

# 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

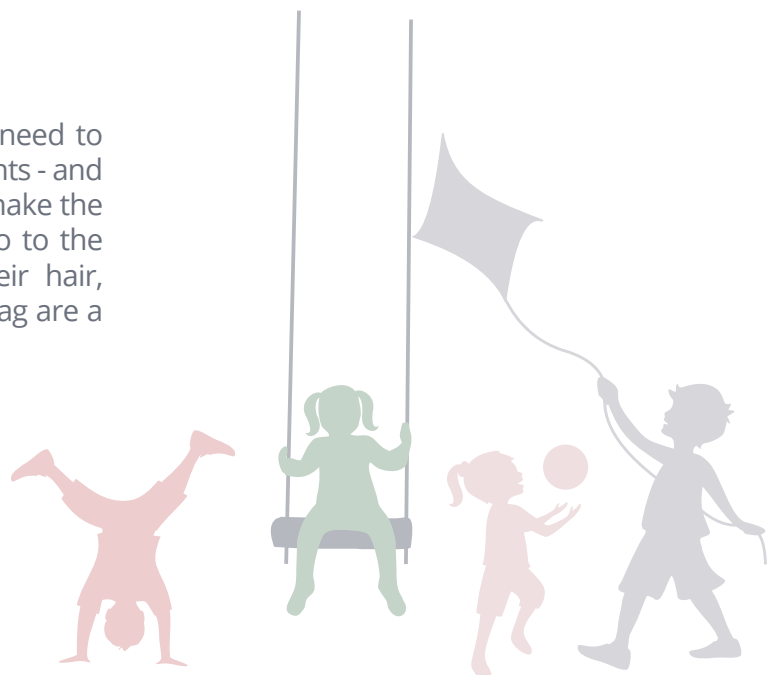
Play Skills are the dynamic activities that can bring your child joy, promote social skills, facilitate learning and improve motor skills. These can be unstructured or organised, independent or with others. While there is no universally accepted definition of play, allied health professionals agree that 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 7 YEARS OF AGE

### FINE MOTOR SKILLS (USING THEIR HANDS)

- Basic fine motor skills have been acquired and movements are more refined, fast and skilful
- Forms most letters and numbers correctly
- Writes consistently on the lines
- Demonstrates controlled pencil movements
- Good endurance for writing
- Can use scissors to cut out complex shapes
- Can build Lego, and other blocks independently

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

- Rides a two wheel bicycle without training wheels
- Jumps and lands using a combination of 1 or 2 foot take off and landings depending on the action
- Can throw a ball both overhand and underhand with appropriate force and direction
- Strikes objects using an object such as a tennis racquet, hockey stick or bat
- Can play multi-rule physical games e.g. football/dodgeball
- Can change direction when running
- Dribbles a ball in a stationary position
- Can hold prone extension (superman) for 90-119 seconds
- Can hold supine flexion (curling up into a ball) for 68 seconds

### SOCIAL SKILLS

- Has learned the 'rules' of social and conversational etiquette e.g. please, excuse me
- Follows rules about communication and behaviour in school such as understanding when to talk or how to talk to adults vs peers

### SELF-REPRESENTATION

- See 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
- 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 can occur

### PLAY SKILLS

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

### INDEPENDENCE SKILLS

- Can use chopsticks
- Can tie a bow and do shoelaces
- Can pack a bag to go to a friend's place or activity
- Can shower/bath completely independently including turning on and off the hot and cold water in a familiar bathroom
- Can wash own hair, may need supervision

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

### UNDERSTANDING

- Understands position words: left, right, same, different
- Understands the difference between reality and fantasy
- Can make predictions and justify decisions
- Can provide solutions
- Can give explanations
- Can classify objects into specific traits: colour, composition

### SPEAKING

- Uses adult like grammar and word order
- Can start and sustain conversations over multiple back and forth interactions
- Tries to explain with clearer language when they recognise a listener doesn't understand
- Can retell a story

### SEEK HELP IF:

- Has speech fluency or stammering issues
- Language is immature compared to same aged peers
- Doesn't understand 'social rules'
- Has obsession e.g. cars, movies, natural disasters
- 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
- 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 7 Years of Age

### DEVELOPMENTAL 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.

**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. Understands position words such as left/right, same/different		
2. Can classify objects into specific traits e.g. colour or transport		
3. Can make predictions and justify decisions		
<b>Communication: Speaking</b>		
4. Can start and sustain conversations over multiple back and forth interactions		
5. Can re-tell a story		
6. Uses adult like grammar and word order		

SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Fine Motor</b>		
7. Forms most letters and numbers correctly		
8. Good endurance for writing		
9. Basic fine motor skills are acquired and movements are refined, fast and skilful		
10. 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>		
11. Throws a ball overhand and underhand with appropriate force and direction.		
12. Strikes objects using an object such as a tennis racquet or bat		
13. Can play multi-rule games		
14. Changes direction when running		
15. Dribbles a ball in a stationary position		
16. Can hold prone extension (superman) for 90-119 seconds		

SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Play</b>		
17. Able to cooperate with others for extended periods of play		
18. Play can involve making up their own rules		
19. Engages in play which includes themes they have never personally experienced: going into space, having surgery.		



SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Independence Skills</b>		
20. Can tie a bow and do shoelaces		
21. Can shower/bath independently including turning on and off the hot and cold water in a familiar bathroom		
22. Can pack a bag to go to a friend's place or activity.		
23. Can sit and listen for sustained periods of time; 10-15 minutes		

TOTAL SCORE	
YES	
NO	

Scores:
19-23: No intervention required
15-18: Monitor
14 or below: Seek Advice from an Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Early Years Teacher or Doctor.



## Talk to Us

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## REFERENCES

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