

# DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

All children are unique and develop different skills at different speeds, but most children follow a similar developmental trajectory. We have listed a range of skills that should be attained by a particular age. If your child is missing a few, it is worth having a discussion with an Occupational Therapist or Speech and Language Therapist. Early intervention in a caring environment will help your child bridge the developmental gap and feel more comfortable among their peers.

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication Skills are crucial for children to express themselves and understand the world around them. Vocabulary is just one important piece of the puzzle. Understanding all the tricky rules of communication such as the tone of voice, facial expressions and how to communicate with friends are also important for living in a social world.

## FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Fine Motor Skills should really be called 'things I can do with my hands'. Examples include fastening buttons, using cutlery, tying shoe laces and writing, using scissors and playing with Lego.

## GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

Gross Motor Skills should really be called 'things I can do with the big muscles in my body'. Examples including; running, hopping, skipping, kicking a ball, climbing a tree and sitting at a table.

## PLAY SKILLS

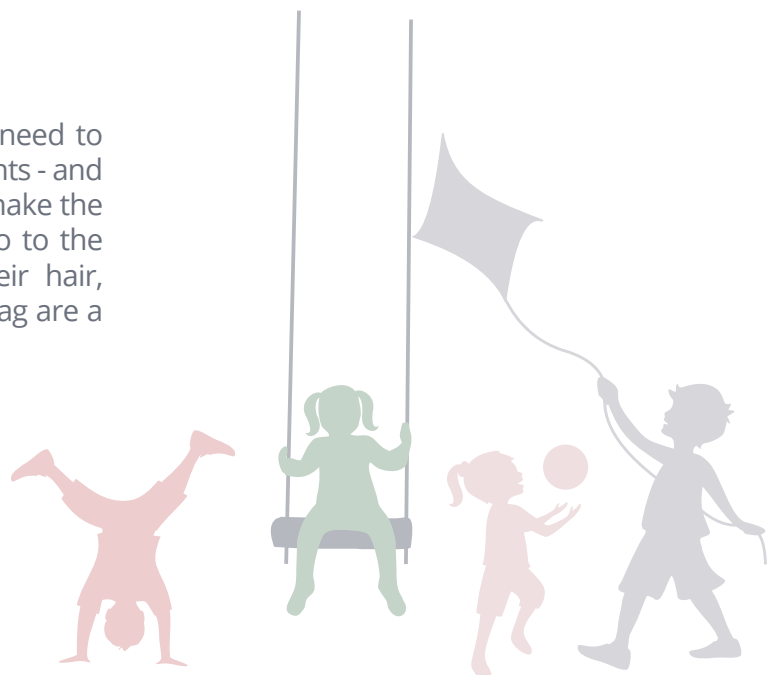
Play Skills are the dynamic activities that can bring your child joy, promote social skills, facilitate learning and improve motor skills. These can be unstructured or organised, independent or with others. While there is no universally accepted definition of play, allied health professionals agree that play skills are important for the well-being of children and can usually spot when children experience difficulties in this area.

## INDEPENDENCE SKILLS

Independence skills are those skills that children need to achieve to lead an independent life from their parents - and importantly, they are also the daily tasks that will make the life of a parent a whole lot easier. Learning to go to the toilet, feeding themselves, dressing, washing their hair, pouring a glass of water and unpacking a school bag are a few examples.

## SELF-REPRESENTATION

Self-Representation is the child's awareness of self.



## BY 6 YEARS OF AGE

### **FINE MOTOR SKILLS** (USING THEIR HANDS)

- ▶ Cuts out more complex shapes such as a flower or car
- ▶ Copies a triangle
- ▶ Colours within lines
- ▶ Uses a tripod or quadruped pencil grasp and uses fingers to generate movement
- ▶ Pastes and glues appropriately
- ▶ Can draw basic pictures
- ▶ Connects two dots with a straight line ▶ Ties a knot

### **GROSS MOTOR SKILLS** (USING THEIR LARGE MUSCLES)

- ▶ Stands on one foot for up to 5-10 seconds
- ▶ Kicks a ball forward
- ▶ Throws a ball overarm
- ▶ Catches a ball that has been bounced
- ▶ Runs around obstacles
- ▶ Able to walk on a line
- ▶ Able to hop on one foot 5-10 times
- ▶ Jumps over an object and lands with both feet together
- ▶ Can ride a two wheel bicycle with/without training wheels
- ▶ Bounces and catches a tennis ball
- ▶ Catches a medium sized ball in their hands, not trapping it against their body
- ▶ Can hold prone extension (superman) for 63-77 seconds
- ▶ Can hold supine flexion (curling up into a ball) for 46 seconds

