

# 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

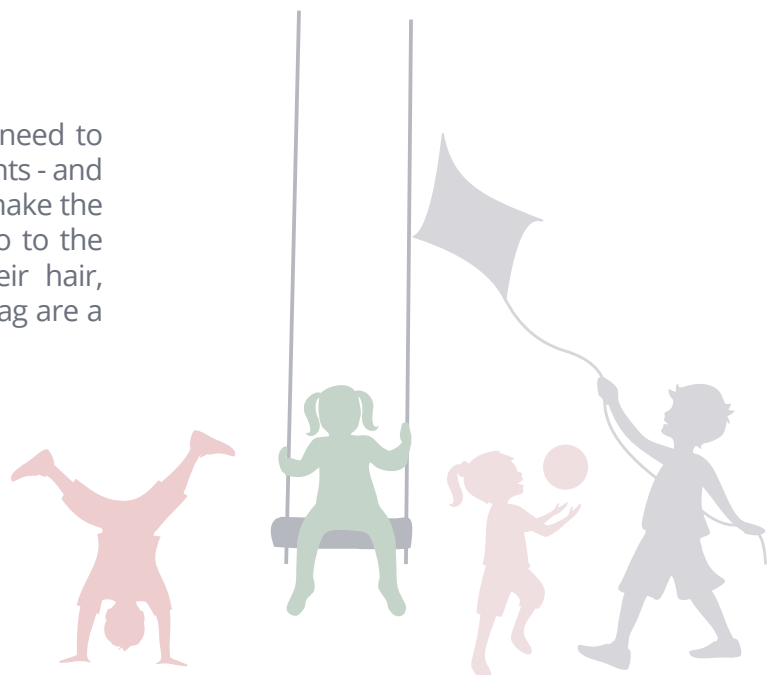
Play Skills are the dynamic activities that can bring your child joy, promote social skills, facilitate learning and improve motor skills. These can be unstructured or organised, independent or with others. While there is no universally accepted definition of play, allied health professionals agree that 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 8 YEARS OF AGE

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

- Fine motor milestones are all achieved
- Can perform more complex tasks with hands e.g. sewing with a needle and thread, cracking an egg, unlocking a door with a key
- Maintains legibility of writing for an entire story

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

- Has mastered; running, skipping, hopping, galloping, sliding
- Can travel in a variety of rhythmical patterns; even, uneven, fast, slow
- Moves in all directions: forwards, backwards, sideways
- Uses more complex movement skills; jumping to catch a ball, kicking and running
- Uses combinations of jumps and landings smoothly and without losing balance
- Skips with a self-turned rope
- Strikes slow moving objects with a bat, stick or racquet.
- Starts/can perform weight bearing activities from feet to hands e.g. cartwheels, handstands
- Can hold prone extension (superman) for 120-138 seconds
- Can hold supine flexion (curling up into a ball) for 88 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.
- Uses different structure and vocabulary when talking to friends, strangers, adults
- Has a deeper understanding of non-verbal cues to change the meaning of what is said e.g. if someone says 'I'm fine' but they have a sad face

### **SELF-REPRESENTATION**

- Global self-esteem starts to emerge, the sense of 'overall worth as a person'
- Develops their own skills and can work besides others.
- Can show persistence in overcoming frustration.
- Can demonstrate/show feelings of resilience

### **PLAY SKILLS**

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

### **INDEPENDENCE SKILLS**

- Understands money
- Prepares simple meals e.g. cereal, sandwich, toast

### **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

#### **UNDERSTANDING**

- Can remember a sequence of 6-8 digits
- Can understand questions relating to inference or prediction e.g. 'what could he have done?' 'How do we know she is upset?'
- Can listen and understand a story without pictures
- Can listen for a sustained period of time e.g. assembly at school

#### **SPEAKING**

- Has most speech sounds including 'th' and 'r'
- Uses regular, irregular verb tenses and plurals; walked, fell
- Uses higher level connectives; although, because
- Can recall a sequence of events with a beginning, middle and end in logical order
- Acquires technical vocabulary related to interests or school subjects
- Can define words with multiple meanings 'nail' 'bark'
- Will ask questions to clarify meaning
- Can express their opinion

### **SEEK HELP IF:**

- Has speech fluency or stammering issues
- Is unable to make inferences or problem solve issues involving others
- Doesn't understand 'social rules'
- Has obsession e.g. cars, movies, natural disasters
- 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
- Has difficulty making friends



## Checklist: By 8 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. Can remember a sequence of 6-8 numbers		
2. Can understand questions relating to inference or predictions e.g. 'how do we know she was upset?'		
3. Can listen and understand a story without pictures		
<b>Communication: Speaking</b>		
4. Uses regular and irregular verb tenses and plurals: walked, fell		
5. Can recall a sequence of events with a beginning, middle and end		
6. Can define words with multiple meanings e.g. 'nail' or 'bark'		

SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Fine Motor</b>		
7. Fine Motor Milestones are all achieved e.g. cutting, holding a pencil, beading		
8. Maintains legibility of writing for an entire story.		
9. Can perform more complex tasks e.g. sewing with a needle and thread.		
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. Has mastered: running, skipping, hopping, galloping, and sliding		
12. Uses more complex movement skills: jumping to catch a ball		
13. Strikes a slow-moving object with a bat, stick or racquet		
14. Uses combinations of jumps and landings smoothly and without losing balance.		
15. Can travel in a variety of rhythmical patterns: even, slow, fast		
16. Can hold prone extension (superman) for 120-138 seconds		

SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Play</b>		
17. Is able to cooperate with others for extended periods of play		
18. Can negotiate during play		
19. Can cope with losing		



SKILL	Yes	No
<b>Independence Skills</b>		
20. Understands money		
21. Prepares simple meals: cereal, sandwich, toast		

TOTAL SCORE	
YES	
NO	

Scores:
19-21: 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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## Visit Us

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## REFERENCES

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