A Baby Journal
NICU Follow-up Clinic
Fairview-University Medical Center
Minneapolis, MN

THE FIRST FEW MONTHS
The period from birth through the first few years is one of many changes. This is a time of rapid growth and continuously acquiring new developmental skills. Each baby has a unique personality in how he/she responds to people and the environment around him/her. Development occurs as an ongoing interaction between the baby and his/her world over time. Development usually takes place in a fairly predictable sequence, with the later stages building on the success of earlier ones. New developmental skills are often learned in spurts, with lulls or plateaus in between. The age at which a baby will reach a certain developmental milestone can vary greatly.

Your baby was born prematurely or was sick at birth and required intensive care. Most babies do very well over time, but following their development a little more closely is beneficial. We will refer to your baby's corrected age, or adjusted age, if he/she was born prematurely. Your baby's adjusted age is the age he/she would have been if he/she was born on the actual due date. For example, if your baby was born at 28 weeks gestation (three months early), when he/she is six months old, his/her age corrected for prematurity would be three months. We continue to use age corrected for prematurity until your child is about two and a half years old. In the NICU Follow-Up Clinic we use corrected age to follow your baby's growth and development.

The first several weeks after you take your baby home is a time of adjustment for your entire family. Your baby is learning to eat better and grow, and to settle into a rhythm of family life.

Newborns see best at six to twelve inches and usually prefer faces or contrast colors such as black and white. Their hearing is very good early, and they are usually very responsive to voices and touch.

Newborns have two different sleep states and four different awake states:
- Quiet sleep with little movement
- Active sleep with some movement and more responsiveness to the environment around them
- Drowsy
- Quiet-alert with minimal body movement and a bright, alert face (Your baby will focus on your face, voice or moving objects when she or he is in this state.)
- Active-alert; awake with much more body movement
- Crying
Babies are very responsive and have cues when they are ready to interact, such as looking at you, reaching toward you, smiling, cooing. They also have cues when they may feel a little overwhelmed and need a break. These may include turning their head away, crying, falling asleep, or even something as subtle as hiccuping.

After your baby has been home for a few weeks, he/she may start to cry more than when he/she was younger. This is very normal and something most babies will do as they become older. Even very young babies are sometimes able to calm themselves when they are upset. They will bring their hands to their face or suck on their fingers or hand. If you need to soothe a crying baby, you can try talking to him/her in a quiet voice, cuddling him/her, letting him/her suck on a pacifier, wrapping him/her snugly in a blanket or singing. Different things will work for individual babies. It may be best to try one thing at a time before trying something else.

The following pages detail a baby's development over the first few years. The items listed are important developmental milestones in the areas of gross and fine motor skills and cognitive and social development. It is important to remember these are only guidelines, and your baby may learn these new skills in a slightly different time frame. We have also included some activities for you and your baby which will help him/her develop some of these new skills.

**BABY’S DEVELOPMENT AT TERM (NEAR YOUR DUE DATE)**

**Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development**

On his back, his arms and legs are bent and flexed close to his body with his head turned to the side. He is able to smoothly move his arms and legs, and kicks with flexed hips and knees. On his tummy, his arms and legs are bent and flexed close to his body. He is able to turn his head from side to side. He has poor head control when in a supported sitting position, and his head feels very heavy and floppy.

**Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development**

His hands are generally fisted. He has a strong grasp reflex if you place your fingers in his palm. He will have lots of random arm movements when he is awake, but makes no attempt to reach for what is seen, heard or felt.

**Cognitive, Social and Visual Development**

He quiets or settles down when picked up, or in response to being held or talked to. He becomes alert to faces and voices, but may be sensitive to bright light or sunlight. He is sensitive to the location of sound. He sees patterns, light and dark, and focuses best at six to twelve inches. He sleeps 70 to 80 percent of the time. The best time for social interactions of up to five minutes is when he is in a quiet-alert state and not hungry. He remembers and prefers his mother's voice to a stranger's voice.
Activities for You and Your Baby

- Make time for lots of face-to-face interactions with him during daily care activities. Watching your face is a wonderful learning experience for him, and he will learn how to smile and recognize your face the more he stares at you.

- Hold your face no more than twelve inches away from him when you feed, hold and talk to him. This is the best focusing distance for him to see.

