

FREE tip sheets, activities, articles, & more!

# Engaging Families in Healthy Development

A toolkit of resources parents can use  
to help their child learn and grow



BROOKES

- ✓ Tips and guidelines
- ✓ Fun & easy learning activities
- ✓ Quick-guide to ASQ screening
- ✓ Links to more resources

[www.agesandstages.com](http://www.agesandstages.com)

*Want to email the individual pages in this toolkit to parents?  
Go to [bpub.fyi/family-resources](https://bpub.fyi/family-resources) to find separate downloads of the pages.*



**Parents are their child's first teachers**—and when they're actively involved in promoting early development, the results are better outcomes and stronger parent-child bonds. Children with involved parents are more likely to get the support they need and be prepared for school and future success.

Adapted from the trusted Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ®) family of products, this toolkit of resources will help you engage families in nurturing their child's developmental and social-emotional skills. Families will get:

- **Tips and guidelines** on supporting the healthy development of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers
- Pages of fun, easy, and low-cost **learning activities** that boost key developmental skills
- A quick-guide to some of the most **commonly asked questions** about ASQ screening
- Links to **more tips and activities** on the Brookes Publishing blog

Share these resources with the families you work with, and help them get their children off to the best start in life!

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# Bright Beginnings: Supporting Your Infant's Development





# Supporting Your Infant's Development

## The first year with baby is filled with wonder

From the day they are sent home from the hospital, new parents are filled with questions about their baby. If left unanswered, these questions can quickly turn into worries: *Are they healthy? Are they on track? Am I doing enough? Too much? Am I even doing it right?*

Thankfully, there is clear guidance for parents on what to look for in their child's development, and when to alert a professional if there are concerns.



### Skills to watch for

What sorts of developmental milestones should parents notice, when it comes to typically developing infants during the first year? **Jane Squires, Ph.D.**, is an expert in early childhood development and early identification of delays. Squires is also lead author of the ***Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ®-3)***. Below, Squires shares information from **The Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** about some noteworthy skills and behaviors to watch for as your baby grows.

**At 2 Months:** calms down when spoken to or picked up; looks at your face; smiles when you talk or smile to them; makes sounds other than crying; reacts to loud sounds; watches you as you move; looks at a toy for several seconds; holds head up when on tummy; moves both arms and both legs; opens hands briefly.

**At 4 Months:** chuckles (not yet a full laugh) when you try to make them laugh; looks at you, moves, or makes sounds to get or keep your attention; makes sounds back when you talk; turns head towards the sound of your voice; looks at hands with interest; holds head steady without support when being held; brings hands to mouth; pushes up onto elbows/forearms when on tummy.

**At 6 months:** knows familiar people; likes to look at self in mirror; laughs; takes turns making sounds with you; makes squealing noises; puts things in their mouth to explore them; reaches to grab a toy they want; closes lips to show they don't want more food; rolls from tummy to back; pushes up with straight arms when on tummy; leans on hands to support themselves when sitting.

**At 1 year:** waves "bye-bye"; calls a parent "mama" or "dada" or another special name; understands "no" (pauses briefly or stops when you say it); puts something in a container, like a block in a cup; looks for things they see you hide, like a toy under a blanket; pulls up to stand; walks, holding on to furniture; drinks from a cup without a lid, as you hold it; picks things up between thumb and pointer finger, like small bits of food.

In the event that delays are suspected, don't panic! Early intervention is key. Identifying possible delays early gets you on the path to getting the supports in place to help your child achieve better outcomes. Discuss your child's development and any concerns with your pediatrician or child care provider. They'll have lots of advice, as well as referral options for you to pursue additional resources if needed. You can also do some homework online. There are some great websites referenced on page 26 of this toolkit and on the [agesandstagesresearch.com](http://www.agesandstagesresearch.com) webpage under Parent Resources.





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 2-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Take turns with your baby when he makes cooing and gurgling sounds. Have a "conversation" back and forth with simple sounds that he can make.

Rest your baby, tummy down, on your arm, with your hand on her chest. Use your other hand to secure your baby—support her head and neck. Gently swing her back and forth. As she gets older, walk around to give her different views.

Gently shake a rattle or another baby toy that makes a noise. Put it in your baby's hand. See if she takes it, even for a brief moment.

Read simple books to your baby. Even if he does not understand the story, he will enjoy being close and listening to you read.

