




Toddler Developmental Continuum of Skills

Individual children develop at a unique pace.

Younger Toddler

Older Toddler

Skill / Skill Code		Definitio	Benchmark 2	Benchmark 3
 Social & Emotional Development	SED 1 Self-Awareness	Shows awareness of self as distinct from others. Expresses needs, wants and preferences.	Recognizes self in photos or in a mirror.	Expresses likes and dislikes. Expresses simple ideas about self in relation to others such as family.
	SED 2 Self-Regulation	Identifies feelings and manages behavior in times of stress. Exhibits self-control and ability to calm self. Reacts to changes in routine.	Shows a range of emotions with facial expressions and gestures. Soothes self by seeking a familiar adult or thing. Redirects to a new activity with help from caregivers.	Experiments and role-plays with a range of emotions. Recognizes when the typical routine is not followed and identifies the change.
	SED 3 Attention & Persistence	Maintains attention on people, things and projects. Persists in understanding and mastering activities, even if challenging.	Participates in daily routines or familiar activities. Attends to what others are looking at or pointing to.	Focuses on an engaging activity for a short period of time independently or with an adult. Asserts a desire to start or end an activity. Asks for help as needed.
	SED 4 Social Relationships	Develops close bonds/relationships with adults and builds peer friendships. Identifies and respects differences in others' abilities, characteristics, feelings and interests. Participates in group activities, takes turns, shares and negotiates with others.	Greets and stays near familiar people. Mimics facial expressions of others. Explores people and their features side-by-side in a book or a mirror.	Identifies and plays side-by-side with a new or familiar person. Demonstrates concern for someone who is sad. Identifies differences between self and others. Participates in an activity when asked.
 Physical Development	PD 1 Gross Motor	Builds strength, coordination and balance of large muscles.	Walks and climbs. Carries, drags, kicks and tosses objects.	Runs and balances on a wide beam. Throws objects in an intended direction. Catches objects against body.
	PD 2 Fine Motor	Builds strength and coordination of small movements in hands to pick up, squeeze, twist, cut and manipulate tools and toys.	Purposefully grasps objects with finger and thumb. Uses hands to accomplish tasks such as feeding self.	Opens, closes, twists and pulls objects with one or both hands.
	PD 3 Safety	Shows awareness of safe practices and demonstrates them when participating in activities.	Responds to possible dangers in environment and avoids them when prompted.	Follows simple safety rules.
	PD 4 Personal Care	Responds to and initiates routines for hygiene, feeding and dressing self.	Recognizes the difference between dirty and clean. Points to body parts when prompted. Participates in taking care of some personal needs, such as feeding self.	With help, participates in healthy habits and healthcare routines. Names body parts. Describes basic personal needs.
	PD 5 Nutrition	Demonstrates knowledge about nutrition and healthy food choices.	Communicates when hungry, thirsty or tired. Feeds self some finger foods.	Anticipates the need to eat, rest and drink. Feeds self soft foods with spoon or other utensil.
 Language & Literacy Development	LLD 1 Receptive Language (Listening)	Understands and interprets language (both words and gestures). Communicates or acts in response to language and verbal cues.	Shows understanding of a variety of single familiar words. Points at named objects or body parts. With prompts and gestures, follows a one-step direction.	Shows understanding of a wide variety of phrases and sentences. Responds to simple statements and questions. Follows related two-step directions given verbally.
	LLD 2 Expressive Language (Communication)	Uses verbal and nonverbal communication to express ideas with increasingly complex words and sentences. Engages in back and forth communication.	Says one- to two-word sentences. Repeats words heard frequently in environment. Uses a few words and word-like sounds to communicate.	Says two- to four-word sentences and repeats short phrases. Identifies familiar people, places and objects. Asks what a specific person or object is called. Communicates needs, desires and ideas.
	LLD 3 Phonological Awareness	Hears small units of sounds.	Imitates sounds and tones.	Shows awareness of separate words in spoken language.
	LLD 4 Alphabetic Knowledge	Identifies letters, numbers, characters and symbols in print and understands that letters represent sounds.	Identifies a familiar object or person when shown a drawing or photo. Points at words printed on a page and pretends to read aloud.	Recognizes the difference between pictures, letters and numbers in print. Recognizes the sound of the first letter in his/her name.
	LLD 5 Concepts of Print	Demonstrates print- and book handling knowledge.	Recognizes if pictures are right-side up. Turns pages from front to back of book.	Identifies the front/back and top/bottom of a book. Indicates where to start reading on each page.
	LLD 6 Reading Comprehension	Understands concepts of text. Recalls and extends details.	Points to pictures and repeats words from familiar stories. Answers "where" questions by pointing.	Talks about pictures and ideas in familiar stories. Answers "what" questions about stories and books. Recalls the name of the main character.
	LLD 7 Writing	Uses scribbles, drawings, letters, characters or words to represent meaning.	Makes random marks with writing tools. Make handprints or fingerprints.	Holds drawing/writing tools with whole hand and may use whole arm to make intentional marks. Scribbles or draws marks as a representation of an object or person.

