

# Infant Toddler Developmental Red Flags

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Funding provided by the Court Improvement Project, State Court Administrative Offices



Age	Cognitive	Receptive Language	Expressive Language	Fine Motor	Gross Motor	Social-Emotional	Sensory
4 Months	Is not gazing at objects; does not tune out repetitive sounds; does not move eyes to follow sound	Does not respond to loud sounds	Does not coo or make sounds	When lying on back: keeps hands fisted and lacks arm movements; is not bringing hands to mouth; lacks symmetrical arm movements; does not turn head to follow a toy or face	When lying on tummy: has difficulty lifting head; stiff legs with little or no movement; When lying on back: head is not in midline	Does not cry when upset; does not smile at people	Sensory integration is the ability to receive input through all of the senses and process this information.  Red flags at any age include:
6 Months	Does not look at self in mirror; does not try to reach for objects; does not bang objects	Does not respond to sounds	Does not make vowel sounds; does not laugh or squeal	When lying on back: does not reach for a toy; has unsymmetrical arm or leg movements; when seated is not reaching to grasp toys; not yet able to eat from a spoon	When seated: poor head control and rounded back; When lying on back: does not bring arm forward; arches back and stiffens legs; is not rolling; When held in a standing position: stiff legs; arms held back behind body.	No joyful expressions; does not cry when upset; does not show affection toward caregivers; parent ignores or misreads child's cues	Auditory: Is very distracted by background noise; enjoys strange noises; unaware of loud noises  Visual: avoids eye contact; looks out of corner of eye; stares at bright and flashing lights;
9 Months	Does not explore toys with eyes, hands, or mouth	Does not look where you point; does not respond to own name or does not appear to know name	Does not use repetitive consonant-vowel combinations (dadada)	Is not using both arms or predominately using one hand; does not pass toys from one hand to the other; is not voluntarily releasing objects	Uses only one side of the body to move; has difficulty crawling; when held in a standing position cannot support weight on legs or does not have a straight back	Failure to thrive with no medical reason; lack of smiling with primary caregiver; child is not comforted by physical contact; child does not show wariness of a stranger; child does not seek proximity to a parent when distressed	Body Position: Is anxious when feet leave the ground; continually spinning and rocking; walks on toes after 18 months  Touch: becomes upset when being groomed (hair washed, teeth brushed); has difficulty standing close to others or stands too close; is sensitive to certain fabric; does not notice when face or hands are messy; craves pressured touch and certain textures
12 Months	Does not search for things s/he sees you hide	Is not pointing or waving bye-bye	No babbling	When seated: stiffly extended arms; is not pointing; is not holding a cup or feeding self with finger foods	Difficulty getting to a standing position because of stiff legs; when seated sits with weight to one side or uses hands to maintain a seated position. Poor balance when standing; is not crawling	Child does not seek out parent when distressed; child is not wary of a stranger; child does not explore a new environment in the caregiver's presence; parent punishes child's distress; no babbling	
18 Months	Does not know what familiar things are for (eg: spoon, cup, comb)	Does not point to show you things; is not copying others	Does have at least 6 words; is not using multiple syllables when babbling (b aba ba); does not produce more consonants than vowels	Is not able to stack two blocks; does not help with dressing; is not scribbling with crayons; not using a pincer grasp (thumb and pointer finger)	No signs of walking; walks on toes	Overly friendly with strangers; child avoids parent when distressed; parent ignores or punishes emotions	
2 Years		Does not understand simple instructions	Is not using spontaneous 2-word phrases; is not copying words	Is not able to eat with a spoon; does not take off own shoes and socks	Not walking steadily; walks on toes; very clumsy	Does not want to play with other children; does not make eye contact; is clingy with adults; goes easily with a stranger; is affectionate with a stranger; hypervigilant or aggressive without provocation; hoarding or stealing; hurts or bullies others; extreme shyness; flat affect; unpredictable outbursts; cruelty to animals	
3 Years	Attention difficulties; does not know shapes or colors; trouble learning numbers and alphabet		Has unclear speech; does not speak in sentences; difficulty rhyming words	Is unable to dress and undress self; cannot unscrew a jar lid	Has a lot of trouble with stairs and balance (note: serious motor delays are typically seen before 18 months)		
4 Years	Does not understand "same" and "different;" cannot re-tell a favorite story	See above	Does not use "me" and "you" correctly; speaks unclearly	Has trouble scribbling	Cannot jump in place (note: serious motor delays are typically seen before 18 months)	Excessive anger; hurts others; hoards or steals; does not have friends; withdrawn or excessively shy; flat affect; not interested in interactive games; does not respond to people outside the family	

- If you see these developmental red flags or are concerned about a young child's development refer them for a developmental assessment.
- For children birth to 36 months, contact Early On by phone (1-800-Early On) or make a referral online
- For children 3-5 years of age, have the parent make a referral or alert the parent that you are making a referral to the school district where the child lives. Child Find coordinators in each county's Intermediate School District, and their contact information can be found on this website <https://eotta.ccesa.org/Contacts.php?ID=17>

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5  
Years

Cannot tell what is real or make-believe; easily distracted and cannot focus on one activity for more than 5 min.	See above	Does not talk about daily activities or experiences; does not use plurals or past tense properly	Does not draw pictures	See above (note: Serious motor delays are typically seen before 18 months)	Does not respond to people; Does not play a variety of games and activities; unable to brush teeth, wash and dry hands, or get undressed; Hoarding or stealing;	
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