Put a puppet or small sock on your finger. Say your baby's name while moving the puppet or sock up and down. See whether he follows the movement. Now move your finger in a circle. Each time your baby is able to follow the puppet, try a new movement.

With white paper and a black marker, create several easy-to-recognize images on each piece of paper. Start with simple patterns (diagonal stripes, bull's eyes, checkerboards, triangles). Place the pictures so that your baby can see them (8"–12" inches from her face). Tape these pictures next to her car seat or crib.

Place a shatterproof mirror close to your baby where she can see it. Start talking, and tap the mirror to get her to look. The mirror will provide visual stimulation. Eventually your baby will understand her reflection.

Sing to your baby (even if you don't do it well). Repetition of songs and lullabies helps your baby to learn and listen.





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 6-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

While sitting on the floor, place your baby in a sitting position inside your legs. Use your legs and chest to provide only as much support as your baby needs. This allows you to play with your baby while encouraging independent sitting.

Gently rub your baby with a soft cloth, a paper towel, or nylon. Talk about how things feel (soft, rough, slippery). Lotion feels good, too.

Common household items such as measuring spoons and measuring cups make toys with interesting sounds and shapes. Gently dangle and shake a set of measuring spoons or measuring cups where your baby can reach or kick at them. Let your baby hold them to explore and shake, too.

**Play voice games.**  
Talk with a high or low voice. Click your tongue. Whisper. Take turns with your baby. Repeat any sounds made by him. Place your baby so that you are face to face—your baby will watch as you make sounds.

With your baby lying on his back, place a toy within sight but out of reach, or move a toy across your baby's visual range. Encourage him to roll to get the toy.

Place your baby in a chair or car seat to watch everyday activities. Tell your baby what you are doing. Let your baby see, hear, and touch common objects. You can give your baby attention while getting things done.

Your baby will like to throw toys to the floor. Take a little time to play this "go and fetch" game. It helps your baby to learn to release objects. Give baby a box or pan to practice dropping toys into.

Place your baby facing you. Your baby can watch you change facial expressions (big smile, poking out tongue, widening eyes, raising eyebrows, puffing or blowing). Give your baby a turn. Do what your baby does.





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 1-year-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

### Let your baby "help"

during daily routines. Encourage your baby to "get" the cup and spoon for mealtime, to "find" shoes and coat for dressing, and to "bring" the pants or diaper for changing.

**Following directions** is an important skill for your baby to learn.

### Babies love games at this age (Pat-a-Cake, This Little Piggy).

Try different ways of playing the games and see if your baby will try it with you. Hide behind furniture or doors for Peekaboo; clap blocks or pan lids for Pat-a-cake.

### Make puppets out

of a sock or paper bag—one for you and one for your baby. Have your puppet talk to your baby or your baby's puppet. Encourage your baby to "talk" back.

Tape a large piece of drawing paper to a table. Show your baby how to **scribble** with large nontoxic crayons. Take turns making marks on the paper. It's also fun to paint with water.

Babies enjoy **push and pull toys**. Make your own pull toy by threading yogurt cartons, spools, or small boxes on a piece of yarn or soft string (about 2 feet long). Tie a bead or plastic stacking ring on one end for a handle.

This is the time your baby learns that adults can be useful! When your baby "asks" for something by vocalizing or pointing, respond to his signal. **Name the object** your baby wants and encourage him to communicate again—taking turns with each other in a "**conversation**."

Cut up safe **finger foods** (do not use foods that pose a danger of your baby's choking) in small pieces and allow your baby to feed himself. It is good practice to pick up small things and feel different textures (bananas, soft crackers, berries).





# How **Parents** of **Infants** Can Support **Social-Emotional Development**



## **Provide a safe home and play environment for your baby**

- Do a safety check at home to make it safe for your baby.
- Have a safe way to transport your baby.
- Know ways to keep your baby safe throughout the day.
- Have someone you trust who can help take care of your baby.
- Provide access to health care for your baby.
- Know how to manage feelings of anger and frustration that come up when you're with your baby.

## **Provide predictable schedule/routines and an appropriate environment for your baby**

- Create and follow routines that make eating enjoyable and satisfying for you and your baby.
- Provide a nap and sleeping routine for your baby that is predictable and appropriate for your baby's age.
- Use daily activities as playtime or make time each day to play with your baby.

## **Respond to your baby's needs**

- Understand your baby's non-verbal communication and know how to respond.
- Understand your baby's verbal communication and know how to respond.
- Know how to help your baby calm down.