### **SOCIAL SKILLS**

- ▶ Is developing the ability to see another person's view

### **SELF-REPRESENTATION**

- ▶ Sees themselves positively and overestimates their abilities.
- ▶ Can describe what they are good and bad at 'I'm good at running but bad at reading'
- ▶ Wants to and derives pleasure from making their parents/caregivers proud
- ▶ Understand that others have a viewpoint about them.
- ▶ Emotions such as shame and doubt are apparent
- ▶ A child can feel 'bad' about their behaviour
- ▶ Some confusion of fantasy/imagined and real worlds e.g. Santa Claus and Tooth Fairy
- ▶ Inhibition of thoughts starts ▶ Mistrust or being wary of situations

### **PLAY SKILLS**

- ▶ Able to cooperate with others for extended periods of play
- ▶ Plays with others with shared aims within the play
- ▶ Negotiating during play occurs
- ▶ Play can involve making up their own rules
- ▶ Engaging in play which can include themes never personally experienced: having surgery, going to space

### **INDEPENDENCE SKILLS**

- ▶ Can use chopsticks
- ▶ Showers/baths independently but will need help washing hair
- ▶ Dresses independently
- ▶ Can remember the morning routine at home/school
- ▶ Packs school bag
- ▶ Sets the table/takes plates away after a meal

### **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

#### **UNDERSTANDING**

- ▶ Follows the meaning of other's conversation
- ▶ Follows 3-4 multi-step directions/instructions
- ▶ Understands the meaning of a greater number of words
- ▶ Understands 'cause and effect' sentences e.g. it rains, I'll get wet

#### **SPEAKING**

- ▶ Vocabulary of 3000-5000 words
- ▶ Uses more complex sentences
- ▶ Uses imaginative language
- ▶ Describes several attributes of an object
- ▶ Uses past tense: ate, kicked, fell
- ▶ Uses & understands time language: yesterday, tomorrow, morning
- ▶ Uses How and Where questions
- ▶ Produces most constants but 'r' and 'th' may not be established.
- ▶ Uses 'because' ▶ Starts using plurals

### **SEEK HELP IF:**

- ▶ Has speech fluency or stammering issues
- ▶ Play is immature or basic compared to other children their same age
- ▶ Finds it difficult to play independently
- ▶ Play is simple and repetitive: lines up cars
- ▶ Doesn't understand 'social rules'
- ▶ Has obsessions e.g. cars, movies, natural disasters
- ▶ Is not able to go to the toilet independently
- ▶ Falls over or movements appear awkward ▶ Frequent meltdowns or tantrums
- ▶ Can't remain focused on an activity for 5 minutes
- ▶ Struggles using their hands for simple activities such as drawing or using a spoon
- ▶ Holds pencil & scissors awkwardly
- ▶ Can't write their name ▶ Has difficulty reading ▶ Has difficulty writing
- ▶ Displays self-stimulating behaviours such as flapping hands, spinning, clapping
- ▶ Copies movie, tv shows, public announcements repetitively
- ▶ Can't sit still, even for brief periods



## Checklist: By 6 Years of Age

### DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Place a tick in the YES or NO column if your child can independently complete this task (no assistance). If they have only partially acquired the skill, please answer NO. Add up all the 'YES' and enter it in the total score.

SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Communication: Understanding</b>		
1. Follows multi step 3-4 directions/instructions		
2. Understands cause and effect e.g. if it rains, I'll get wet		
3. Follows the meaning of others conversation		
<b>Communication: Speaking</b>		
4. Vocabulary is 3000-5000 words		
5. Uses and understands time language: yesterday, tomorrow, morning		
6. Uses 'how' & 'where' questions		
7. Uses imaginative and more complex language		

SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Fine Motor</b>		
8. Cuts out complex shapes like a flower or car		
9. Ties a knot		
10. Copies a triangle		
11. Cuts out complex shapes like a flower or car		
12. Holds pencil with a tripod grasp and movement is generated from the fingers not the arm and shoulder.		



SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Gross Motor</b>		
13. Stands on one foot for 5-10 seconds		
14. Able to hop on one foot 5-10 times		
15. Jumps over an object and lands with both feet together		
16. Bounces and catches a tennis ball		
17. Catches a medium sized ball in their hands, not trapping it against their body.		
18. Can hold prone extension (superman) for 63-77 seconds		

SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Play</b>		
19. Able to cooperate with other children for extended periods of play		
20. Negotiates during play		
21. Engages in play which includes themes they have never personally experienced: going into space, having surgery.		



SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Independence Skills</b>		
22. Dresses independently		
23. Remembers the morning routine at school/home		
24. Showers/baths independently		

TOTAL SCORE	
YES	
NO	

Scores:
20-24: No intervention required
16-19: Monitor
15 or below: Seek Advice from an Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Early Years Teacher or Doctor.



## Talk to Us

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