- He may need to take frequent short breaks from direct eye contact during your visual interaction with him. Respect his "I need a break" signals and let him shift his gaze, look away from you, turn his head or squint his eyes to take a little break. If eye contact is difficult to achieve, this may be his way of telling you he is over-stimulated or stressed.

- Talk to him while you are bathing or dressing him.

- Change his sleep position in his crib and place interesting things to look at on different sides so his head is not always facing the same direction. This will keep his head from becoming flattened on one side.

Baby’s Development at One Month

Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development
On her back, she actively moves her arms and kicks her legs, extending out further. Movements are still reflexive and not purposeful. Her head is still turned to either side. On her stomach, she is beginning to do more active lifting and turning of her head. She may get her hand to her mouth to suck on. Her arms are beginning to move away from her body. She continues to need support of her head, and may begin to lift her head momentarily when she is held upright against your shoulder.

Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development
Her hands are beginning to open up more. She likes to grasp your fingers; this is still a reflexive grasp.

Cognitive, Social and Visual Development
She stares at objects and makes eye contact. She prefers to look at patterns over color. She is increasingly alert and may stay awake one to two hours out of every eight. She may begin to smile at a face or at the sound of a voice. She can distinguish similar sounds like "ba" and "pa." Her daily patterns of sleeping, crying and eating are still disorganized. She may cry for prolonged periods, especially in the evening. This will improve over the next two to three months.

Activities for You and Your Baby

- Enjoy special times each day with her when she is alert and calm. Small, frequent periods of social interaction are nice, and can happen during daily
activities such as diaper changing, dressing, bathing and feeding. Talk to her, smile at her.

- Experiment with different positions when you hold her, always making sure she feels secure. Hold her cradled on your chest on her tummy. Hold her up on your shoulder with support at her head so she can look around. Hold her sitting, leaning against your chest.

- Ideas for toys at this time include mobiles, plastic mirrors, small light-weight rattles and wrist rattles.

**BABY’S DEVELOPMENT AT TWO MONTHS**

**Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development**

On his back when awake, he will cycle his arms and legs smoothly with a variety of movements. He has more extended and straight arms and legs. Arms are still held out at his sides and do not yet come together in the middle of his body. On his stomach, he can lift his head and hold it up for short periods of time, at least five to ten seconds. Hips and legs are extending and he may begin to squiggle or squirm about. In supported sitting, he is beginning to make attempts at lifting and holding his head up for short periods of time, but head-bobbing is still seen. He may begin to take weight on his legs for three to five seconds in supported standing.

**Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development**

His grasp of your fingers and toys is becoming more voluntary. He will hold a light-weight rattle for three to five seconds if you place it in his palm. His hands are open most of the time now.

**Cognitive, Social and Visual Development**

He has increased visual alertness. He may begin to make small throaty sounds. Visually, he still continues to look at people and faces. He can quiet himself by sucking on his hand or by attempting to bring his hand to his mouth. He becomes excited and smiles at people. He can differentiate between a real face and a picture of a face. Each will get a smile, but your face will get a bigger smile. He is starting to remember frequently heard songs or stories.

**Activities for You and Your Baby**

- Let him play on his tummy for short periods of time on a nice big blanket on the floor. You can lie down in front of him and encourage him to practice lifting up his head for short interactions. Put some toys nearby for him to look at.

- Name, show and gently massage his hands as you dress, bath and cuddle him. Help him rub or touch his hands together on his chest or face. If you lie him on his side, it will be easy for him to begin to "find" his hands on his own.
Ideas for toys at this time include mobiles, plastic mirrors and rattles.

**BABY'S DEVELOPMENT AT THREE MONTHS**

**Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development**
On her back, she is now able to hold her head in the midline of her body. She may begin to rub her feet together and has lots of active kicking. She is beginning to "find her hands" and will hold her hands on her chest, stare at her hands, etc. On her stomach, she can prop briefly on her elbows or forearms and lift her head up for short periods of time. In sitting, she is trying to keep her head still when supported in sitting. Less head-bobbing is seen, her back is rounded and she leans forward.

**Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development**
Her arms and hands now come together on her chest. She may begin to swipe or bat at suspended toys, but with poor control. She is beginning to clutch at clothing and blankets.

