



## Cognitive Development in Toddlers

Research shows that children who can distinguish the building blocks of speech at 6 months are better at acquiring the skills for learning to read at 4 and 5 years of age. For example, a baby understands that certain sounds have different meanings. This is an example of cognitive development – knowledge and skills that help children think about and understand the world around them.

A typically developing one year old child will begin to explore objects in many different ways, such as shaking, banging, throwing and dropping. Other behaviors at this age include finding hidden objects, looking at the correct picture when an image is named, imitating gestures, and using objects correctly, e.g., drinking from a cup, brushing hair, or talking on a phone. To encourage cognitive development, provide tools and objects that encourage your child to think about how things work, or how they come apart and go back together.

As a child approaches age two, you might notice that he is starting to sort by shapes and colors and he now engages in make-believe play. Provide simple props and get involved in pretend play with your toddler. You will promote your toddler's cognitive



development if you engage in quality interactions with him.

Expose your toddler to print and materials (e.g., books, puzzles) that foster her understanding of concepts. Make an effort to expand on your child's interests and provide support but don't do it for her. If she's trying to make a puzzle piece fit, show her how to turn the piece around but don't put it in for her. The more she does, the more she builds thinking skills and self-confidence.

Another way to foster cognitive development is to provide your child with choices. Allow him to explore different ways of solving problems. While you may want to provide some gentle guidance and encouragement, allow him some time to figure things out (e.g., a new game). This may require patience on your part, but it will ultimately help him to learn.

Source: [http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/age1\\_2/topicsAZ/PKDEV\\_000343](http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/age1_2/topicsAZ/PKDEV_000343)

## Early Childhood Screening

Early childhood screening is used by doctors and early childhood teachers to check how children are developing in their thinking, learning and talking skills, as well as how their large and small muscles are growing. The goal of screening is to identify problems early so that children can get the help they need to be successful in school.

When your child turns three years old, contact your local school district for more information about the free Early Childhood Screening program. Children in Minnesota cannot go to kindergarten in public schools unless they have had a health and developmental screening.

During the screening, a nurse or early childhood teacher looks at how a child sees, hears, moves, plays, talks, learns and behaves. She also helps connect parents to early childhood programs and other community services. In Minnesota these programs include: Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE); School Readiness; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Public Health Home Visits; and Head Start.

If you have concerns about your child's development before age three, you can take your child to your health care provider, or you can contact Help Me Grow at 1-866-693-GROW(4769).

For more information visit [http://parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/age3\\_5/topicsAZ/PKDEV\\_000399](http://parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/age3_5/topicsAZ/PKDEV_000399)

Trusted parenting information, resources and activities to help your children grow, develop and learn from birth through high school at [www.MNParentsKnow.info](http://www.MNParentsKnow.info).

**MARCH 14, 2012**  
**12:00 PM - 1:00 PM**

**Getting Kids Off to a Great Start: Early Childhood Screening**

Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/368571122>

## Poison Prevention Tips

Did you know that each year, more than 1.2 million children ages 5 and under are unintentionally poisoned? Culprits can be medication on your dresser, cleaning supplies under your kitchen sink, cosmetics in your bathroom or carbon monoxide from gas appliances. Simple steps will keep your kids safe.

- Cigarettes and alcohol should be out of reach from your child at all times.
- When taking medicine, read the label and follow the directions on medicines and products when using them.
- Teach children to ask an adult before eating or drinking anything. Poisons can look like food or drink.

- Never leave a baby alone unless in a crib or playpen.
- Do not allow smoking in your home.
- Put child safety latches on cupboard and cabinet doors.
- If you live in an older home, test for lead paint.
- Store medicines and household products (laundry soap, bleach, makeup, paint, household cleaners, etc.) locked up, where children cannot see or reach them. Store such items in their original containers to avoid confusion or mistakes.
- Buy child-resistant packages when available.

Children who have ingested poisonous substances may experience difficulty breathing, throat pain, or burns to the lips and mouth. If you suspect your child has been poisoned, take the product and call **1-800-222-1222**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If your child has collapsed or is not breathing, call **911**. Take the poison with you to the emergency room, whether it's a part of a plant or the chemical's container.

Source: [http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/age3\\_5/topicsAZ/PKDEV\\_000422](http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/age3_5/topicsAZ/PKDEV_000422)

## Test Your Knowledge of Early Childhood Screening

- T F Help your child prepare for Early Childhood Screening with drills in number and letter recognition.
- T F Early Childhood Screening checks to see how children are developing in their thinking, learning and talking skills and how their large and small muscles are growing.
- T F Vision and hearing are tested during Early Childhood Screening.

Answers: 1) F, 2) T, 3) T

— EVERYDAY —



## Parent to Parent

Everyday Parent to Parent Forum is a bulletin board for Minnesota parents to ask questions or to share what they have learned. Join the discussion forum at [www.MNParentsKnow.info](http://www.MNParentsKnow.info).



If you have concerns about your child's growth and development, please talk to your child's health care provider or call 1-866-693-GROW (4769), to

talk to a professional and find out how you can get connected with various resources in Minnesota.

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