

Growth and Development: 9-18 Months

Watching a young child grow is a wonderful and unique experience for a parent. Learning to sit up, walk, and talk are some of the more major developmental "milestones" your child will achieve. But your child's growth is a complex and ongoing process. Young bodies are constantly going through a number of physical and mental changes.

Although no two children develop at the same rate, they should be able to do certain things at certain ages. As a parent, you are in the best position to note your child's development, and you can use the milestones described below as guidelines.

At the ages noted, observe your child for 1 month. (This lets you take into account any days when your child may be acting differently because he or she is sick or upset.) Use the milestones listed for each age to see how your child is developing.

Remember a "no" answer to any of these questions does not necessarily mean that there is a problem. Every child develops at his or her own pace and may sometimes develop same age. Keep in mind these milestones should be used only as guidelines.

Plan to talk about these guidelines with your pediatrician during your next office visit if you note the following:

- major differences between your child's development and the "milestones"
- your child does not yet do many of the things usually done at his or her age

9 Months

When your child is playing and you come up quietly behind him, does he sometimes turn his head as though he hears you? (Loud sounds do not count.) Check "Yes" only if you have seen him respond to quiet sounds or whispers.

Can your child sit without support and without holding up her body with her hands?

Does your baby crawl or creep on her hands and knees?

Does your baby hold his bottle?

12 Months

When you hide behind something or around a corner and then reappear again, does your baby look for you or eagerly plan for you to reappear?

Does your baby make "ma-ma" or "da-da" sounds? Check "Yes " if she makes either sound.

Does your baby pull up to stand?

Does your baby say at least one word?

Does your baby walk holding on to furniture?

Is your baby able to locate sounds by turning her head?

18 Months

Can your child hold a regular cup or glass without help and drink from it without spilling?

Can your child walk all the way across a large room without falling or wobbling from side to side?

Does your child walk without support or help?

Does your child say at least two words?

Does your child take off his shoes by himself?

Does your child feed himself?

If you have any questions, plan to discuss them with your pediatrician. Pediatricians are trained to detect and treat developmental problems in children. Many problems, if detected early, can be treated by your pediatrician and successfully managed.