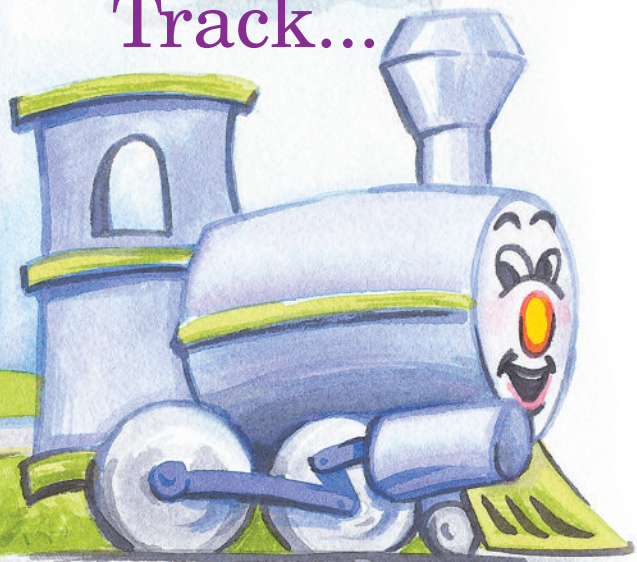


Staying On  
Track...



12 to 15  
months

15 to  
18 months

2  
years

3  
years

4  
years



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#### Most Toddlers 12–15 months old ...

- begin walking with help
- say “dada” and “mama” and a few other words
- like social games like pat-a-cake and peek-a-boo
- go to a familiar adult for affection, help, or comfort
- feed self cracker or other finger foods
- look when you call them by name
- repeat actions that produce laughter and attention

Go new places together. For your young toddler, this is a thrilling adventure with opportunities to make new discoveries. Talk about and describe the things you see and hear around you.

Your child’s intonations, pointing, and gestures let you know she wants to talk, to tell you something. Try to figure out the message she is communicating and show your interest and excitement.

Do it again—and again—and again. Toddlers love repetition. Repeat favorite songs, rhymes, and stories.

#### Most Toddlers 15–18 months old ...

- take off their own shoes, socks and easy-to-remove clothing
- walk alone or with very little help
- point to things when named
- ask for simple things like “cookie” and “milk”
- want individual attention and say “mine” often
- listen to simple short stories, songs and rhymes
- pull at another person to show them some action or object
- greet peers and familiar adults when reminded

Let your child experiment with water, sand, and bubbles—give your child non-breakable spoons, cups, and bowls for pouring, filling, emptying, splashing!

Allow lots of time when going places. Your child is very curious about the people and things he sees: the mail carrier, gum wrappers, bugs, trucks, plants.

Every day your child is learning more words and can do more things. Most toddlers will enjoy imitating your actions—dancing to music, making motions to finger plays, pretending to eat food. Your child may also like imitating your speech—words from simple nursery rhymes, and sounds toys and animals make.

#### Most 2 year olds ...

- combine two words together: “more milk” “daddy home”
- use their own names to talk about themselves
- turn the pages of a book
- walk, run, jump, and throw a ball
- like doing things their own way and say “no” often
- pretend (feeding dolls or animals, talking on a play telephone)
- know the function of common household objects (toothbrush, fork, telephone)
- enjoy playing alongside other children but may not share their toys
- show their feelings through actions and vocalizations (love, mad, sad, joy)

When talking with your child remember to label your feelings as they occur. Label their feelings for them as they express them.

When taking walks or playing in the park, your child will enjoy walking or climbing on things. Hold their hand—you are giving your child the courage to try new things!

Let your child know you are listening even though you may not be able to do what she wants. “I know you’re having fun and want to stay and play, but we need to go home now.” Your child will learn that you care about her feelings and desires and that they are important.

#### Most 3 year olds ...

- follow two simple requests (get the book and put it on the table)
- can be understood by family members and caregivers
- use objects symbolically (using a banana for a phone, or a block for a car)
- climb stairs, but may hold onto the railing
- talk about feelings and tell pretend stories
- use the bathroom during the day
- know the difference between ‘boy’ and ‘girl’
- begin to share toys and play with other children
- greet familiar adults without reminders
- want to please others
- show affection for younger children

Children love to imitate their parents’ daily activities, like folding clothes, washing dishes, washing the car. They may not be able to do these things well but letting children ‘help’ makes them feel important!

Give three year olds opportunities to make choices. “Do you want to color or play ball?” “What do you want to put on first, your socks or your shirt?”

You can also help your child make choices about positive behavior. “If you want to play with your toys in the water, you need to go outside or to the kitchen sink.” Making decisions helps your child feel good, gain self-confidence and become successful at solving problems.

#### Most 4 year olds ...

- can hop on one foot, can catch a ball
- enjoy singing simple songs and saying nursery rhymes
- use crayons to draw on paper
- are understood by most people they talk with
- like pretend play but may not always know the difference between ‘real’ and ‘pretend’
- show concern and sympathy
- begin to express own feelings (mad, happy, etc.) in words

Gather old clothes, jewelry, hats and assorted ‘junk’ in a special box. Your child will enjoy trying out different roles pretending to be a firefighter, teacher, doctor, dancer, mommy—especially when you join in the fun!

Your child may enjoy telling you pretend stories. Print the story on a piece of paper as your child tells it to you. Adding a picture may be fun. Hanging it up for all the family to see will make your child feel proud. Encourage other family members to ask about the special ‘picture book.’

Sometimes your child needs help, you may want to work on problems together. “Hm ... I see your toy is broken. What do you think we might do to fix it?” “Uh-oh! There’s three of us and only two cookies. What should we do?”