**Cognitive, Social and Visual Development**
She smiles easily and spontaneously, and may start to laugh and make vowel sounds (ooh, aah). Her facial expressions and vocalizing increase. She stares indefinitely at surroundings and will glance from one object to the next. She will glance from one object to the next slowly, smoothly and reliably with her eyes. She is beginning to sense that her hands and legs are extensions of her and will look at and mouth her fingers. She watches her hands move and may bring them to her mouth. She begins to recognize and differentiate family members or other people close to her. Her patterns of eating, sleeping and alertness are more clearly regulated, and she anticipates feeding, being picked up, etc.

**Activities for You and Your Baby**
- Hold her up in supported sitting positions during the day so that she can practice holding her head steady for short periods of time. Place a moving toy at her eye level to encourage her to stay sitting for longer periods of time.
- Hang toys across her crib or on the floor when she is lying on her back so that she can really stare at them and maybe even begin to reach for them. When you are holding her while talking on the phone, let her play with the coiled phone cord. Give her a rattle to hold during a diaper change or give her a small cut-up sponge (1 x 3 inches) to hold during her bath.
- Bring your face within her reach when you hold her or during close interactive times. Kiss and nibble at her fingers if she makes attempts at reaching for you.
Continue to give her opportunities to play on her tummy. This will help her strengthen her head, neck and shoulders in preparation for learning to roll.

**BABY'S DEVELOPMENT AT FOUR MONTHS**

**Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development**

On his back, your baby may now be able to roll to either side and is actively reaching for toys. He can hold his head in the middle and freely turn his head to look at or follow toys. He lifts his legs off the surface of the floor when kicking and does lots of kicking. On his stomach, he props on his forearms and has good strong head lifting, holding and control. He can turn his head easily from side to side to follow an object. He may begin to roll from his tummy to his back and works hard at rolling. He likes playing on his tummy and may rock like an airplane with his arms and legs up off the floor. When he is supported in sitting, he can hold his head in midline for very long periods of time with good head control. His back is getting straighter in the sitting position. He cannot yet use his arms to reach and play in sitting. When he is held in standing, he takes equal weight on both legs and will often bounce while standing. You still must provide all support for balance.

**Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development**

He actively brings his hands to the middle of his body and up to his mouth. He uses his hands to reach and grasp and is gaining more variety in the way he uses his hands. At first he will often "miss" when reaching because he will under-reach or over-reach.

**Cognitive, Social and Visual Development**

He is beginning to coo during play times. He splashes and kicks during bath time. He squeals and coos when you talk to him and may develop a belly laugh. He eagerly brings toys to his mouth. He may smile or vocalize at his mirror image. He anticipates food on sight or upon hearing a bottle or the food being prepared. He sleeps ten to twelve hours at night. He enjoys actively playing with an adult (such as bouncing). He vocalizes feelings of pleasure, displeasure and eagerness with sounds other than crying (screches, hums, yelps).

**Activities for You and Your Baby**

- During playtime, begin to introduce simple games like "pat-a-cake" with his feet during diaper changes or "this little piggy" during bath time. Begin simple turn-taking games with him. If he yawns, you yawn back. If he coos or makes a sound, talk back to him making the same sound. He may begin to repeat your sounds and movements or smile in delight at this new game.

- Give him a mirror to look at during play times. You can buy one at a toy store, or look for shatter-proof mirrors (automotive sun visor mirrors) in an auto or grocery store. You can even shatter-proof a make-up mirror at home by covering it with clear contact paper. Tap on the mirror to help attract his attention; smile with him or make silly faces.
Continue to provide a variety of sized/shaped rattles for him to reach for, manipulate and chew on.

**YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT AT FIVE MONTHS**

**Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development**
On her back, she is beginning to roll from back to tummy. She is also beginning to reach for and play with her knees and feet. She may bring her feet up to her mouth and suck on her toes. She holds her head in the center or middle of her body and may be able to lift her head off the floor. On her stomach, she pushes up onto extended or straight arms and can turn her head to look in all directions. She actively rolls from her tummy to her back. She may even begin to scoot forward, backward or in a circle by kicking her legs and twisting her body. She may begin to reach for toys when playing on her tummy. If she is placed in sitting, she may be able to maintain this position for two to three minutes when propping or holding herself with arms and hands. If she is gently pushed, she easily falls over.

**Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development**
Her reach for toys or faces is now very accurate. She will often reach with both hands at the same time. She may hold or pat her bottle. She wants to touch, shake, hold and mouth objects.

**Cognitive, Social and Visual Development**
She recognizes familiar objects, parents and brothers or sisters. Her voice has more inflections and she talks to herself when alone. She may begin to make consonant sounds (b, d, m). She will use smiles and vocalizing to gain attention. She stays alert for two to three hours at a time. She puts everything in her mouth and will now touch, hold, turn and taste all her toys. She uses vision in a new way—by coordinating vision with the other senses. If she sees an object, she will reach, grasp and pull the object to her mouth, and complete the exploration by gumming and chewing on it.

**Activities for You and Your Baby**
- Hold your arms out for a moment each time you go to pick her up. This helps her to learn the "up" gesture. Lightly clap your hands, touch her and say "up," and then lift her arms a bit to help her get the idea.
- Give her lots of different toys to hold, touch, shake and taste. She is really exploring toys now and will enjoy just about everything she can hold.
- When she plays on her back or reaches for her knees and feet, she is actually working her tummy muscles, and the muscles in her legs and back she will use when she learns to sit up all by herself. Let her have lots of play time on the floor on her back and stomach.
YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT AT SIX MONTHS

Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development
On his back, he likes to play and rolls easily from back to stomach. On his stomach, he may begin to push up onto hands and knees. In sitting, he may have independent balance from a few minutes up to one-half hour. When you hold his hands to be pulled into sitting, he pulls himself up without any further help. He still enjoys being held in standing but needs maximum support.

Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development
He begins to manipulate toys and objects. He may begin to use his fingers to pick up small toys by "raking" at his toys using his fingertips. He is beginning to transfer or pass toys from one hand to another. He reaches in different ways for different objects, anticipating their size, shape and distance from his body.

Cognitive, Social and Visual Development
He inspects objects at length and senses the relationship between his hands and the toys he manipulates. He turns his head when his name is called. He may begin to imitate babbling sounds "bababa" "dadada." He may begin to get his front bottom teeth. His vocalizations differ depending on whether they are directed at toys or people. He may not like being left alone in a room. He may remember where some toys are kept.

Activities for You and Your Baby
- As he realizes he is a separate person from you, he also realizes he is dependent on you for love and security. This growing understanding and learning on his part can trigger "separation anxiety" when he is away from you, because he will worry you won't return. The degree, intensity and duration will vary from child to child. He may cry and become clingy, refuse to eat or show other signs as you leave. He may even save them for when you return! To help him learn to cope with these separations, keep initial times apart brief to help him learn that when you leave you will indeed come back. Each time you leave, talk to him and let him know where you are going and reassure him that you will come back. You can ease into this slowly by letting him play with a favorite toy in another room while you are nearby. If he fusses while you are out of sight, call to him so he can hear your voice and reassure him that you'll be right back. He may begin to roll across the room to find you or to seek out a favorite toy.

- His favorite place to be is on the floor. He will practice pushing up onto tall arms and maybe even up on his hands and knees. Get down on the floor with him and play.

- You can start reading to him. Good books for young babies are colorful with relatively simple pictures. Cloth books are nice. Babies from six to nine months also like to look at pictures of babies. The words should be simple, and rhyming books are nice.
YOUR BABY’S DEVELOPMENT AT SEVEN TO EIGHT MONTHS

Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development
She is beginning to move in and out of different positions. She may creep on her hands and knees, forward and backward. She will have independent sitting balance if you place her in sitting, and may or may not need her hands for support. She has good sitting balance, loves to play in sitting and can reach forward to pick up a toy. She loves to stand if you place her in standing, but needs help to get down.

Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development
Her reach is very accurate and well directed with either hand. She bangs and shakes toys. She will "rake" at toys with her fingers. She is developing a more defined pincer grasp using her thumb and middle fingers to pick up small objects. She is fascinated by toys like keys and beads.

Cognitive, Social and Visual Development
She plays vigorously with noise-making toys and shows increased exploration of toys. She looks briefly for a toy that "disappears." When looking in a mirror she reaches for and pats the mirror image. She may begin to be fearful of strangers. She is learning the meaning of "no" from the tone of your voice. She may begin to make a game of flinging or throwing toys.

