

Milestones of development in early childhood

AGE	PHYSICAL	COGNITIVE	LANGUAGE	EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Slower gains in height and weight than in toddlerhood. (294) ■ Balance improves; walking becomes better coordinated. (310) ■ Running, jumping, hopping, throwing, and catching develop. (310) ■ Puts on and removes some items of clothing. (312) ■ Uses spoon effectively. (312) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make-believe becomes less dependent on realistic toys, less self-centered, and more complex. (325) ■ Can take the perspective of others in simple situations. (330) ■ Recognition memory is well developed. (341–342) ■ Aware of the difference between inner mental and outer physical events. (344–346) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vocabulary increases rapidly. (356) ■ Sentences follow word order of native language; adds grammatical markers. (358) ■ Displays effective conversational skills. (359) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begins to develop a self-concept and self-esteem. (367) ■ Distinguishes own intentional from unintentional acts. (369) ■ Cooperation and instrumental aggression appear. (367, 385) ■ Understands causes, consequences, and behavioral signs of basic emotions. (371) ■ Empathy increases. (373–374) ■ Gender-stereotyped beliefs and behavior increase. (391)
3–4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May no longer need a daytime nap. (303) ■ Running, jumping, hopping, throwing, and catching become better coordinated. (310) ■ Galloping and one-foot skipping appear. (311) ■ Rides tricycle. (311) ■ Uses scissors. (312) ■ Draws first picture of a person. (314) ■ Can distinguish writing from nonwriting. (318) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Masters dual representation. (326) ■ Notices and reasons about transformations, reverses thinking, and understands causality in familiar situations. (328) ■ Classifies familiar objects hierarchically. (329) ■ Uses private speech to guide behavior in challenging tasks. (337) ■ Attention becomes more sustained and planful. (341) ■ Uses scripts to recall familiar experiences. (342) ■ Understands that both beliefs and desires determine behavior. (344) ■ Aware of some meaningful features of written language. (346, 348) ■ Counts small numbers of objects and grasps cardinality. (349) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Masters increasingly complex grammatical structures. (357–358) ■ Occasionally overextends grammatical rules to exceptions. (358) ■ Understands many culturally accepted ways of adjusting speech to fit the age, sex, and social status of speakers and listeners. (359) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begins to distinguish others' intentional from unintentional acts. (369) ■ Emotional self-regulation improves. (372) ■ Experiences self-conscious emotions more often. (372–373) ■ Nonsocial activity declines and interactive play increases. (375) ■ Instrumental aggression declines, and hostile aggression increases. (385) ■ Forms first friendships. (377) ■ Distinguishes moral from social-conventional and personal matters. (384–385) ■ Preference for same-sex playmates strengthens. (391)



AGE	PHYSICAL	COGNITIVE	LANGUAGE	EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL
5–6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Body is streamlined and longer-legged with proportions similar to those of adults. (274) ■ First permanent tooth erupts. (296) ■ Gross motor skills increase in speed and endurance. (310) ■ Skipping appears. (311) ■ Shows mature throwing and catching patterns. (311) ■ Ties shoes, draws more complex pictures, uses an adultlike pencil grip, and writes name. (312–316) ■ Can discriminate letters of the alphabet. (318) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to distinguish appearance from reality improves. (334) ■ Attention continues to improve. (341) ■ Recall, scripted memory, and autobiographical memory improve. (341–343) ■ Understanding of false belief improves. (344–345) ■ Understands that letters and sounds are linked in systematic ways. (346, 348) ■ Counts on and counts down, engaging in simple addition and subtraction. (349) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vocabulary reaches about 10,000 words. (356) ■ Uses many complex grammatical structures. (358) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bases understanding of people’s intentions on a wider range of social cues. (369) ■ Ability to interpret, predict, and influence others’ emotional reactions improves. (371) ■ Relies more on language to express empathy. (373–374) ■ Becomes better at social problem solving. (377–379) ■ Has acquired many morally relevant rules and behaviors. (380) ■ Gender-stereotyped beliefs and behavior continue to increase. (390–393)



Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the page(s) on which each milestone is discussed.