## **Provide activities and play with your baby**

- Provide your child with books, toys, and playthings that are safe and that your baby enjoys.
- Know the age-appropriate games that your baby enjoys.

# Beyond Babyhood: Supporting Your Toddler's Development



# Supporting Your Toddler's Development

## Moving beyond babyhood and into unique personality

As toddlers explore their abilities, begin to assert independence, and forge an identity, it is normal to push boundaries once in a while. Toddler development is where your baby becomes a more of an individual, wanting to exercise more control over things, and wanting to be understood. Gaining the ability to communicate is a huge step in and making all of that happen. But often toddler speech is still quite hard to understand, and that can create some frustration.

### Watching for Progress

Just as it's natural for the toddler to rebel, it's natural for parents to worry. Parents who wonder if their toddler is on track for developmental milestones can find solace in knowing they are not alone. Children develop at their own pace, and there's not an exact time they'll learn a specific skill, but common milestones do help establish a general idea of what to watch for and when.

Resources for parents to gauge their toddler's developmental progress are easy to find, and pediatricians are always willing to lend an ear to concerned parents. If there are delays, early intervention services are accessible to all and can significantly improve long-term outcomes.



### Noteworthy Milestones

What sorts of developmental milestones should parents notice, when it comes to typically developing children between 1 and 3 years of age? **Jane Squires, Ph.D.**, is an expert in early childhood development and early identification of delays. Squires is also lead author of the *Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ®-3)*. Below, Squires shares information from **The Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** about some noteworthy skills and behaviors to watch for as your toddler grows.

**At 1 year:** waves “bye-bye”; calls a parent “mama” or “dada” or another special name; understands “no” (pauses briefly or stops when you say it); puts something in a container, like a block in a cup; looks for things they see you hide, like a toy under a blanket; pulls up to stand; walks, holding on to furniture; drinks from a cup without a lid, as you hold it; picks things up between thumb and pointer finger, like small bits of food.

**At 18 months:** moves away from you, but looks to make sure you are close by; points to show you something interesting; looks at a few pages in a book with you; help you dress them by pushing arms through sleeves or lifting up feet; tries to say three or more words besides “mama” or “dada”; follows one-step directions without any gestures, like giving you the toy when you say “Give it to me”; plays with toys in a simple way, like pushing a toy car; walks without holding onto anyone or anything; scribbles; climbs on and off a couch or chair without help.

**By the end of year 2:** notices when others are hurt or upset, like pausing or looking sad when someone is crying; points to things in a book when you ask, like “Where is the bear?”; says at least two words together, like “More milk”; tries to use switches, knobs, or buttons on a toy; plays with more than one toy at the same time, like putting toy food on a toy plate; kicks a ball; runs; walks (not climbs) up a few stairs with or without help; eats with a spoon.





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 18-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Pretend play becomes even more fun at this age. Encourage your toddler to have a doll or stuffed toy do what he does—walk, go to bed, dance, eat, and jump. Include the doll in daily activities or games.

Toddlers love movement. Take him to the park to ride on rocking toys, swings, and small slides. You may want to hold your toddler in your lap on the swing and on the slide at first.

Put favorite toys in a laundry basket slightly out of reach of your toddler or in a clear container with a tight lid. Wait for your toddler to request the objects, giving her a reason to communicate. Respond to her requests.

Sing action songs together such as "Ring Around the Rosy," "Itsy-Bitsy Spider," and "This Is the Way We Wash Our Hands." Do actions together. Move with the rhythm. Wait for your toddler to anticipate the action.

Toddlers will begin putting objects together. Simple puzzles (separate pieces) with knobs are great. Putting keys into locks and letters into mailbox slots is fun, too.

Your toddler may become interested in "art activities." Use large nontoxic crayons and a large pad of paper. Felt-tip markers are more exciting with their bright colors. Let your toddler scribble his own picture as you make one.

Play the "What's that?" game by pointing to clothing, toys, body parts, objects, or pictures and asking your toddler to name them. If your toddler doesn't respond, name it for him and encourage imitation of the words.

Fill a plastic tub with cornmeal or oatmeal. Put in kitchen spoons, strainers, measuring cups, funnels, or plastic containers. Toddlers can fill, dump, pour, and learn about textures and use of objects as tools. Tasting won't be harmful.





# Activities

AGE 2

## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 2-year-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Action is an important part of a child's life. Play a game with a ball where you **give directions** and your child does the actions, such as "Roll the ball." Kick, throw, push, bounce, and catch are other good actions. Take turns giving the directions.