Activities for You and Your Baby
- When she is sitting and playing on the floor, put a small basket or box of toys near her where she can reach them. She will choose toys, take them out and play with them. Continue to give her a variety of toys and objects to play with such as pots and pans, balls, blocks, measuring spoons and cups.
- She will have fun when you play games with her like hiding a favorite toy partially under a cloth or cup so she will try to find the toy.
- Show her and read to her from small picture books. Point to the picture and say "this is a ball." Show her objects in the house that are the same as in her book.
- Tie a toy on the end of a string to her highchair so that when she drops the toy she can pull it back up.

YOUR BABY’S DEVELOPMENT AT NINE TO TEN MONTHS

Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development
He pulls up to standing against furniture and people. He will stand briefly with one hand held, and may try to stand alone. He cruises or walks sideways along furniture (couch or coffee table). He may learn to sit down from standing. He is crawling everywhere. He may hold a toy in one hand when crawling. He plays
more and more in the all-fours position. He dislikes playing on his back. When sitting and gently pushed to either side, he will extend his arms on that side of his body to catch himself.

**Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development**

He uses his index finger to poke/point at objects, crevices or holes in toys. He may try to build a tower of two blocks but most often without success. However, knocking down a tower you have built is great fun. He is interested in self-feeding. He will extend a toy to an adult, as if to "give" it to you, but won't let go.

**Cognitive, Social and Visual Development**

He may be starting to put toys "in" or take toys "out" of containers. He loves to play pat-a-cake and so-big games and may wave bye-bye. He uncovers a toy seen hidden. He may say ma-ma and da-da as specific names. He may be sensitive to other children; for example, crying when he hears another baby cry. He imitates tongue clicking and "raspberries." He performs or repeats acts if you applaud a behavior. He may begin to use gestures as language appropriately; for example, shaking his head for no or waving bye-bye. He will deliberately choose a toy for play.

**Activities for You and Your Baby**

- As his independence and motor skills increase, he will be very eager to explore the world around him. Child-proof your house thoroughly so he can safely explore without too many restrictions. Get yourself down to his eye level and climbing level and think of all the things he can get into. Move breakable items out of reach or out of sight. Tell him what he is allowed to do when you need to restrict his exploring. If he begins to play with an out-of-bounds drawer or item, direct him to his toy box or a drawer of Tupperware containers and lids. Too many no's may inhibit his curiosity and learning.

- Let him feed himself finger-food or teething biscuits. Lots of hand-to-mouth movements will encourage active wrist and finger movement. He will explore his fingers as well as the food as he brings the food to his mouth. This will help him refine his small finger muscles. Let him try to pull tissue from a tissue box, a straw out of a plastic cup or pegs from a pegboard to work those tiny finger muscles.

- To learn about "out" and "in" concepts, let him play with empty margarine tubs, pots and pans, and shallow containers like pie pans. Place toys in and out during play with these. During his bath, fill plastic cups with water for him and let him dump the water "out." Let him take a diaper "out" of the box when it is time to change him.

- Let him practice using his index or "pointer" finger to poke and probe at objects. Let him try pushing buttons to make something happen; for example, an elevator button lighting up, keys on a piano or a telephone dial.
YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT AT ELEVEN TO TWELVE MONTHS

Gross Motor and Large Muscle Development
She is able to squat down to pick something up off the floor. She may be able to stand up in the center of the room. She may take independent steps. She climbs up stairs or on furniture, but may need help getting down.

Fine Motor and Small Muscle Development
She helps when getting dressed by pushing her arms through a sleeve. She may pull on shoelaces to untie them or un-velcro them, or take her socks off. She may remove and place rings on a tower cone toy. She turns pages of a book, many at a time. She may carry a spoon toward her mouth in an attempt to self-feed.

Cognitive, Social and Visual Development
She opens drawers or cupboards to explore the contents. She is interested in fitting toys together. She responds to music by rocking, dancing and bouncing. She points to a few body parts on request. She enjoys games like hide-and-seek, or rolling balls back and forth. She gives affection to people and favored toys and objects. She may begin to test parents in feeding and bedtime situations. She uses the same sounds or hand motions for a word, regularly says "ba" for bottle or consistently puts fingers near her mouth for bottle. She can amuse herself for 30 to 45 minutes, but is happier playing alone when other people are in the room.

