

CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT TWELVE TO FIFTEEN MONTHS

While reading this information, please keep in mind that all children are unique. While the sequence of development is practically the same for all children (for example, most children learn to crawl before they learn to walk), each child's rate of development is different. There is a wide variation in normal development. Some children reach developmental milestones earlier than others. Some reach them later than others. Rarely does a delay in reaching a developmental milestone mean that there is a problem. In most cases, delays turn out to be normal. Remember that premature infants generally reach developmental milestones later than other infants of the same birth age. Parents with any questions or concerns about their children's development should contact their children's health care provider.

Highlights in Physical Development

***Self Help.** By twelve months of age most babies want to do increasingly more for themselves. Many will insist on feeding themselves and will help with getting dressed and undressed. At twelve months, some children are able to drink from a cup without help, although many aren't able to do this until later. Most children can drink from a cup by fifteen months of age.

***Hands/Grasp.** Grasp is constantly improving, and by fifteen months most babies will be able to pick up tiny objects neatly with the tips of their thumbs and forefingers. Many children will now begin to put things back together instead of just taking them apart. Many children at this age are able to build a tower of two to three blocks after watching someone else do it. As children learn to pick up small objects, they will then learn to put them into containers.

***Crawling/Standing/Walking.** By twelve months of age, most children will show some combination of standing, walking, and cruising. At this age, most children can now pull themselves to a standing position, stand holding onto something, and then lower themselves back down. Children who are learning to cruise and walk will still probably prefer crawling as their main means of transportation.

Although some children can walk at twelve months of age or earlier, most children are not able to walk well until much later. Babies who are good crawlers may be slower to walk than average. When other development is normal, late walking is rarely something to worry about. As children begin to walk, their legs will appear bowed, and their feet may turn in. This is perfectly normal.

Highlights in Cognitive/

Language Development

At about one year of age, patterned speech begins for most children. It is at this time that children begin to make sounds that are consistently used to communicate with others. Most one year olds can say one or two understandable words besides "mama" and "dada," and by thirteen months many children will be able to say three additional words.

Language skills are rapidly developing at this stage, and most children will begin to listen closely to the speech of other people. They may begin to imitate new words they hear, and will probably be able to understand simple questions.

Highlights in Social\Emotional Development

During the twelfth month, most children will be able to express many different emotions and recognize them in others. It is also at this time that children begin to cry only to express distress. This is because most children are now able to communicate in ways other than crying.

At twelve months of age, many children still fear strange people and places. This anxiety usually lessens towards the end of the first year as children get used to meeting and seeing strange people and being in strange

surroundings. Separation anxiety, the fear children have when separated from their mothers or caretakers, is usually at its height around fourteen to fifteen months of age. Separation anxiety usually begins to decrease after fifteen months.

During the period from twelve to fifteen months, many children are able to play simple games like pat-a-cake, and waving bye-bye. As children approach fifteen months of age, they may be able to play simple cooperative games like rolling a ball back to another person, and handing a toy back and forth to another person.



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