

Fact Sheet #1: Skills to Expect from 0 to 18 months

Mental Skills

Children:

- Remember people and objects that are not present
- Imitate other people's facial expressions, sounds, and actions
- Imitate what they see on TV, even if they don't understand what they are doing
- Understand what they hear before they can speak
- Make noises to communicate with others and to show satisfaction or displeasure
- Recognize their own name
- Begin to explore the environment, touch and manipulate objects

- Learn by imitating and observing other people
- Show understanding of words for highly familiar objects
- Understand about a dozen common phrases
- Begin to use me, I, you
- Understand and can follow very simple instructions
- Have very short attention spans



Social Skills

Children:

- Cry, flail arms and legs when in pain, tired, hungry, cold, thirsty, wet, lonely or in a new situation and/or with new people
- Smile, babble, and coo to show pleasure, joy, and excitement
- Recognize the difference between familiar people and strangers
- Develop strong bonds with people regularly caring for them, a parent or other adult and show anxiety when separated
- Are friendly to familiar people and afraid of strangers

- Recognize distress of others by showing distress and crying
- Enjoy audience and applause
- Can play alone for brief periods of time
- Become angry when frustrated
- Are afraid of strangers and are wary of unexpected situations



Tips for Parents

- If your baby is distressed and cries, comfort him or her. This will not spoil your child. When babies cry, they need warm and gentle responses to feel secure and safe. This trust forms the foundation for your future relationship with your child.
- Don't punish a crying baby. Be patient; your baby is just trying to tell you that something is wrong. Harsh responses will frighten a baby and make things worse.
- Play with your child every day. Make fun playtime part of your time together.
- Provide toys that are designed for your child's age and are safe.
- Talk frequently to your child, use simple direct words, and give positive instructions (Say "Let's play with the rattle" instead of "Don't play with the fork!")
- Read simple books to your child every day; those with familiar objects to stimulate language and communication.
- If possible, reduce separations or always have a familiar person caring for your child.
- Create and maintain daily routines to help your baby feel secure and build trust.



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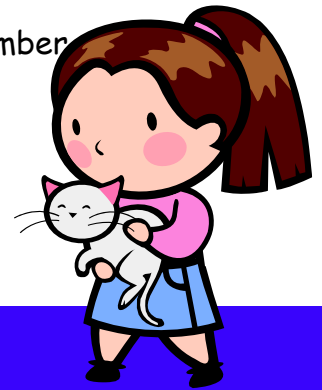


Fact Sheet #2: Skills to Expect from 18 to 36 months

Mental Skills

Children:

- Have mental images of people and objects that are not present.
- Can use imagination and begin to play pretend games
- Use an object to represent a person, like a doll to represent a mother or a child
- Recount events of the day and imitate actions and events that occurred in the past.
- Has a vocabulary of several hundreds words; can use two- to three-word sentences; repeat words.
- Listen to stories for a short period of time.
- Understand that images and pictures represent real objects and people.
- Have a vague notion of time; still confuse the meanings of today, tomorrow, and yesterday.
- Generally have short attention spans and can be easily distracted.
- Are just beginning to remember rules and don't really understand right from wrong.



Social Skills

Children:

- Are developing a strong sense of themselves as separate individuals.
- Think they are the center of the world.
- Beginning to show signs of independence; can be stubborn and contrary: say NO to adults.
- Are possessive, with strong notions of territory: This is mine! Having difficulty sharing.
- May be having trouble waiting and want things right now.
- Have trouble expressing emotions with words; when frustrated or angry can have tantrums or hit and kick to get what they want.
- Play side by side with others more than cooperatively with them.
- Begin to understand that other people have expectations of them
- Are more aware of feelings of others; enjoying adult's attention.
- Express their feelings through pretend play, make believe play.





