to three words
- Understands possessive and progressive actions, such as "my ball"; "I playing"
- Understands spatial words (in, on, under)