Activities for You and Your Baby
- She may begin to share toys with you. Show your interest in what she is playing with. Ask her to show you what she is holding. If she gives it to you, tell her how wonderful she is, admire the toy and give it back to her.
- Put toys up on a couch or chair that is her height so she can stand up and play and practice climbing.
- Give her toys she can put together, take apart, open, close, turn and twist. She likes cabinet doors, keys in locks, boxes with lids, etc. Give her blocks or boxes that she can stack or build with. Also give her toys she can practice pushing or pulling (a toy car).

YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AT THIRTEEN TO EIGHTEEN MONTHS

Gross Motor/Large Muscle Development
He will walk alone, stand alone and demonstrate beginning balance reactions in kneeling and standing positions. He is able to stop, start and turn when walking. He will walk backward and sideways. He will throw a ball underhand. He will run, although the running is clumsy. He will bend over and look through his knees at you. He will pull toys behind him while walking. He will stand on one foot with help. He will walk up stairs with one hand held and independently creep up and
down stairs. He will carry large toys while walking. He will use a small rocking chair or rocking horse in play.

**Fine Motor/Small Muscle Development**

He will build a two- to three-cube tower with blocks. He will scribble and will imitate beginning crayon scribble strokes. He holds a crayon with a whole-handed, cylindrical grasp. He will place one to two pieces in a puzzle. He will continue to refine his pincer grasp with thumb and index finger and can now precisely release a small object into a container. He will crumple paper, try to tear it and practices using both hands together. He has a great variety of arm, hand and wrist movements, and can turn doorknobs, unscrew lids, etc. He will eat table food with a spoon independently and will use a small fork to stab at food. He will hold and drink from a cup--spilling, of course!

**Cognitive/Social and Language Development**

He will use appropriate intonation patterns in his jargon speech. He can imitate words imperfectly. He uses gestures and other movements to communicate. He will show body parts, clothing items or toys when asked. He will follow simple directions. He will offer and release toys to an adult. He will point to himself when asked "where is _____?" He will say "no" loud and clear. He recognizes familiar people and toys at a distance of 20 feet or more.

**Activities for You and Your Toddler**

- Let him continue to move and explore around the house, and be patient as he follows you all over the house. Let him follow and "help" you with tasks throughout the day. When you are in the kitchen, give him a sponge to help wipe the floor. Give him a brush and a doll so he can fix the doll's hair while you are getting dressed and ready for the day.

- To help him out of his "no" stage, use distraction! Distraction is a powerful tool that you can use to prevent his "no" behavior before it occurs. For example, if you know that he always says no when it is time to put on a jacket, give him a toy to occupy him, or dress him in front of a large mirror and make silly faces.

- Play ball with him. Roll or toss a ball back and forth to him. He probably won't catch the ball, but can "trap" it between his legs or grab it when it stops by him. Hold your hands out and encourage him to roll it back to you.

- Give him a lot of different containers to open and close, boxes with and without lids, coffee cans, etc. Give him a variety of items to drop into and take out of and arrange in containers--blocks, empty spools of thread, pop-beads, clothespins, Koosh balls, little cars and crayons.
YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AT NINETEEN TO TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS

Gross Motor/Large Muscle Development
She will walk down stairs with one hand held. She will play in a squatting position and move in and out of a squat to a standing position while she is playing. She may begin to jump in place. She gets into and out of standing in a variety of ways (pushing into squatting, half-kneels up to her feet). She will easily climb into an adult chair, turn to sit down and then climb off the chair. She can run without falling, but running is still a bit awkward. She can kick a ball forward a few feet. She may begin to "jump" off a bottom step or a curb, but will land first on one foot, then the other.

Fine Motor/Small Muscle Development
She can independently work a few mechanical toys that take some strength (wind-up music boxes, see-and-say, jack-in-the-box). She can take apart and put together simple toys (bristle blocks, Duplo Legos, stacking rings, Mr. Potato Head). She can help put on a few items of clothing, such as pulling shirts over her head, pulling on socks and hats. She can take off things such as unfastened shoes, socks and coats. She may be curious and interested in fasteners, and attempts to manipulate things such as zippers and snaps.

