

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

2-3 YEARS OLD

LANGUAGE

- Understands concepts such as location, number, size, sequence, & same/different
- Begins to understand time concepts of *soon*, *later*, *wait*
- Uses word combinations often but may occasionally repeat some words or phrases (Example: "I want – I want juice!")
- Tries to get your attention by saying, "Look at me!" or "Watch me!"
- Gives reasons for things and events, like saying that they need a coat when it is cold outside
- Says their name when asked
- Uses some plural words like *birds* or *toys*
- Uses -ing verbs like "eating" or "running"
- Adds -ed to the end of words to talk about past actions, like "looked" or "played"
- Has a vocabulary of at least 200 words
- Asks *who*, *what*, *where*, *why*, and *how* questions
- Answers questions like "What do you do when you are sleepy?" or "Which one can you wear?"



SPEECH

- Correctly produces /m/, /n/, /p/, /b/, "y," /h/, /w/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, and /f/ in most instances
- Correctly produces most vowels in words
- Speech is becoming clearer but may not be understandable to unfamiliar listeners or strangers



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Watches other children and briefly joins in their play
- Requests permission for items or activities
- Begins to use language for fantasies, jokes, and teasing
- Makes conversational repairs when a listener does not understand
- Engages in longer dialogues/conversations
- Participates in simple group activities
- Begins to control behavior verbally rather than just physically

Note: these milestones are meant to be a helpful resource to provide you with a general sense of how most children develop. However, they do not always account for individual differences such as neurodivergence and culture. These lists should be used to identify areas in which a child needs support to navigate their environment with ease and functionality, and not as absolute goalposts.



FEEDING/EATING

- Self-feeds completely (using utensils or fingers)
- Gives up the bottle
- Brings a spoon/fork to mouth, palm up, self-feeds with little spillage
- Drinks from a cup with limited spillage
- Chews and swallows with lips closed and without gagging or choking
- Bites through a variety of food thicknesses
- Chews using stable rotary jaw action

Milestone information is from ASHA.org (2024), CDC.gov (2024), Crowe, K., & McLeod, S. (2020), and LinguiSystems Guide to Communication Milestones (2012th ed.) - curated by Happy Little Speech.