Tips for Parents

- It is hard for children of this age to share things and take turns.
- The best way to deal with dispute over toys is to have more than one toy for them.
- Children of this age are always busy and often cannot do the same thing for long periods of time. Do not expect them to be happy in a place (church, grocery store) or situation (family dinners) or playing with the same toy or the same children for more than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour or so without your support and attention
- When children fight over the same toy, teach positive and nonviolent solutions: (1) provide another toy or remove the toy; (2) if that doesn't work, redirect children's attention to something else or take them to another place. Always make it clear that hurting another child is not acceptable.
- Always help your child resolve conflicts by using words to express what is happening ("You want to play with the car and Joanna is playing with the car? Tell her 'I want the car'").
- Tantrums are typical of this age but when they happen,
 - (a) Remain calm; use a few gentle words to calm or distract your child,
 - (b) Don't yell or hit your child
 - © Don't try to talk or teach in the middle of a tantrum,
 - (d) Give little attention or ignore,
 - (e) Shift your child's attention to something else,
 - (f) Stand firm, don't give in to tantrums; try never to reward a tantrum.
 - (g) Try to understand the causes
- Adults should try to save saying NO to situations involving safety and emotional well-being. In other situations, give choices



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Fact Sheet #3: Skills to Expect from 3 to 5 years

Mental Skills

Children:

- Can think about objects, people, and events without seeing them
- Although less than before, still think they are the center of the world and have trouble seeing things from someone else's perspective.
- More able to use words to express thoughts and feelings and to share experiences
- Talk to themselves out loud as a way to control their behaviors
- Can think of events in the past or those yet to happen
- Begin to think ahead and plan their actions; often can anticipate physical consequences of actions that are not too complicated
- Starting to see the difference between things they see and what they really are (a stuffed dog is not a dog)

- Starting to see the relationship of cause and effect (If I do this, then that will happen)
- Ask a lot of *why, how, where* questions
- Learn by imitation, observation, and by exploring, creating, and doing things
- Understand that breakfast is before lunch; lunch is before dinner, etc
- Beginning to understand before/after; up/down; over/under; today, yesterday, and tomorrow
- Can't play or do something for too long or



become bored and tired unless there is adult guidance

Social Skills

Children:

- Can read and interpret emotions of others; can tell when someone is angry or upset,
- Can't understand abstract emotions like pity, greed, gratitude
- Use different ways to control their own emotions: close their eyes and ears; remove themselves from the situation; sometimes can resist temptation to respond to whatever is disturbing them
- May develop first true relationship because friends become very important.
- How they play: At age 3, they typically play near a friend, find it difficult to take turns and to share things; at age 4, they may begin cooperative play, still difficult to share but begin to understand turn taking, begin to offer things to others; at age 5, enjoy playing with other children, often cooperate well, have special friends,
- Use less physical aggression than when younger

- Use more often verbal aggression like insults, threats, teasing to hurt other children; bullying appears: they understand the power of rejection
- Understand social rules and can act in accordance to them
- Are eager to carry out some responsibilities; offer to help
- Understand that praise or blame happens because of what they do
- Begin to understand the difference of doing things "on purpose" and "by accident"; focus more on the damage than on the intentions of the perpetrator
- By age 4, begin to have a sense of their ethnic identity and of the ways their social group is perceived in the society
- Increased capacity to use imagination; can imagine terrible things can happen to them and can lead to fear; nightmares can happen



Tips for Parents

- Teach your children to use words when they are angry, sad. ("You are *sad* because grandpa is gone")
- Ask your children to show *angry, mad, sad, happy, surprised feeling* using their faces and tell you what makes people feel that way
- Ask your children to draw a picture of their mad feelings and talk about them
- Give your children opportunities to accomplish something like organizing toys and books, helping with making up the grocery list; delivering short messages to others, giving their own ending to a story in a book
- Help your children cope with fantasy fear by pointing out the difference between reality and fantasy
- Keep your children away from situations that create real fear such as seeing violence in the home or neighborhood, watching violence on TV, and receiving physical punishment
- When there is a fight:
 - (a) Stop the fighting, go first to the child that is injured to calm him or her
 - (b) Use time out to calm down the child who is

the aggressor (No more than one minute for each year of the child's age)

