



Stages of Child Development

Ages	Stage	Milestones
<p>Conception - Birth</p> 	<p>Prenatal stage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves 3 stages – germinal, embryonic and fetal stage. • During the fetal stage the following are evident: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 9–12 weeks - sex organs begin to differentiate. ❖ 16 weeks – Fingers and toes are fully developed, and fingerprints are visible ❖ 24 weeks – Hearing has developed and the fetus can respond to sounds. ❖ 24 weeks – Internal organs, such as the lungs, heart, stomach, and intestines, have formed enough that a fetus can be born prematurely. ❖ 16 to 28 weeks – the brain doubles in size ❖ Around 36 weeks – a fetus can be born and survive outside the mother’s womb with no complications
	<p>Infancy</p>	<p>Birth – 6 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once born, one of the things that babies need the most is to be held, cuddled, rocked, and carried. • Do not know any words. • Make different kinds of sounds to express feelings. • They cry to let others know when they need something, like eating. • Rest is crucial at this stage to allow growth • Children at this stage do not understand their feelings or how other people feel. • Babies love to grab things and put them in their mouths.
<p>Birth – 12 months</p>	<p>Infancy</p>	<p>6 – 12 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babies usually start to crawl, pull to a stand and rock back and forth. • They usually cry less and smile more. • At this stage, the babies need to know that parents are always close-by. • Sometimes babies cry because they feel sick or because they are teething. • Babies at this stage begin to speak and make sounds.
<p>1 – 2 years Old</p>	<p>Toddler</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children begin to walk independently and start talking. • They love to touch everything, drop objects from their hands, and taste everything. • Children at this stage are eager to know the names of all the objects around them and can learn words quickly. • Children at this stage become more independent.

2 – 3 years Old	Pre-School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They try to make sense of their feelings. • Children start learning about danger and become fearful of being hurt. • Children at this stage do not know the difference between reality and fantasy. • Self-control and self-confidence begin to develop at this stage. • At this stage, parents should provide children with reassurance and support so they feel safe and protected and grow up with confidence.
3 - 5 years Old	Early childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are very curious and want to learn everything. • At this stage, children also learn to do more on their own and they want to practice their independence. • Children need time to play, particularly with other children of the same age. Through play, children solve problems, invent new things and figure out how things around them work.
5 – 9 years Old	Middle childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As they start school, they must quickly learn how to manage on their own without their parents, how to get along with many other children, meet the expectations of new adults who are not their family members, and adjust to new schedules and routines. • Some children can adjust quickly to all these changes and without problems. Others will face challenges. • At this stage of development, children observe and learn many things from adults. • This is why parents have the important responsibility to guide and support their children.
9 – 13 years Old	Pre-adolescence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Child is about to enter puberty. • This is a time of psychological, physical and emotional change for both boys and girls. This is also the time for the onset of menstruation for girls. • This is a sensitive time for the child, which requires attention, guidance and support from parents and caregivers. • Children at this stage spend more time with their friends and peers than with their parents. • Sometimes they want to be independent and do what their friends do, even if their parents disapprove. • The child's body undergoes a fast transformation. • The child might not always be keen to talk when upset or sad.

**13 – 18 years
old**

Adolescence

- Physically, mentally and emotionally the child transitions into the adolescent stage.
- Clear sexual identity – manhood, and womanhood is established.
- The most important thing for the child at this stage is to develop his/her own unique identity “who they are”, separate from own parents, and establish peer relationships.
- This is because the child is trying to experiment with different identities to see which one would fit best, rebelling against the influence of parents.
- Even the best adolescents experience at some stage some identity confusion: some boys and girls might experience self-doubt and peer pressure to conform to a group and experiment with risky behaviours (e.g., minor delinquency, alcohol and drug use, or risky sexual behaviour).
- Adolescents’ sense of risk is low and they can get hurt, get pregnant or even die due to poor judgement.
- In this phase of transition, it is important for parents and caregivers to listen to the child, provide opportunities for dialogue to address confusion and insecurities and transfer necessary knowledge and skills to build the adolescent’s confidence and sense of responsibility.