

Developmental Skills at a Glance: Ages 5-6

A family-friendly guide to skills you may notice emerging at this age

Children develop at different rates and in different ways. These are examples of skills you may notice emerging. One skill on its own does not tell us whether a child has a developmental difficulty.

COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE

Uses connected, increasingly complex sentences • Maintains conversations on a shared topic • Tells connected stories with more than one event • Explains simple reasons or sequences • Repairs misunderstandings by repeating or rephrasing

MOVEMENT & HAND SKILLS

Runs, jumps and balances with increasing control • Participates in playground games • Throws, catches and kicks • Uses scissors and drawing tools functionally • Writes or copies some letters and often their name with appropriate instruction

REGULATION & PARTICIPATION

Communicates feelings, problems or support needs • Uses familiar strategies or environmental supports • Recovers from manageable disappointments with support • Begins to recognize and request supports that help participation

PLAY & SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

Participates in cooperative play and group activities • Contributes ideas and listens to others • Takes turns and follows familiar rules • Uses communication to solve simple peer problems • Recognizes that others may have different ideas or feelings

EVERYDAY INDEPENDENCE

Completes familiar dressing and self-care routines with decreasing assistance • Manages belongings and classroom materials • Follows familiar arrival and transition routines • Completes simple responsibilities • Seeks help when needed

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Talks about stories and classroom experiences • Participates in early literacy and number activities according to exposure • Follows familiar multi-step routines • Uses prior knowledge, modelling and repetition to learn • Works independently for short periods

SIMPLE IDEAS TO TRY AT HOME

- Have conversations about the day and encourage your child to explain ideas.
- Play simple games that involve turn-taking, rules, movement or problem-solving.

- Read together and talk about the beginning, middle and end of stories.

- Encourage age-appropriate independence with belongings, dressing and household routines.

Have questions about your child's development?

Hello Speech Developmental Services supports children and families with speech, language, occupational therapy and developmental services.

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For multilingual children, consider skills across all of the child's languages. AAC and other communication methods count as communication.

Evidence-informed by the Rourke Baby Record / Canadian Paediatric Society, CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early., ASHA developmental guidance, and occupational therapy participation frameworks.

For general education only. This handout is not a developmental screening or diagnostic tool.