

Ages and Stages: Infants and Toddlers





Why Learn About Developmental Stages?

- To become the best parents we can.
- It makes a child's life easier and happier.
- To have appropriate expectations for children.
- So children can feel good about their capabilities.



Developmental Stages

- There are four things we know about child development:
 - The brain of young children is still developing.
 - Each stage has certain tasks that must be accomplished to move on to the next stage.

Developmental Stages

- The expectations we have for children determines whether childhood will be a nurturing experience.
- Children are unique and each child has individual capabilities.



Primary Areas of Development: Physical Development

- As children get older they get bigger.
- Their gross motor and fine motor skills increase.



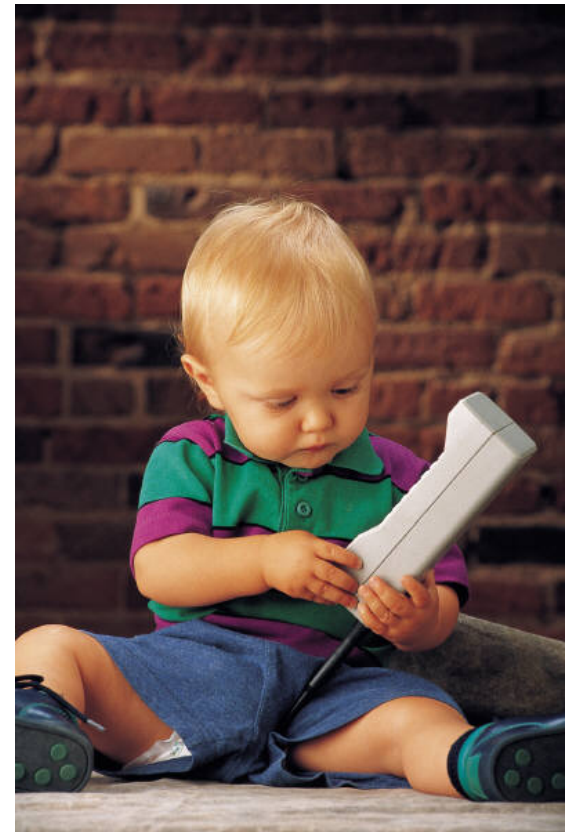
Primary Areas of Development: Intellectual Development

- Children learn more the older they get.
- Stimulation is necessary to help children's brains develop.
- Without stimulation, intellectual abilities may lag behind or fail to develop.



Primary Areas of Development: Language Development

- As children grow older, their communication skills increase.
- Their ability to use words, phrases, and sentences helps them gain mastery of their environment.





Primary Areas of Development: Social/Emotional Development

- The way we treat children and the care they receive affect the way they mature.
- The ability for children to use their physical, intellectual, and language skills depends on how well children develop socially and emotionally.



Developmental Stage: Infancy

- For years, psychologists thought that babies were incompetent.
- Today we know this is untrue.
- Very young infants can begin to make sense of their new environment.
- Infant's skills increase rapidly during the 1st year.



Developmental Stage: Infancy

- **Physical Development**

- The major part of the infant's first year is devoted to survival.
- The infant is completely helpless at birth and is totally dependent upon the parents for help.
- Being fed, held, touched, looked at, and talked to have significant impact on the growth of the child.



What Can Babies Do?

Physical Development

0-6 months

- Automatic reflexes such as hand-to-mouth.
- Focus on objects 8-15 inches away.
- Make cooing, crying, and grunting sounds.
- Will lift head when on stomach.
- Suck fingers.
- May be pulled slowly by hands to a sitting position.
- May be starting to teethe.

7-12 months

- Sit up without support for a short time.
- Begin to crawl by pulling self forward.
- **Can pull self up to stand.**
- **Feed self pieces of food with hands.**
- **Start practicing walking but continues crawling.**
- **Begin a tottering walk with legs wide apart.**
- **Sit independently on hard surface.**



Developmental Stage: Infancy

- **Intellectual Development**
 - Physical and intellectual development are closely related to one another.
 - The child learns about the world through exploration of objects, by moving around, and through interactions with the parents.
 - The behavior of infants during the first year helps them understand, adapt, and interact effectively with their world.



What Can Babies Do?

Intellectual Development

0-6 months

- Cries to have needs met.
- Recognizes familiar voices or faces.
- Responds to strangers by crying or staring.
- Follows moving objects with eyes.
- Likes repetition of simple acts like opening and closing hands.
- Baby still cries but also laughs out loud.

7-12 months

- Can imitate sounds; watches your mouth with interest when talking.
- Child repeats an act to observe change in the environment.
- Responds to and imitates facial expressions of others.
- Child uses responses to solve problems and to achieve some goal.



Developmental Stage: Infancy

- **Language Development**

- Language develops slowly during the first year of life.
- An adult's vocabulary is largely determined by the speech they heard in the first three years of life.
- The first two years are the most important.
- Parents who talk and respond to their babies help facilitate language development.