Cognitive/Social and Language Development
She may begin to make-believe play with toys and objects (cuddling, carrying and tucking in a baby doll). She will enjoy and engage in some messy explorative activities (finger-paints, Playdough). She uses foresight in solving problems. If she see a toy on a high shelf out of reach, she will intentionally go get a stool, box, pillow or something to climb on and make herself taller so she can reach the toy. She will explore new toys independently and is now able to make them work without first being shown. She remembers where to find specific toys, books, objects and people. She will claim her own belongings by saying "mine" or clutching them. She refers to herself by names and loves routine in her day. She plays side by side with her peers (parallel play). She enjoys rhymes and fingerplays. She understands and responds appropriately to two simple related requests spoken to her, such as "get your blanket and meet me in your room." She will "parrot" or repeat words in response to a question, such as "Do you want a cookie?" with "want cookie." She uses at least 30 words on her own and combines them in two-word sentences--"me go."

Activities for You and Your Toddler
- Give her opportunities to color, scribble and explore. Since there are no right or wrong ways to scribble, she can always feel successful with coloring. Give her crayons, washable markers or chalk, tape a piece of paper on the table or high-chair tray and let her go at it. Hang her pictures up on the refrigerator or a special bulletin board.

- Let her practice using her hands together in coordinated ways to accomplish a task. Let her hold a banana with one hand and peel it with the other. Let
her scoop, stir and pour sand with one hand while holding the container with the other. Let her remove paper wrappers from juice jars, Popsicles or granola bars.

- Give her a few "beads" and a string to explore how to thread a needle, and let her practice through trial and error. If she needs help, put the bead on the tip of the string and let her move it down the string. Make a necklace out of the beads she has strung for her to wear and show off.

**YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AT TWENTY-FIVE TO THIRTY MONTHS**

**Gross Motor/Large Muscle Development**
He can imitate standing on one foot for several seconds. He can climb onto and off a small wheeled toy (scooters, Big Wheel) and may begin to climb on and off the toilet. He can push himself forward/backward on a riding toy to move. He will walk up and down steps, alternating his feet, if one of his hands is held. He is brave now and will jump from a higher step or curb (12 inches), and both feet will land at the same time with good control and balance. He can catch, kick and throw a large ball with fair to good accuracy.

**Fine Motor/Small Muscle Development**
He manipulates increasingly difficult objects (fasteners in self-care, cutting with a scissors, drawing, puzzles, beginning arts and crafts activities). He has a lot of wrist action and movements now and can unscrew jar lids, turn the television or radio knobs, etc. He will now build simple things with construction toys like Legos and blocks. He can put six shapes into a formboard (circle, square, triangle, etc.) without error. He can cut short, random "snips" with a scissors. When he is coloring he holds the paper with one hand to prevent it from turning and will imitate vertical, circular and horizontal strokes. He can now feed himself with a spoon without turning the spoon or spilling. He can undress himself if the difficult fasteners are undone.

**Cognitive/Social and Language Development**
He can imitate an adult putting an object in front of, behind, to the side of, under or on top of something (for example, putting the ball behind the chair, under the chair). He may begin to use the potty during the day, with accidents. He will insist on doing many things for himself--dressing, eating, fixing food. He finally understands and stays away from common dangers at home such as open stairs, strange animals, sharp furniture corners, etc. He can match a few colors and simple objects (his toothbrush to a picture of a toothbrush). He can rote count to five and has the concept of "one," ex., "Give me one cookie." He can identify by name and touch many body parts and can tell or show you what he can do with his body (for example, bend arm, wiggle toes). He has a vocabulary of from 100 to 200 words and will now put three words together in a sentence.
Activities for You and Your Toddler

- Encourage him to help you and imitate you when you fold clothes, small washcloths or napkins. Make sure to tell him what a good helper he is.

- Let him color on some paper and then send his art work in the mail to a relative or friend. Let him fold the picture, put it in the envelope, etc. These are good fine-motor activities for his finger muscles.

- Let him use small kitchen tongs to pick up objects such as cotton balls, etc. This will give him practice with the opening and closing motions needed to use a scissors. If he uses a scissors, make sure it is the kind with rounded tips. Show him how to snip with a scissors and let him practice on narrow strips of paper.

