



North Texas Therapy & Home Care

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Developmental Milestones Ages 2-5

2 years:

Development

- Climbs up steps alone, one step at a time holding the stair rail or the parent's hand.
- Jumps off the floor with both feet.
- Opens doors.
- Kicks a ball.
- Can wash and dry hands.
- Climbs on furniture.
- Uses a spoon and cup well.
- Asks frequent questions: "What is that?"
- Enjoys imitating adult activities.
- Two year olds often go through a short period of mild speech abnormalities (like stuttering).
- Selects and uses a toy appropriately (feeds a doll, hammers pegs in a cobbler's bench).
- Most 2-year-olds have a vocabulary of 50 or more words, although this number varies with the sex of the child (girls speak more than boys), if the child has older siblings (who will speak for him or her) or if two languages are spoken in the house.

A consultation may be warranted if your child:

- Cannot walk by 18 months
- Fails to develop a mature heel-toe walking pattern after several months of walking, or walks only on his toes
- Does not speak at least 15 words
- Does not use two-word sentences by age 2
- By 15 months, does not seem to know the function of common household objects (brush, telephone, bell, fork, spoon)
- Does not imitate actions or words by the end of this period
- Does not follow simple instructions by age 2
- Cannot push a wheeled toy by age 2
- Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had

3 years:

Development

- Can name pictures in a book.
- Names at least one color.
- Knows his or her own name, age and sex.
- Begins to use pronouns.
- Able to put on his or her own shirt, but will need help with shoes and buttons.
- May be able to ride a tricycle.
- Can jump in place and stand briefly on one foot.
- Can (unfortunately!) open doors.

- More than 50 percent of the child's speech is intelligible. There may be temporary episodes of stuttering during this time.
- Understands such words as "cold," "tired," "hungry." Comprehends the meaning of "on or under", and "bigger or smaller."
- Follows a 2-3 part command
- Uses 4-5 word sentences

A consultation may be warranted if your child:

- Frequently falls and has difficulty with stairs
- Persistently drools or has very unclear speech
- Cannot build a tower of more than four blocks
- Difficulty manipulating small objects
- Cannot copy a circle by age 3
- Cannot communicate in short phrases
- Has no involvement in "pretend" play
- Does not understand simple instructions
- Has little interest in other children
- Has extreme difficulty separating from mother or primary caregiver
- Has poor eye contact
- Has limited interest in toys
- Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had

4 years:

Development

- Speech is almost always understandable in 5-6 word sentences.
- Can usually count from 1 to 10.
- Can walk on tiptoes, climb a ladder and ride a tricycle.
- May name and match three or four primary colors.
- Knows his or her own name.
- Correctly uses the pronoun "I."
- Children this age recognize gender differences and will correctly say "I am a girl" or "I am a boy."
- Can dress and undress with supervision but still has trouble with laces and buttons. Children this age also begin to be selective about what they wear.
- Holds and uses a pencil with good control. Can copy a cross, circle and possibly a square.
- Can to draw a person with a face, arms and legs.
- Engages in conversational "give-and-take."
- Can sing a song.
- Talks about his or her day's activities and experiences.
- Can identify emotions such as sadness, anger, anxiety and fear.
- Enjoys the companionship of other children; plays cooperatively and shows interest in other children's bodies.

A consultation may be warranted if your child:

- Cannot throw a ball overhand
- Cannot jump in place
- Cannot ride a tricycle
- Cannot grasp a crayon between thumb and fingers
- Has difficulty scribbling
- Cannot stack four blocks

- Still clings or cries whenever parents leave
- Shows no interest in interactive games
- Ignores other children
- Doesn't respond to people outside the family
- Doesn't engage in fantasy play
- Resists dressing, sleeping, using the toilet
- Lashes out without any self-control when angry or upset
- Cannot copy a circle
- Doesn't use sentences of more than three words
- Doesn't use "me" and "you" correctly
- Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had

5 years:

Development

- Skips, can walk on tiptoes and jumps forward.
- Throws a ball overhand.
- Washes and dries hands and brushes teeth unassisted.
- Can cut and paste.
- Can name four or five colors.
- Can state his or her age.
- Can produce six to eight word sentences.
- Can tell a simple story.
- Can dress and undress without supervision.
- Knows his or her own phone number, address and several nursery rhymes.
- Can copy a triangle from a picture.
- Draws a person with a head, body, arms and legs.
- Understands right and wrong, fair and unfair.
- Understands games that have rules.
- Engages in make-believe and dress-up play, in which your child may assume a specific role ("mommy or daddy").

A consultation may be warranted if your child:

- Acts extremely fearful or timid
- Acts extremely aggressively
- Is unable to separate from parents without major protest
- Is easily distracted and unable to concentrate on any single activity for more than five minutes
- Shows little interest in playing with other children
- Refuses to respond to people in general, or responds only superficially
- Rarely uses fantasy or imitation in play
- Seems unhappy or sad much of the time
- Doesn't engage in a variety of activities
- Avoids or seems aloof with other children and adults
- Doesn't express a wide range of emotions
- Has trouble eating, sleeping, or using the toilet
- Can't tell the difference between fantasy and reality
- Seems unusually passive
- Cannot understand two-part commands using prepositions ("Put the doll on the bed, and get the ball under the couch.")

- Can't correctly give her first and last name
- Doesn't use plurals or past tense properly when speaking
- Doesn't talk about her daily activities and experiences
- Cannot build a tower of six to eight blocks
- Seems uncomfortable holding a crayon
- Has trouble taking off clothing
- Cannot brush her teeth efficiently
- Cannot wash and dry her hands
- Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had

If You Are Concerned – Act Early

If you are concerned that your child is not reaching developmental milestones at the same time as other children the same age, contact us at 972-385-0006. We will have a therapist speak with you about your concerns to determine whether or not a formal evaluation is warranted.