What Can Babies Do?

Language Development

0-12 months

- Respond to speech by looking at speaker.
- Make crying and non crying sounds.
- Babble by repeating some vowel and consonant sounds.
- Attempt to imitate sounds.
- Begin to understand simple words or phrases such as “No, Come, Bring.”



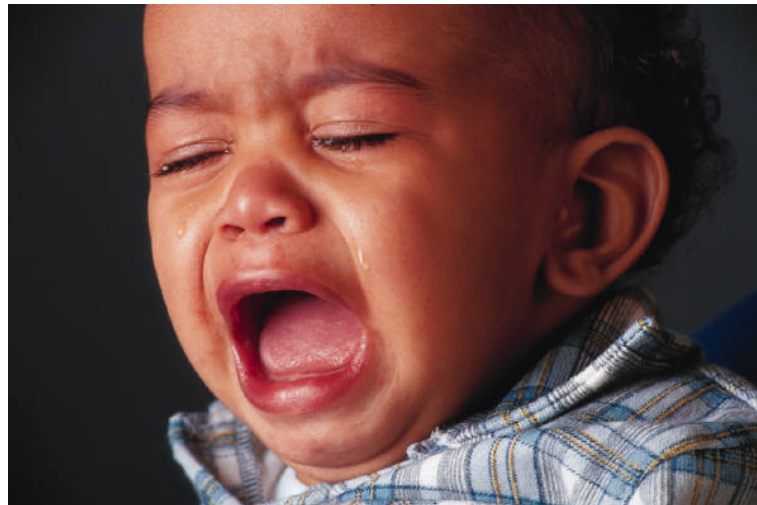
Developmental Stage: Infancy

- **Social and Emotional Development**
 - The infant struggles with learning to trust or mistrust himself and others in his environment.
 - The degree to which a child develops trust depends on the quality of care the child receives.



Developmental Stage: Infancy

- The child whose needs are met develops a belief that the world is a safe place, and that people are dependable and helpful.
- When children who do not have their needs met, they develop mistrust.





What Can Babies Do?

Social/Emotional Development

0-6 months

- Likes high-pitched voices and will usually quiet down when they hear them.
- Smiles spontaneously.
- Loves to be played with and likes to be picked up.
- Responds differently to strangers than to familiar persons.
- May give joyful kicks and gurgle and laugh to engage parent in play.

7-12 months

- May become attached to a particular toy.
- Beginning to learn to be independent. May go away from you, but will quickly return.
- Will express frustration for failure to master a task.
- Loves an audience and will repeat any behavior that gets attention.
- Tantrums may occur.

Developmental Stage: Toddler

- Life with toddlers is rarely dull. Their new abilities make them both exciting and frustrating for parents.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

- **Physical Development**
 - Although growth in the second and third years is slower than infancy, it still occurs at a rapid pace.





What Can Toddlers Do?

Gross Motor Skills

12-24 months

- Can usually walk backward.
- Loves to carry things, especially big things.
- Likes to push or pull toys
- Loves to throw things.
- Seats self in child's chair.
- Moves to music.

25-36 months

- Runs, jumps, climbs.
- Stands on chair, walks upstairs, crawls downstairs backward.
- Kicks at ball, loves pounding, tugging, lugging, and dumping.
- Climbs small ladder.
- Walks on tiptoes.
- Stands on one foot with aid.



What Can A Toddler Do?

Fine Motor Skills

12-24 months

- Combines use of several objects.
- Begins to use spoon to eat; can drink from a cup.
- Turns several pages at a time.
- Make a straight stroke with pencil or crayons instead of just a scribble.
- Turn a door knob.
- Build a tower of many blocks.

25-36 months

- Turns single pages.
- Drinks from a cup without help.
- Removes shoes, pants, socks, sweater, unzips large zipper.
- Snips with scissors.
- Holds crayons with thumb and fingers instead of fists.
- Paints with wrist action.
- Uses one hand consistently in most activities.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

- **Intellectual Development**
 - Increased exploration leads to activities that expand the child's understanding of the world.
 - Toddlers begin to understand that each object has an individual use.
 - Such understanding leads to exploration of these objects and how they work.
 - Toddlers at this stage have been referred to as "little scientists."



What Can A Toddler Do?

Intellectual Development

12-24 months

- Curious about textures.
- Imitates the actions and words of adults.
- Attracted to water and to toilets and enjoy playing in the bathroom.
- Recognizes difference between the concept of you and me.
- Has limited attention span; accomplishes primary learning through exploration of the environment.