Suggested Toys for Your Child at Different Ages

Zero to Three Months
black and white patterned pictures or mobiles, light-weight rattles or wrist rattles
music boxes
play gyms/toy bars that sit on the floor
fabrics with different textures

Four to Six Months
rattles in a variety of sizes, shapes, weights and textures
soft stuffed animals and dolls
floating tub toys
small plastic mirrors

Seven to Nine Months
squeaky dolls and animals
containers and small balls and blocks
soft books
busy boxes
toys to pound

Ten to Twelve Months
strings of snap beads and pop beads
toys which can be pulled apart and snapped together
blocks, shape toys, stacking rings
pegboards, play telephones
pop-up toys (jack-in-the-box, toys with dials, levers and switches)

Thirteen to Eighteen Months
small, 3- to 5-piece wooden puzzles
nesting boxes, beakers, cups, bowls, spoons, containers with lids
push/pull toys
records, tapes, CDs with light, rhythmic music
crayons, washable markers
items that adults use: pots and pans, plastic dishes, purses, combs and brushes,
keys, small broom and dust pan
doctor kits
articles that your child can manipulate: stacking rings, simple puzzles, peg boards,
touch and feel books, blocks, nesting cubes
dolls, cars, push and pull toys, small riding scooter
recordings of nursery rhymes and nonsense songs

**Nineteen to Twenty-four Months**
pounding toys
picture books, puzzles
large beads to string
play telephone
any toys with parts that move and turn

**Twenty-five to Thirty Months**
tricycle of the correct size to fit the child
play cars and trucks big enough to sit on or straddle
big and small balls
a small table and chair
dishes and play furniture, play cooking utensils
playdough, clay
sandbox and sand toys
dress-up clothes
art easel or chalk board

**Suggested Books to Enjoy With Your Child**
Reading is a very good way to enjoy time with your child and help his development. Starting to read to your child when he is young will help make this a special time, which you can continue to enjoy as he gets older. At six months of age your baby will enjoy looking at books with colorful pictures and listening to stories which have one to two words on a page. Make reading fun by making changes in the tone of your voice and making the sounds of the animals or other characters in the book. Make up your own story to go with the pictures. A story at bedtime is a nice way to spend quiet time at the end of a busy day. Books are nice presents for children. However, it is also fun to visit your local library and pick out new books every few weeks. Helping your child learn to enjoy books will help his overall development as well as provide him with an activity he can enjoy as he gets older and eventually starts reading to you. Below are suggestions for books. The authors also have other books available, and you will enjoy finding books on topics that interest your child.
Books for Babies from Birth to Two Years of Age

At this age, a story should only last a few minutes, and then your baby will be ready to move on to a different type of play. For young children, look for books with colorful pictures and not too many words on one page. Other ideas are cloth books or sturdy board books, books with rattles and bells inside, and "lift the flap" books. Babies also enjoy pictures of real babies and animals.

Animal Sounds for Baby  Cheryl Wilis Hudson
Baby Has a Boo-Boo  Archambiuett
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom  Archambiuett
Clap Hands  Helen Oxenbury
Good Morning Sun  Harriet Ziefert
Good Night Moon  Margaret Wise Brown
Guess Who I Love  Wendy Lewison
Happy Babies  Wendy Lewison
I Love You Sun, I Love You, Moon  Karen Pandell
Pat-a-cake  Moira Kemp
Pat the Bunny  Dorothy Kuhardt
The Very Hungry Caterpillar  Eric Carle

Books for Toddlers from Two to Four Years of Age

As a toddler, your child will enjoy books with colorful pictures and stories which are slightly longer. By two or three years of age, he or she can pick out a book for story time. Many children at this age may select the same book time after time. Let your child tell you stories about the pictures and ask him or her questions about the story. Also, books can be used when he or she is beginning to learn about numbers, colors or the ABCs.

Animal Babies  Harry McNaught
Caps For Sale  Esphyr Slobodkina
Clifford the Big Red Dog  Norman Bridwell
Corduroy  Don Freeman
Curious George series  H. A. Ray
Holobird  Angela Ballerina
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie  Laura Numeroh
The Little Engine that Could  Watty Piper
Little Toot  Hardie Gramatky
Little Toot and the Loch Ness Monster  Hardie Gramatky
My Many Colored Days  Dr. Seuss
One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish  Dr. Seuss
The Snowy Day  Erza Jack Keats
Trouble With Trolls  Jan Brett

Additional Information About Child Development


Segal, Marilyn. (1998) Your Child At Play: Birth to One Year, 2nd Ed.