Children can find endless uses for **boxes**. A box big enough for your child to fit in can become a car. An appliance box with holes cut for windows and a door can become your child's playhouse. Decorating the boxes with crayons, markers, or paints can be a fun activity to do together.

Take time to **draw** with your child when she wants to get out paper and crayons. Draw large shapes and let your child color them in. Take turns.

Play "**Follow the Leader.**" Walk on tiptoes, walk backward, and walk slow or fast with big steps and little steps.

Enhance listening skills by playing both slow and fast music. Songs with speed changes are great. Show your child how to move fast or slow with the **music**.

Children at this age love to **pretend** and really enjoy it when you can pretend with them. Pretend you are different animals, like a dog or cat. Make animal sounds and actions. Let your child be the pet owner who pets and feeds you.

Add actions to your child's favorite **nursery rhymes**. Easy action rhymes include "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush," "Jack Be Nimble," "This Is the Way We Wash Our Clothes," "Ring Around the Rosy," and "London Bridge."





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 30-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Tell or read a familiar story and pause frequently to leave out a word, asking your child to "fill it in." For example, Little Red Riding Hood said, "Grandmother, what big \_\_\_\_\_ you have."

Give a cup to your child. Use bits of cereal or fruit and place one in your child's cup ("one for you") and one in your cup ("one for me"). Take turns. Dump out your child's cup and help count the pieces. This is good practice for early math skills.

Trace around simple objects with your child. Use cups of different sizes, blocks, or your child's and your hands. Using felt-tip markers or crayons of different colors makes it even more fun.

Have your child help you set the table. First, have your child place the plates, then cups, and then napkins. By placing one at each place, he will learn one-to-one correspondence. Show your child where the utensils should be placed.

Help your child learn new words to describe objects in everyday conversations. Describe by color, size, and shape (the blue cup, the big ball). Also, describe how things move (a car goes fast, a turtle moves slowly) and how they feel (ice cream is cold, soup is hot).

To improve coordination and balance, show your child the "bear walk" by walking on hands and feet, keeping the legs and arms straight. Try the "rabbit hop" by crouching down and then jumping forward.

Cut pictures out of magazines to make two groups such as dogs, food, toys, or clothes. Have two boxes ready and put a picture of a dog in one and of food in the other. Have your child put additional pictures in the right box, helping her learn about categories.

Put an old blanket over a table to make a tent or house. Pack a "picnic" sack for your camper. Have your child take along a pillow on the "camp out" for a nap. Flashlights are especially fun.





# How **Parents** of **Toddlers** Can Support **Social-Emotional Development**



## **Respond to your child's needs**

- Understand your child's nonverbal communication and know how to respond.
- Understand your child's verbal communication and know how to respond.
- Support your child's emotional needs.
- Use positive comments and language with your child.
- Successfully redirect your child's inappropriate behaviors.
- Understand why your child engages in inappropriate behaviors and how to modify the environment.

## **Provide predictable schedule/routines and an appropriate environment for your child**

- Provide a mealtime routine for your child that is predictable and appropriate for your child's age.
- Provide a rest and sleeping routine for your child that is predictable and appropriate for your child's age.
- Provide your child with predictable limits and consequences.
- Take time each day to play with your child.

## **Provide a safe home and play environment for your child**

- Do a safety check at home to make it safe for your child.
- Have a safe way to transport your child.
- Provide your child with safe care and supervision.
- Provide access to regular medical and dental care for your child.
- Know how to manage your feelings of anger and frustration that come up when you're with your child.

## **Provide activities that match your child's development level**

- Provide your child with books, toys, and playthings that match your child's developmental level.
- Know the age-appropriate games that your child enjoys.

# Ready for School Success: Supporting Your Preschooler's Development



## New skills prepare 3s and 4s for school and beyond

As toddlers grow into their 3s and 4s, emotions begin to emerge and need managing. Independence becomes a new theme. Developmental milestones can come fast, as those uncertain toddlers bloom into bigger, more distinct personalities, and get ready to take on the world—and school.

Three- and four-year-old children are a wonder to behold. In such a time of rapid change, many parents look for reassurance that their little ones are still meeting typical developmental milestones—and to learn what they can do to support healthy child development. If there are delays, catching them early and getting intervention services is key.



