



Early Learning Continuum of Skills for Infants and Toddlers

Child development is a dynamic and gradual process, and each child develops in their own unique way. The Experience Baby *Early Learning Continuum of Skills* outlines a series of observable skill benchmarks for children ages 3-18 months. Each open-ended *Shared Experience Card* is written to trigger 1-2 of these skills.



CONNECT & COMMUNICATE

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Skill / Skill Code	Skill Definition	Benchmark 1	Benchmark 2
SED 1 Self-Awareness	SED 1a Knows self and increases confidence	Responds to name, explores hands and looks in mirror.	Recognizes self in photos or in a mirror.
	SED 1b Expresses curiosity, preference and initiative	Vocalizes or moves to express wants and needs.	Seeks out or responds to favorite or preferred toys, objects or people
SED 2 Self-Regulation	SED 2a Identifies emotions	Makes facial expressions or vocalizations to express engagement, contentment, stress or discomfort.	Shows a range of emotions with facial expressions and gestures.
	SED 2b Manages feelings and behavior	Calms with support from caregiver.	Soothes self by seeking a familiar adult or thing.
	SED 2c Follows routines and transitions	Reacts to changes in tone of voice or expression.	Cooperates during familiar routines and familiar activities.
SED 3 Attention & Persistence	SED 3a Attends and engages	Focuses for a short time on a person, sound or thing.	Attends to what others are looking at or pointing to.
	SED 3b Shows flexibility and inventiveness	Shifts attention from one person or thing to another.	Repeats actions to gain a result.
SED 4 Social Relationships	SED 4a Develops relationships with adults and peers	Responds to primary caregivers through eye contact and gentle touch.	Greets and stays near familiar people.
	SED 4b Participates cooperatively in groups	Enjoys turn-taking games such as peekaboo.	Mimics actions of others.
	SED 4c Identifies and respects differences in others	Adjusts behavior according to emotional or facial response of a familiar person.	Explores people and their features side by side in a book or a mirror.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

LLD 1 Listening	LLD 1a Understands and interprets language (both words and gestures)	Turns head toward the person speaking and makes gestures and/or vocalizations in response.	Shows understanding of a variety of single familiar words. Points at named objects or body parts.
	LLD 1b Follows directions	Responds to conversation in environment and imitates actions.	With prompts and gestures, follows a one-step direction.
LLD 2 Communication	LLD 2a Uses language to express ideas	Uses vocalizations and gestures to communicate.	Uses a few words, signs or word-like sounds to communicate.
	LLD 2b Uses conversational skills	Mimics single sounds.	Says one- to two-word sentences.
	LLD 2c Uses and expands vocabulary	Makes noises and gestures to communicate.	Repeats words heard frequently in environment.
LLD 3 Phonological Awareness	LLD 3 Hears small units of sound	Babbles and vocalizes using sound, volume and inflection.	Imitates sounds and tones. Repeats the last word in familiar rhymes when prompted.
LLD 4 Alphabetic Knowledge	LLD 4a Identifies letters and words	Looks for familiar people and objects when given their names.	Identifies a familiar object or person when shown a drawing or photo.
	LLD 4b Makes letter-sound connections and decodes words	Babbles or repeats sounds.	Points at words printed on a page and pretends to read aloud.
LLD 5 Concepts of Print	LLD 5 Uses print concepts and explores books and other text	Looks at or points to pictures. Opens and closes books.	Recognizes if pictures are right-side up. Turns pages from front to back of book.
LLD 6 Reading Comprehension	LLD 6a Responds to text	Interacts by reaching for or patting when a book is read.	Points to pictures and repeats words from familiar stories.
	LLD 6b Retells, asks and answers questions about a text or story	Holds book and looks intently at each page.	Answers “where” questions by pointing.
LLD 7 Writing	LLD 7 Uses writing to represent meaning	Explores writing materials.	Makes random marks with writing tools. Make handprints or fingerprints.





Early Learning Continuum of Skills

for Infants and Toddlers

MOVE & GROW

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Skill / Skill Code	Skill Definition	Benchmark 1	Benchmark 2
PD 1 Gross Motor	PD 1 Builds strength, coordination and balance of large muscles	Sits independently and pulls self into a standing position. Kicks or grabs from a seated or lying position.	Walks and climbs. Carries, drags, kicks and tosses objects.
PD 2 Fine Motor	PD 2 Builds strength and coordination of small movements	Reaches for objects in sight. Uses hands or feet to make contact with an object.	Purposefully grasps objects with finger and thumb. Uses hands to accomplish tasks such as feeding self.
PD 3 Safety	PD 3 Demonstrates safe practices	Expresses distress when needs are not met.	Responds to possible dangers in environment and avoids them when prompted.
PD 4 Personal Care	PD 4 Implements self-help routines for hygiene and dressing	Receives appropriate healthcare from caregivers. Cries or moves body when physical needs are not met.	Recognizes the difference between dirty and clean. Begins to participate in self-care activities. Points to body parts when prompted.
PD 5 Nutrition	PD 5 Follows healthy nutrition routines	Cries when hungry or tired.	Communicates the need to eat, rest and drink. Feeds self some finger foods.

PLAY & EXPLORE

MATH & REASONING

Skill / Skill Code	Skill Definition	Benchmark 1	Benchmark 2
MR 1 Number Sense	MR 1a Identifies numerals	Hears numbers in everyday context.	Recognizes the numeral one and sees other numerals around the room.
	MR 1b Determines quantity	Hears rote counting.	Repeats number words when heard.
	MR 1c Understands operations	Looks for an object that is taken out of sight.	Demonstrates an understanding of one, two and more.
MR 2 Spatial Awareness	MR 2a Understands how objects move in space	Tries to put one object inside another.	Purposely turns or spins objects. Fills container then dumps out the contents.
	MR 2b Determines object location	Participates as caregiver raises arms or legs and says up/down.	Follows simple positional directions such as on/off, over/under and up/down.
MR 3 Shapes	MR 3 Identifies shapes and their characteristics	Manipulates objects that are a variety of shapes.	Matches two identical shapes.
MR 4 Measurement	MR 4a Estimates and measures	Recognizes when to use whole hand or just two fingers to pick up an object.	Explores size and weight of objects in relation to self.
	MR 4b Compares and serializes	Picks up and puts down objects. Demonstrates an understanding of "more."	Places objects in a line. Demonstrates an understanding of more, none and one.
MR 5 Patterns	MR 5 Identifies, reproduces and creates patterns	Plays predictable activities with caregivers such as pat-a-cake and peekaboo.	Attempts to mimic vocal and physical patterns.
MR 6 Classification	MR 6 Matches and sorts	Recognizes familiar people and objects.	When shown one object, finds the match.
MR 7 Logic & Reasoning	MR 7 Recalls info, builds memory, reasoning and problem-solving	Reacts to unexpected noises, lights or sights and determines if safe or scary.	Experiments with cause and effect.