

Figure 4.4

Sample Developmental Skills Checklist for Babies

This sample checklist identifies early developmental skills which are the foundation of ongoing development. Activities to address these skills are most effective when embedded within other visual or skill activities. The list is intended as a guide for planning goals and interventions. Specific skills can be included or removed based on the needs of the baby. Skills that are not fully accomplished can be identified as goals on a home action plan.

Developmental Skills Checklist

Directions: Mark each skill with a + for accomplished and a – for emerging. Any skills that are not accomplished or emerging should be left blank.

Social Connectedness

- ☐ Shows attachment to primary adults
- ☐ Leans into the adult when being held
- ☐ Tolerates or enjoys being played with
- ☐ Tolerates or enjoys parent-initiated games and songs
- ☐ Exhibits ability to calm self
- ☐ Calms to the primary adult's voice or when being held
- ☐ Follows simple directions (e.g., "Open your mouth")
- ☐ Shows an awareness of parental limits (e.g., stops an action in response to "no")
- ☐ Engages in play with an adult or another child
- ☐ Begins turn-taking activities

Sensory or Tactile Awareness

- ☐ Tolerates or enjoys being touched by an adult
- ☐ Tolerates a variety of tactile stimuli
- ☐ Typically holds hands open
- ☐ Tolerates messy play such as finger painting
- ☐ Willingly allows hands to be guided toward objects and during activities

- ___ Initiates use of feet to interact with objects
- ___ Initiates use of hands to interact with objects
- ___ Uses the whole hand to feel objects
- ___ Moves hands over a target in active exploration
- ___ Splashes in water
- ___ Explores tactile books with pads of fingers
- ___ Identifies a favorite toy, device, or book using a tactile cue, such as a sticker

Auditory Awareness

- ___ Mild or no startle response to soft moderate sounds
- ___ Alerts to the sound of objects by stopping action
- ___ Alerts to a parent's voice by stopping action
- ___ Looks toward the sound of an object
- ___ Looks toward adult when hearing his or her voice
- ___ Shows anticipation of a routine when hearing a familiar sound (e.g., going into a car after hearing keys jingling)
- ___ Calms to a familiar adult's voice
- ___ Calms to instrumental music
- ___ Slightly moves hand or foot to a familiar song

Visual Awareness

- ___ Changes behavior in response to a lighted stimulus in a dark environment
- ___ Shows awareness of whether lights are on or off
- ___ Changes behavior when shown a lighted stimulus in a dim environment
- ___ Fixates on a lighted toy in a dark environment
- ___ Fixates on a lighted toy in a dim environment
- ___ Fixates on a lighted toy in normal room light
- ___ Locates or touches lighted objects in a dark environment
- ___ Locates or touches lighted objects in a dim environment
- ___ Locates or touches lighted objects in normal room light
- ___ Fixates or reaches toward moving objects
- ___ Shows awareness of shiny objects illuminated by a flashlight

- ___ Shows awareness of shiny objects in normal room light
- ___ Shows reduced delayed fixation to known objects
- ___ Regards non-lighted objects with interest
- ___ Fixates on up to 10 visually motivating objects
- ___ Reaches for visually motivating objects
- ___ Spontaneously reaches to repeatedly bat, grasp, or operate objects in a play box
- ___ Uses eye contact to signal intent to be picked up
- ___ Shifts gaze between two visually motivating targets
- ___ Moves an arm toward a visually located nearby target
- ___ Visually locates dropped objects that are touching the body
- ___ Visually locates dropped objects near the body
- ___ Visually localizes objects located on the side
- ___ Maintains fixation while reaching for a visually motivating target
- ___ Maintains fixation while reaching for a desired object
- ___ Selects a desired object (visually or by reach) in group of three or four known objects
- ___ Responds primarily to one or two preferred colors
- ___ Chooses visually between two objects
- ___ Responds to simple observed gestures, such as a wave
- ___ Views a smile or other facial expression and responds
- ___ Maintains fixation on a slowly moving visually motivating target in near visual field
- ___ Names or identifies viewed and known objects in near visual field
- ___ Selects objects representing items in a story or book
- ___ Gathers scattered objects as much as 4 feet away
- ___ Scans a lighted surface to find an object
- ___ Scans a lighted surface to find a named object
- ___ Moves across a room toward a light source
- ___ Watches the movement of a large target more than 10 feet away
- ___ Identifies a large target from 12 to 20 feet away
- ___ Show recognition of primary adults and self in a clear photo

Gross Motor Development

- ___ Keeps head at midline much of the time

- ___ Typical muscle tone in upper extremities
- ___ Typical muscle tone in lower extremities
- ___ Maintains straight back for 3-5 minutes in supported sitting
- ___ Shows head and neck strength in supported sitting
- ___ Bears weight on legs momentarily
- ___ Holds arms at mid-level much of the time
- ___ Tolerates tummy-time activities
- ___ Rolls front to back
- ___ Rolls back to front
- ___ Moves forward when on tummy
- ___ Holds position on all fours
- ___ Plays with objects while in all-fours position
- ___ Stands at furniture when occupied for a few minutes
- ___ Moves laterally along furniture
- ___ Returns to sitting from standing
- ___ Takes several steps using equipment or holding hands
- ___ Stands independently for several seconds
- ___ Takes several steps independently

Fine Motor Development (Grasp, Manipulation) and Object Use

- ___ Keeps hands open when relaxed
- ___ Maintains equal strength and dexterity in left and right hands
- ___ Bats at objects
- ___ Holds an object placed in one hand
- ___ Pulls cloth from face when playing “peek-a-boo”
- ___ Voluntarily grasps objects
- ___ Releases objects
- ___ Holds objects in both hands simultaneously
- ___ Brings hands to mouth
- ___ Brings both hands to midline
- ___ Transfers objects between hands (left to right and right to left)
- ___ Makes up to five movements with an object (e.g., shakes, bangs, turns)

- ___ Moves to operate a simple cause-and-effect toy after demonstrations
- ___ Claps hands in response to a song
- ___ Takes objects out of containers
- ___ Puts objects into containers
- ___ Uses an emerging pincer grasp (holding an object between thumb and index finger)
- ___ Opens a simple container
- ___ Closes a simple container
- ___ Operates a switch to achieve a desired result
- ___ Operates simple fasteners (e.g., zippers, snaps, Velcro)

Personal Independence

- ___ Holds bottle independently
- ___ Begins to pull shirt over head with help
- ___ Helps to hold spoon during feeding time
- ___ Begins to finger feed
- ___ Participates in diaper routine by holding wipes
- ___ Removes clothes independently
- ___ Participates in some chores (e.g., throwing trash in a container)

Concept and Language Development

- ___ Shows awareness of major body parts (i.e., hands, feet, head)
- ___ Makes verbal sounds in play
- ___ Imitates simple gestures when modeled
- ___ Uses a few gestures to express wants
- ___ Responds appropriately to up to five verbal or gesture requests
- ___ Participates in regular lap story time involving music, a story box, or a book
- ___ Participates in scripted routines with identified vocabulary
- ___ Shows understanding of vocabulary of up to 20 words or signs