### Meeting Milestones

**Jane Squires, Ph.D.**, is an expert on early childhood development and identification of delays, and lead author of the *Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ®-3)*. Squires emphasizes that along with physical and cognitive development, children's social-emotional skill development and competence is a particularly important indicator of school readiness. "Checking in on progress in these areas is an essential part of preparing for school," says Squires. "Self-regulation and other social-emotional skills that help the child cooperate and listen in the classroom are often more predictive of academic and job successes than pre-academic skills."

When parents, pediatricians, and child care providers work together, they present a child's best opportunities to meet developmental milestones and be ready for school and beyond. Below, Squires shares information from **The Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** about some noteworthy skills and behaviors to watch for as your child grows.

**At age 3:** calms down within 10 minutes after you leave them, like at a childcare drop off; notices other children and joins them to play; talks with you in a conversation using at least two back-and-forth exchanges; asks "who", "what" "where", or "why" questions, like "Where is mommy/daddy?"; says first name, when asked; talks well enough for others to understand, most of the time; draws a circle when you show them how; avoids touching hot objects like a stove, when you warn them; strings items together, like large beads or macaroni; puts on some clothes by themselves, like loose pants or a jacket; uses a fork to eat.



**At age 4:** pretends to be something else during play (teacher, superhero, dog); asks to go play with children if none are around, like "Can I play with Alex?"; comforts others who are hurt or sad, like hugging a crying friend; avoids danger, like not jumping from tall heights at the playground; says sentences with four or more words; says some words from a song, story, or nursery rhyme; talks about at least one thing that happened during the day, like "I played soccer."; answers simple questions like "What is a coat for?" or "What is a crayon for?"; names a few colors of items; tells what comes next in a well-known story; draws a person with three or more body parts; catches a large ball most of the time; serves themselves food or pours water, with adult supervision; unbuttons some buttons; holds a crayon or pencil between fingers and thumb (not a fist).





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 3-year-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Make an **adventure path** outside. Use a garden hose, rope, or piece of chalk and make a "path" that goes under the bench, around the tree, and along the wall. Walk your child through the path first, using these words. After she can do it, make a new path or have your child make a path.

Before bedtime, look at a magazine or children's book together. Ask your child to **point to pictures** as you name them, such as "Where is the truck?" Be silly and ask him to point with an elbow or foot. Ask him to show you something that is round or something that goes fast.

While cooking or eating dinner, play the **"more or less"** game with your child. Ask who has more potatoes and who has less. Try this using same-size glasses or cups, filled with juice or milk.

Make a **necklace** you can eat by stringing Cheerios or Froot Loops on a piece of yarn or string. Wrap a short piece of tape around the end of the string to make a firm tip for stringing.

Practice **following directions**. Play a silly game where you ask your child to do two or three fun or unusual things in a row. For example, ask him to "Touch your elbow and then run in a circle" or "Find a book and put it on your head."

Find large pieces of paper or cardboard for your child to **draw on**. Using crayons, pencils, or markers, play a drawing game where you follow his lead by copying exactly what he draws. Next, encourage your child to copy your drawings, such as circles or straight lines.

Listen and dance to **music** with your child. You can stop the music for a moment and play the "freeze" game, where everyone "freezes," or stands perfectly still, until you start the music again. Try to "freeze" in unusual positions for fun.





# Activities

AGE 4

## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 4-year-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Invite your child to play a **counting game**. Using a large piece of paper, make a simple game board with a straight path. Use dice to determine the count. Count with your child, and encourage her to hop the game piece to each square, counting each time the piece touches down.

Play the **"guess what will happen"** game to encourage your child's problem-solving and thinking skills. For example, during bath time, ask your child, "What do you think will happen if I turn on the hot and cold water at the same time?" or "What would happen if I stacked the blocks to the top of the ceiling?"

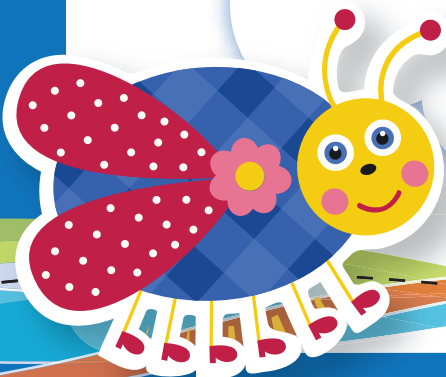
Play **"bucket hoops."** Have your child stand about 6 feet away and throw a medium-size ball at a large bucket or trash can. For fun outdoors on a summer day, fill the bucket with water.