If you or someone who cares about your child has concerns about his or her development, early intervention services may help. You can request a free evaluation at any time to answer questions about your child’s development and determine whether your child may benefit from the early intervention supports and services offered through the Early Intervention Colorado Program.

There are local agencies known as Community Centered Boards throughout Colorado who are responsible for coordinating the local Early Intervention Colorado Program. To be connected to the Community Centered Board in your county, you can call 1-888-777-4041 or visit [www.eicolorado.org](http://www.eicolorado.org), click on the Local Early Intervention Contacts icon and choose the appropriate city, county or zip code for your family. If your child is a 3 or 4 year old, contact your local school district.



COLORADO  
Department of Human Services

1-888-777-4041  
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As Your  
Child  
Grows &  
Learns



[www.eicolorado.org](http://www.eicolorado.org)  
1-888-777-4041



## Babies are born learning

This brochure provides parents and caregivers with information about young children's learning and development from birth through 4 years old. It also suggests simple activities parents and children can do together to encourage learning at different ages.

Each child develops at his or her own pace, and there is a broad range of what is considered typical development among young children.

However, development generally occurs in a predictable sequence and children about the same age will acquire the same skills.

## If you have concerns

You know your child best, so you're likely to make the most accurate observations about your child's development. Follow your instincts. If you are worried about how your child is developing, talk with a professional. A more complete check of your infant or toddler's development (including vision and/or hearing) can be arranged for free by contacting the Community Centered Board that serves your community. You can request a free evaluation at any time to answer questions about your infant or toddler's development, and determine whether your child may benefit from the early intervention supports and services. To begin that process call (toll-free) 1-888-777-4041. If your child is a 3 or 4 year old, contact your local school district.

Children who were born prematurely, had very low birthweight, or were born with a medical condition or disability may not reach these milestones at the same age as their peers. If you have concerns contact the Community Centered Board serving your community to see what developmental supports and services may be appropriate.

## Hearing

Your baby's hearing is fully developed when she is still very young, so the earlier babies are checked for hearing the better. Babies should have a hearing screening in the hospital right after birth, and should have regular hearing checks during well-child visits to the pediatrician. Here are some general things to look for related to your baby's hearing:

### Does your child ...

- pay close attention to voices, and respond to familiar sounds?
- startle at loud or unexpected noises?
- calm and turn to you when she hears your voice?
- react to sounds around her?

## Vision

At birth, a baby's vision is pretty fuzzy, though she can make out light, shapes, and movement, and can see things that are about 8–15 inches away from her. Your baby's sight will gradually improve until at about 8 months when she will be able to see as well as most adults do. Babies should be screened for vision regularly at well-child visits, starting at birth. Here are some general things to look for related to your baby's vision:

### Does your child ...

- move both of her eyes in all directions?
- make eye contact?
- follow moving objects with her eyes?
- look at people and things without eyes crossing or squinting (after 9 months)?
- have eyes that are clear, not watery or red?



## Most Babies from Birth to 3 months old ...

- cry to show discomfort or fatigue and quiet when comforted
- use eyes to follow people and objects and gaze at caregiver
- react to sudden movements or noises
- move arms and legs easily
- smile and make gurgling and cooing sounds
- hit or kick an object to make a pleasing sight or sound continue
- lift head up while lying on their tummy

Cuddle and hold your baby so she can see your face. Bring your face close to your baby's, and gaze at one another. Attach a mirror to the crib so she can see herself.

Get close to your baby's face and copy her sounds. Respond to each sound, then wait with anticipation until she makes the next sound. You have a real dialogue going!

Your baby's day revolves around caregiving routines—diapering, dressing, eating, and sleeping. These routines offer opportunities for interaction with you. Let your baby watch your face while you talk and sing.

## Most Babies 3–6 months old ...

- reach for and grasp toys
- look toward an interesting toy or sound
- explore by banging, rattling and dropping objects
- hold head up without support
- laugh aloud in response to touches or sounds
- roll over
- make babbling sounds
- smile at familiar faces

Repeat the sounds your baby makes: “ah, ba-ba, a-goo.” You will be delighted when your baby makes more sounds more often!

When you are feeding, dressing, bathing your baby, talk about what you're doing—make it fun!

Your baby is learning what makes sounds and where sounds are coming from. Talk about what your baby hears and sees: “You heard daddy call your name.” “Did you hear the dog bark?” “Someone's at the door. Let's see who it is.”

## Most Babies 6–9 months old ...

- imitate the sounds made by parents
- sit up without support
- use sounds to get your attention
- know strangers from family
- respond to their own name
- pass objects from hand to hand

Give your baby lots of practice and freedom to exercise his hands, arms, trunk, and legs by playing on the floor in safe surroundings. Place a toy just outside of your baby's reach to encourage him to move toward it.

Introduce your baby to toys with different textures, and toys that make different noises, such as bells, music boxes, and rattles.

Encourage your baby to sleep for longer periods at night. Help him comfort himself with a pacifier, familiar music, or a special loved object.

Play hide and seek, and peek-a-boo games. They help your baby learn that people and objects disappear and return.

## Most Babies 9–12 months old ...

- follow simple requests (“Give it to me.”)
- pick up items using their thumb and index finger.
- jabber word-like sounds
- begin to use gestures to let you know what she wants and needs (wave bye-bye, shake head no, etc.)
- creep or crawl
- pull self to a standing position and may walk holding onto furniture or hands
- hug, pat, kiss familiar people

Eyes, ears, nose, tummy, toes—your child will enjoy taking turns pointing to body parts!

Cuddle up with your child while looking at picture books and family photos. Share excitement about what each of you finds interesting.

Moving around is fun for your child. Encourage his efforts to move toward toys and people. Give a big smile and clap your hands. Your child will feel proud and want to do it again!