25-36 months

- Responds to simple directions such as, “Give me the block,” or “Get your shoes.”
- Recognizes self in mirror; can talk briefly about what he is doing.
- Has limited sense of time; vaguely knows idea of past and future and knows such terms as “yesterday” and “tonight,” although they may be used incorrectly.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

- **Language Development**

- Babies begin to produce a few basic words at about one year of life.
- By 24 months, most children are speaking phrases and have a wide range of words.
- A two year old has a vocabulary of perhaps 50 words, which increases to about 900 words by the time the child is three.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

- Many factors contribute to the development of language in a child:
 - A strong, emotional relationship with the parents.
 - The amount and quality of time spent together.
 - The amount of talking, asking questions, and responding to what the child says.

What Can Toddlers Do?

Language Development

12-36 months

- Says first meaningful words.
- Uses single word plus a gesture.
- Refers to self by name; uses “my” or “mine” to indicate possession.
- Likes to talk to self; replaces baby talk with sentences; likes to repeat words.
- Joins words together in two-word phrases.
- Asks “what” and “where” questions.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

- **Social/Emotional Development**
 - Parents of toddlers have an challenging job.
 - The child continues to be dependent, but at the same time is developing into an independent person.





Developmental Stage: Toddler

- The second and third years of a child's life focus on the emergence of autonomy.
- This autonomy is built upon the child's new motor and mental abilities. The child takes pride in his new accomplishments and wants to do everything himself.
- It is important during this stage to allow the child to express autonomy.



What Can Toddlers Do?

Language Development

12-36 months

- Toddler likes to say the word “no” to express autonomy.
- Toddler wants to do things by himself, such as eat or dress.
- Begins to show interest in using the toilet like adults.
- Likes to play near other children even though they may not play together.
- Likes to play dress-up to imitate parent’s behavior.
- May want to hold a favorite toy or blanket or suck thumb to comfort self.
- May have an imaginary friend.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

Special Problems

- **Separation From Parents**
 - Crying at separation is normal.
 - Throwing temper tantrums at separation is a sign of possible problems.
 - Children feel fear that can turn into panic during actual separation.
 - Feelings of security need to be developed, and assurances that the parent will not abandon the child need to be expressed.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

Special Problems

- Sometimes children are comforted by having a picture of the parent or an item belonging to the parent to hold until the parent returns.
- Some children may comfort themselves with a favorite blanket, toy, or their thumb.
- Never threaten to leave a child as a form of discipline.
- Be sure to say goodbye to your child before you leave.
- Do not “sneak out” to avoid upsetting the child. This only makes the child fearful.

Developmental Stage: Toddler

Special Problems

- **Assertiveness**

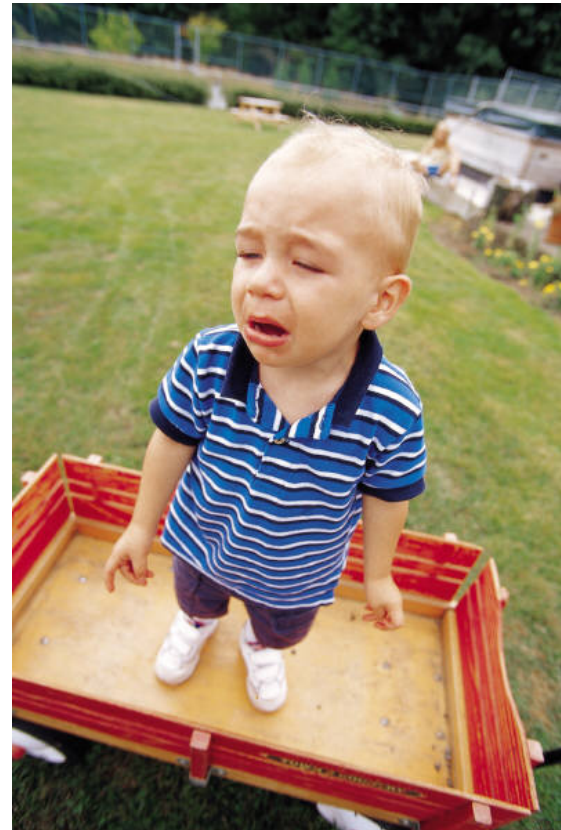
- As the toddler becomes independent, the child will become more assertive.
- “No” becomes a common word. “I want,” “I need,” and “More” are other phrases and words frequently expressed in the toddler years.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

Special Problems

- Toddlers may feel frustrated and angry when he or she cannot accomplish a goal.
- When parents set limits, toddlers may express their anger by yelling, crying, having a temper tantrum, holding their breath, or throwing objects.





How To Handle Challenging Behaviors

- Ignore undesirable behavior that is harmless.
- Praise desirable behavior.
- Use time-out or loss of a privilege for undesirable behavior that cannot be ignored.
- As children become more capable and competent at achieving their goals, the tantrums will decrease.



Developmental Stage: Toddler

- Parents need to help a child explore and grow during this stage.
 - Provide a safe environment for the child to explore.
 - Provide a creative environment for the child to explore.
 - Be involved in the child's exploration.