Make a **bean bag** to catch and throw. Fill the toe of an old sock or pantyhose with 3/4 cup dry beans. Sew the remaining side or tie off with a rubber band. Play "hot potato" or simply play catch. Encourage your child to throw the ball overhand and underhand.

Go on a **walk** and pick up things you find. Bring the items home and help your child **sort them into groups**. For example, groups can include rocks, paper or leaves. Encourage your child to start a collection of special things. Find a box or special place where he can display the collection.

**"Write" and mail a letter** to a friend or relative. Provide your child with paper, crayons or pencil, and an envelope. Let your child draw, scribble, or write; or he can tell you what to write down. When your child is finished, let him fold the letter to fit in the envelope, lick, and seal. You can write the address on the front. Be sure to let him decorate the envelope as well. After he has put the stamp on, help mail the letter.

Play **"circus."** Find old, colorful clothes and help your child put on a circus show. Provide a rope on the ground for the high wire act, a sturdy box to stand on to announce the acts, fun objects for a magic act, and stuffed animals for the show. Encourage your child's imagination and creativity in planning the show. Don't forget to clap.





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 5-year-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Encourage **dramatic play**. Help your child act out his favorite nursery rhyme, cartoon, or story. Use large, old clothes for costumes.

Make an **obstacle course** either inside or outside your home. You can use cardboard boxes for jumping over or climbing through, broomsticks for laying between chairs for "limbo" (going under), and pillows for walking around. Let your child help lay out the course. After a couple of practice tries, have him complete the obstacle course. Then try hopping or jumping through the course.

Play **"mystery sound."** Select household items that make distinct sounds such as a clock, cereal box, metal lid (placed on a pan), and potato chip bag. Put a blindfold on your child and have him try to guess which object made the sound. Take turns with your child.

Play the **"memory"** game. Put five or six familiar objects on a table. Have your child close her eyes. Remove one object, and rearrange the rest. Ask your child which object is missing. Take turns finding the missing object.

Practice **writing** first names of friends, toys, and relatives. Your child may need to trace the letters of these names at first. Be sure to write in large print letters.

Let your child help you with simple **cooking tasks** such as mashing potatoes, making cheese sandwiches, and fixing a bowl of cereal. Afterward, see if he can tell you the order that you followed to cook and mash the potatoes or to get the bread out of the cupboard and put the cheese on it. Supervise carefully when your child is near a hot stove.

You can play **"license plate count up"** in the car or on the bus. Look for a license plate that contains the number 1. Then try to find other plates with 2, 3, 4, and so forth, up to 10. When your child can play "count-up," play "count-down," starting with the number 9, then 8, 7, 6, and so forth, down to 1.



# How Parents of Preschoolers Can Support Social-Emotional Development



## Respond to your child's needs

- Understand your child's nonverbal communication and know how to respond.
- Understand your child's verbal communication and know how to respond.
- Support your child's emotional needs.
- Use positive comments and language with your child.
- Successfully redirect your child's inappropriate behaviors.
- Understand why your child engages in inappropriate behaviors and how to modify the environment.

## Provide predictable schedule/routines and an appropriate environment for your child

- Provide a mealtime routine for your child that is predictable and appropriate for your child's age.
- Provide a rest and sleeping routine for your child that is predictable and appropriate for your child's age.
- Provide your child with predictable limits and consequences.
- Take time each day to play with your child.

## Provide a safe home and play environment for your child

- Do a safety check at home to make it safe for your child.
- Have a safe way to transport your child.
- Provide your child with safe care and supervision.
- Provide access to regular medical and dental care for your child.
- Know how to manage your feelings of anger and frustration that come up when you're with your child.

## Provide activities that match your child's development level

- Provide your child with books, toys, and playthings that match your child's developmental level.
- Know the age-appropriate games that your child enjoys.





# ASQ<sup>®</sup> for Parents

## Your Quick-Guide to ASQ<sup>®</sup> Screening

If you're like most parents, you probably have a lot of questions when a doctor or teacher says your child will be screened. You know your child better than anyone else, and the thought of "scoring" what they can and can't do might make you feel apprehensive—angry even. You might wonder how a questionnaire can accurately capture all your child's skills, and if screening might lead to a label or diagnosis. And as a busy, concerned parent, you might have practical questions too, like how long is this going to take? and what happens next?

