

## What can I do if I have questions or concerns about my child's development?

- Speak to your child's health care provider (paediatrician, general practitioner, family doctor, or nurse).
- Visit your nearest health centre.
- Request developmental screening.
- If there are still concerns, **do not delay**, request a referral for a developmental evaluation.
- A child's development is a process that parents and health providers should monitor.

## Where can I find additional information?

- US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – [Learn the Signs/Act Early](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html) (https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html)
- “[Nurturing Your Child's Early Brain Development](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4ZomIKxRNE)” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4ZomIKxRNE>
- [Early Child Development](https://www.who.int/topics/early-child-development/en/): <https://www.who.int/topics/early-child-development/en/>
- [What is early childhood development?](https://pressroom.oecs.org/oecs-and-unicef-supporting-early-childhood-development) (<https://pressroom.oecs.org/oecs-and-unicef-supporting-early-childhood-development>)

When you  
**Know**

It helps  
your  
child

**Learn**

and  
**Grow**

Screen early, Developmental checkups help your child learn and grow.

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# Child Development



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# WHAT IS CHILD DEVELOPMENT?

A child's early years are very important for their health and development. Children of all abilities, including those with special health needs, need to have their social, emotional, and educational needs met so that they can thrive.

- Child development refers to the changes that take place from birth to adulthood that allow a child to gain new skills in thinking, communicating, moving around, using their hands, and getting along with others.
- The steps of development typically follow a predictable pattern, but how fast a child develops varies from one child to another.
- Children may show a range of behaviours and abilities and still be considered to be developing normally.
- Child development is influenced by the environment and what is inherited from parents.

## What are the different areas of child development?

- Motor (physical)
  - \* Gross motor (to help move from place to place)
  - \* Fine motor (using hands)
- Communication (speech/language)
  - \* Expressive (speaking)
  - \* Receptive (listening)
- Cognition (thinking, understanding, learning)
- Social/emotional (getting along with peers and adults)



## Why do some children take a different path in their development?

Several causes may be identified, alone or acting together, or there may be no known cause. Delays in development are sometimes caused by factors that could not have been avoided.

### Before Birth:

- Genetic, such as Down syndrome
- Toxic (harmful) substance in pregnancy, such as drugs or alcohol
- Infections, such as syphilis, rubella, toxoplasmosis, cytomegalovirus, or Zika virus
- Brain or other malformations

### At Birth:

- Prematurity
- Lack of oxygen

### After Birth:

- Infection, such as meningitis or other severe illness
- Metabolic, such as underactive thyroid gland
- Injury, especially head injury
- Severe neglect and/or psychological trauma

If you have concerns about your child's development, **do not delay! Early intervention may be able to help.**

## RED FLAGS

### Age Missed Milestones Requiring Intervention

2 mo	Lack of visual fixation No social smile
4-6 mo	Fails to track person or object No steady head control No response/turn to sound or voice
6 mo	Decrease/absence of vocalizations
9-12 mo	Fails to sit independently
18 mo	Fails to walk independently Does not seek shared attention to object/event with caregiver
24 mo	No single words
36 mo	No three word sentences Cannot follow simple commands
>3 y	Speech unintelligible Dependence on gestures to follow commands



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