(c) When both children are calm, talk to them and ask: What happened? What is each one feeling? Ask them to think of a solution; tell that it's OK to be angry or mad but not to hurt

(d) Praise both children for thinking of a solution. Remember to show your love and care even though you disapprove of their behavior



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Fact Sheet #4: Skills to Expect from 6 to 8 years:

Mental Skills

Children:

- Become able to understand the viewpoint of others: are aware that others can have different thoughts
- Can focus on several aspects of a problem at a time
- Can concentrate on what they do for longer periods of time
- Increased problem-solving ability, but not yet like an adult
- Can think of simple plans before acting. For example, when inviting friends over to play, children can plan in advance what games they will play
- Can begin to understand time and the days of the week; by age 8 can place events in time sequence
- Improved short- and long-term memory
- Can speak and also write; by age 8 have a vocabulary of 20,000 words and learn an average of 20 new words a day; can also understand that a word may have different meanings
- Can communicate better and longer with others, express themselves, and understand things.
- Can better understand and internalize moral rules of behavior (right/wrong; good/bad; wonderful/terrible)
- Begin to understand that what is fair is related to merit: who works harder deserves special treat
- Are better able to empathize with other people and accept the idea of giving special consideration to those in greater need

Social Skills

Children:

- Are able to view themselves based on: how they perform in school; capacity to make friends; and their physical appearance
- Understand they can feel two emotions at the same time (I like Jenny but I hate how she talks to me)
- Are intensely interested in peers, prefer same sex friends; develop friendships marked by give and take, mutual trust, and shared experiences
- Feel that belonging and acceptance by peers is very important. (Children may look more for peers than to adults for gratification)
- Play is no longer just fantasy play where imagination is the key element; more often children choose rules-based games where the rules are the key element and winning the game is more frequently the objective
- Have great concern with justice and fairness; what is fair or equal is important and some children may try to get even and become verbally or physically aggressive
- Continue to develop social skills like empathy and compassion
- Become more able to do things by themselves and as a result, their relationship with parents changes





Tips for Parents



- Help your children to develop a sense of competence: give them opportunities to master some skills like cooking, building models, making crafts, playing an instrument
- Learn to gradually share the control of your child's life with your daughter or son
- Reinforce the understanding of right and wrong and consequences

Teach problem solving to your child. Use the IDEAL model to:

Identify the problem and the feelings involved (Your child is being bullied and is afraid of going to school)

Determine with the child possible solutions without use of violence

Evaluate with the child the merits of each possible solution

Act, choosing the best solution

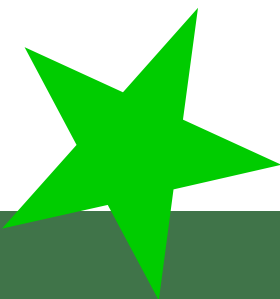
Learn from what you and your child did to solve the problem

- Use real-life situations (in your family or make-up a situation) and when you are on the bus, in the car, or in the kitchen, play the IDEAL game with your child. A mock scenario

could be: A child can't watch TV because hasn't done homework and she/he is mad and breaks the remote control.

- Reinforce prosocial skills such as sharing, empathy, cooperation by asking a child to do things like help care for a baby, collect food for a shelter.
- Provide opportunities for your child to develop an understanding of rules by playing simple table games that rely on chance rather than on skills such as cards, dominoes, tic-tac-toe
- Teach by speaking out loud to yourself (so your child will hear) about a problem and how to resolve it. An example: We are out of milk, bread, and fruits. I'm not feeling well. I will call daddy and ask him to stop by the grocery store on his way home to get them
- Demonstrate that behaviors and actions have consequences for everybody involved in a situation: If you do that, this will happen or when you do this, then you will get this

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