### The “Why” of Screening



#### What is Screening?

Screening is a quick check of your child's development. It's happening in a wide variety of early childhood settings these days—from doctor's offices to preschools to child care programs. Screening takes a snapshot of your child's current skills and helps accurately identify children who may be at risks for delays.



#### Why is it important for my child to be screened?

Regular screening provides a fast and helpful look at how your child is doing in important areas like communication, social skills, motor skills, and problem-solving skills. Screening can identify your child's strengths, uncover new milestones to celebrate, and reveal any areas where your child may need support. It helps you understand your child's development and know what to look for next. And it helps you work with doctors and educators to plan next steps when it makes the most difference—your child's critical first years of life.



#### Can a questionnaire really capture my child's true skills and developmental progress?

Yes! Studies have shown that parent-completed screeners like ASQ<sup>®</sup> are very effective at pinpointing child progress. Information parents give about their children is usually highly accurate. Plus a parent-report tool like ASQ calls for your unique perspective on how your child behaves and performs skills in natural settings like your home. That means it can capture the big picture of your child's development better than a screening that takes place in an unfamiliar setting.



#### Why would I want to fill out a questionnaire that highlights what my child can't do?

The great thing about ASQ is that it's strengths-focused—the emphasis is really on what your child can do. It's the perfect way to keep track of milestones and celebrate them as your child grows and develops.



## What if my child has a diagnosed disability? Will I still be asked to fill out an ASQ questionnaire?

As ASQ co-developer Jane Squires says: “The main point of screening is to catch children who may be at risk for disabilities...If children are already diagnosed with a disability, screening is redundant.” So ideally, you won’t be asked to fill out a questionnaire if your child has been diagnosed already. However, if your state’s regulations require universal screening for all kids, talk to your healthcare or educational professional—they may need to seek clarification from the administrative office regarding the screening of children with disabilities. You may choose to fill out selected portions of the questionnaire that apply to your child, or you can decline consent for participating in screening.



## Can my child’s teacher also fill out an ASQ questionnaire?

Yes, teachers or other providers who spend 15–20 hours per week with a child may also complete ASQ questionnaires. Since teachers spend so much time with your child and know them so well, their expertise and insights can be invaluable. After your child’s teacher completes a questionnaire, it’s helpful for them to share results with you and discuss any differences in skills or behaviors seen at school versus at home.

## How ASQ Works



### What is ASQ, exactly?

The ASQ screeners are sets of valid, reliable, and age-appropriate questionnaires that are filled out by the true expert on your child—you! There are two screeners in the ASQ family: **ASQ®-3**, which looks at key areas of early development, and **ASQ®:SE-2**, which focuses on social-emotional development.



### Tell me more about ASQ-3

ASQ-3 is a set of simple questionnaires trusted for more than 20 years to check child development. There are 21 ASQ-3 questionnaires for use with children from 1 month to 5½ years old (one questionnaire for each age range). Here are the five important areas of development that each questionnaire looks at:

1. **Communication:** Your child’s language skills, both what your child understands and what he or she can say.
2. **Gross Motor:** How your child uses their arms and legs and other large muscles for sitting, crawling, walking, running, and other activities.
3. **Fine Motor:** Your child’s hand and finger movement and coordination.
4. **Problem Solving:** How your child plays with toys and solves problems.
5. **Personal-Social:** Your child’s self-help skills and interactions with others.

The “Overall” section asks you open-ended questions about your child’s development and lets you weigh in with any concerns you may have.



## Tell me more about ASQ:SE-2

ASQ:SE-2 is a set of questionnaires with a deep, exclusive focus on social-emotional development. There are 9 ASQ:SE-2 questionnaires for use with children from 1 month to 6 years old. Here are the seven important areas of development that each questionnaire looks at:

1. **Autonomy:** Your child's ability or willingness to self-initiate or respond without guidance (moving to independence).
2. **Compliance:** Your child's ability or willingness to conform to the direction of others and follow rules.
3. **Adaptive Functioning:** Your child's success or ability to cope with bodily needs (sleeping, eating, toileting, safety).
4. **Self-Regulation:** Your child's ability or willingness to calm or settle down or adjust to physiological or environmental conditions or stimulations.
5. **Affect:** Your child's ability or willingness to demonstrate their own feelings and empathy for others.
6. **Interaction:** Your child's ability or willingness to respond to or initiate social responses with parents, other adults, and peers.
7. **Social-Communication:** Your child's ability or willingness to interact with others by responding or initiating verbal or nonverbal signals to indicate interests, needs, or feelings.