 Mathematics & Reasoning	MR 1 Number Sense	Understands concepts of number and quantity.	Recognizes the numeral one and sees other numerals around the room. Repeats number words when heard. Demonstrates an understanding of one, two and more.	Recognizes numerals to three. Points to one object at a time while counting (not always in correct order). Creates groups of objects. Adds to and removes from group as prompted.
	MR 2 Spatial Awareness	Understands how objects move in space and describes their location, e.g., on, under, next to.	Purposely turns or spins objects. Follows simple positional directions such as on/off, over/under and up/down. Fills container then dumps out the contents.	Recognizes objects that are upside down and turns them right-side up. Finds or places objects next to, between, in front of or behind self. Puts together three pieces to create a whole object.
	MR 3 Shapes	Identifies shapes and their characteristics.	Matches two identical shapes.	Identifies a few basic shapes.
	MR 4 Measurement	Estimates, measures and compares size, weight, length or volume.	Explores size and weight of objects in relation to self.	Determines which object is bigger (heavier, longer) when given two objects.
	MR 5 Patterns	Identifies, reproduces and creates patterns.	Attempts to mimic vocal and physical patterns.	Copies patterns with two steps, such as red-blue, red-blue.
	MR 6 Classification	Matches and sorts.	When shown one object, finds the match. Identifies and names familiar people, characters and animals.	Sort objects by one feature, such as size or color. Groups objects by common characteristics.
	MR 7 Logic & Reasoning	Uses logic to solve problems.	Experiments with cause and effect.	Recognizes a problem and asks for help.
 Science	SCI 1 Investigation & Inquiry	Observes, inquires and investigates objects and events to gain understanding.	Asks one- to two-word questions. Uses senses to explore environment.	Identifies personal interests and seeks more information. Investigates an object or group of objects in multiple ways. Shares discoveries with others.
	SCI 2 Natural & Earth Science	Understands living and nonliving things, their characteristics and how they change.	Plays with rocks, sand, dirt or water. Reacts to animals or insects in immediate environment. Understands hot and cold. Points at clouds and explores the feel of rain and wind.	Identifies familiar animals, plants or rocks in immediate environment. Groups living things by common characteristics. Notices changes in temperature or weather.
	SCI 3 Physical Science	Explores forces, motion and materials and how they change.	Reacts to changes in texture, smell, sound or sight. Uses body to push or pull toys.	Explores motion by moving, rolling, blowing on or dropping a toy.
	SCI 4 Technology	Explores technology and how things work.	Begins to use simple tools purposefully, such as using a spoon to feed self.	Explores movable parts on toys and tools. Uses on and off switches.
 Social Studies	SS 1 Culture & Community	Explores communities and families, culture and traditions.	With help, participates in family traditions and customs.	Recognizes familiar symbols or artifacts of family traditions or customs. Identifies differences between self and others.
	SS 2 Civics & Economics	Follows familiar rules, routines and helps make group decisions. Explores the concept of trade. Identifies ownership of items.	Participates in communal activities. Expresses a desire for an object or action. Says me, mine.	Recognizes and attends to authority figures. Recognizes ownership of familiar objects.
	SS 3 Geography	Identifies types of places and interacts with maps.	Recognizes familiar places. Finds ways to move around obstacles in a familiar environment.	Identifies a variety of familiar places, such as the store, car, home or Grandma's. Follows a path.
	SS 4 History & Sense of Time	Develops sense of time.	Observes events and begins to participate.	Describes events as they happen. Uses words such as first, then.
 Creative Arts	CA 1 Music	Expresses through music and develops rhythm and tone.	Responds to changes in sound, rhythm, volume or melody. Repeats words in familiar songs and attempts to sing.	Claps to beat (not always consistently). Understands difference of singing and speaking voices. Expresses likes and dislikes of familiar songs. Explores shaking, pounding and tapping various instruments.
	CA 2 Dance & Movement	Expresses through dance and develops movement techniques.	Moves body purposely. Sways or bounces to music. Uses purposeful gestures and body language to communicate.	Follows the movements of others. Explores personal space and direction. Moves in own way to music and rhythm.
	CA 3 Visual Arts	Expresses through 2D and 3D visual art. Develops artistic techniques.	Uses hands and feet to explore a variety of media. Scribbles, colors or paints intentionally on paper.	Explores a variety of artistic tools and media. Uses materials to create shapes and symbols.
	CA 4 Drama	Participates in dramatic and symbolic play. Uses props to represent other objects or ideas.	Mimics observed behaviors and words. Mimics the use of familiar objects.	Uses words, actions and props to pretend. Uses realistic toys as replacements for real objects. Distinguishes between real and pretend.