The "Overall" section asks open-ended questions about your child's social-emotional development and lets you weigh in with any concerns.



## How long does an ASQ questionnaire take?

You'll only need 10–15 minutes to fill out an ASQ-3 or ASQ:SE-2 questionnaire. It's that quick and easy!



## How does it work?

- You'll receive an ASQ questionnaire from your child's healthcare provider or early childhood educator. They might send it to you in the mail, give you access to a secure website where you can fill it out, or give you the questionnaire during an in-person visit.
- You'll answer each question based on what your child is able to do now. Your answers help show your child's strengths and areas where they may need practice or support.
- After you complete the ASQ questionnaire, just return it to your child's healthcare or education professional. They'll score the questionnaire, share the results with you, and discuss any follow-up steps.

## Next Steps



### What happens after I get my child's ASQ results?

If your child is developing without concerns, there won't be specific follow-up steps—just keep playing and interacting with your child as they grow and reach new milestones. If your child has trouble with some skills, your program will help you with next steps, including a possible referral for more assessment. Whether or not there are concerns, your program might also give you some fun and easy ASQ learning activities to try with your child before the next screening.



### What are the ASQ Learning Activities?

These are fun, age-appropriate activities and games you can try with your child to boost their development between screenings (and have fun with them at the same time)! Your child's doctor or teacher might print these out or email them to you after an ASQ screening.



### Will my child be labeled as a result of an ASQ screening?

ASQ is a screener, not an assessment, so it can't diagnose a disability. It can help determine if your child needs further assessment or support in one or more areas. A big benefit of ASQ is that it helps catch potential delays or issues early—so if your child does need some extra support, follow-up, or intervention, they can get it now, when it makes the most difference.

Each ASQ questionnaire you complete helps get your child off to the best possible start in life. Thanks for reading this introduction to screening—we hope it answered your questions and reduced some of your worries. If you have any other questions about screening, please explore the rest of the ASQ website ([www.agesandstages.com](http://www.agesandstages.com)) or talk to your child's healthcare or education professional.





# Our Top 12 Blog Posts for Parents of Young Children

Read these practical posts on the Brookes Blog for more activities, tips, and guidance on promoting children's development in the crucial first years of life:



## Fun Activities for All 4 Seasons

**10 Fun Fall Activities that Support Young Children's Development**

**21 Skill-Boosting At-Home Activities to Try with Your Child this Winter**

**12 At-Home Spring Activities to Boost Your Child's Development**

**14 Skill-Building Summer Activities to Do with Young Children**

## Early Literacy & Math Skills

**Math All Day: 14 Ways to Teach Young Children Math Skills During Daily Routines**

**20 Shared Reading Tips to Share with Parents**

**11 Language-Boosting Activities for Young Children**

**12 Ways Parents and Teachers Can Encourage Early Literacy and Language Skills**



## Social-Emotional Development

**11 Simple Things You Can Do to Support Young Children's Social-Emotional Skills**

**10 Activities for Teaching Young Children About Emotions**

**The Power of Mindfulness: Practical Tips to Help Children Feel Safe & Secure**

**Recommended Reads: 25 Books, Programs, & Resources on Social-Emotional Learning**

Find these blog posts and more at  
**[blog.brookespublishing.com](http://blog.brookespublishing.com)**

## Additional Resources for Parents:

**Ages & Stages Questionnaires**

[www.agesandstages.com](http://www.agesandstages.com)

**American Academy of Pediatrics**

[www.healthychildren.org/english/ages-stages](http://www.healthychildren.org/english/ages-stages)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones)

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting)

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/concerned.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/concerned.html)

**Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning**

[csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/family.html](http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/family.html)

**National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations**

[challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu](http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu)

**National Parent Helpline**

[www.nationalparenthelpline.org](http://www.nationalparenthelpline.org)

**Parenting Counts**

[www.parentingcounts.org/developmental-timeline](http://www.parentingcounts.org/developmental-timeline)

**Vroom**

[www.vroom.org](http://www.vroom.org)

**ZERO TO THREE**

[www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/parent-favorites](http://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/parent-favorites)

[www.bpub.fyi/Lets-Play-App](http://www.bpub.fyi/Lets-Play-App)

Find more parent resources at

[www.agesandstages.com](http://www.agesandstages.com)  
[www.brookespublishing.com](http://www.brookespublishing.com)



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