



The first five years of a child's life are a time of tremendous physical, emotional, social and cognitive growth. Children enter the world with many needs in order to grow: love, nutrition, health, social and emotional security and stimulation in the important skills that prepare them for school success. Children also enter the world with a great capacity to learn.

Research shows that children are more likely to succeed in learning when their families actively support them. Families who involve their children in activities that allow the children to talk, explore, experiment and wonder, show that learning is both enjoyable and important. They motivate their children to take pleasure in learning and to want to learn more. They prepare them to be successful in school and in life.

There is a strong connection between the development a child undergoes early in life and the level of success that the child will experience later in life. When young children are provided an environment rich in language and literacy interactions and full of opportunities to listen to and use language constantly, they can begin to acquire the essential building blocks for learning how to read.

*"A child's best educational opportunities & growth depend on the combined efforts of the parent, the teacher & the child. The greatest contribution on the part of the parent should come before the child even begins their formal education." From Parents Are Teachers Too by Claudia Jones*

## How do you decide what skills your child needs to begin school?

Children need good posture, muscle tone and fine motor control to begin school. A child who is clumsy & can't move well, who is floppy, hasn't got a good pencil grip and can't hold scissors properly is probably going to have some difficulty in their first year of school.

Kids need to have sufficient physical development to competently master the technical stuff of school. If they can open their school bag, take lids of lunch boxes, get out pens and put their shoes on, it will help them to feel comfortable in the school environment from the beginning.

Developmental levels give you an indication of where your child is in relation to other children, organizing knowledge and competencies into age groupings. These age groupings are not rigid directives but approximate guidelines based on research that, within a given area, suggests a progression of skills and knowledge. Because young children learn at different rates, we at [www.GetReadyForSchool.com](http://www.GetReadyForSchool.com) believe no child should be unduly rushed or held back solely based on the age groupings specified although as a parent you can help to develop these skills.

### Problems Preschoolers Often Have

- Low muscle tone
- Poor postural development
- Poor balance
- Poor sense of body position and movement
- Poor fine tactile discrimination
- Poor bilateral integration:
  - development of hand dominance
  - symmetrical movements
  - alternating movements
  - crossing the midline
- Poor motor co-ordination:
  - eye-hand co-ordination
  - slow control
  - motor planning
- Poor visual-motor co-ordination where the eye directs fine movements of the hand
- Poor visual attention
- Delayed visual perception
- Limited memory and problem solving skill - reduced concentration
- Delayed speech and language
- Social and emotional immaturity

### Motor Development for 2 Year Old Children

#### BODY SCHEME

- Identifies 2 body parts from picture
- Touches tummy, cheek, arm, leg, mouth and hair.

#### GROSS MOTOR

- Goes up and down steps independently, 2 steps per tread while holding on.
- 2 1/2 years: Jumps with 2 foot take off. Tiptoes briefly.
- Runs
- Walks sideways and backwards.
- Kicks ball on request
- Rhythmically bounce - swing arms, sway, nod.

#### VISUAL PERCEPTION

- Enjoys watching moving objects
- Points to pictures of familiar objects
- Adds a chimney to a 3 cube train
- Begins matching colors.

#### EYE - HAND CO-ORDINATION

- Hand preference is beginning to develop
- Builds a tower of 6-7 cubes
- Strings large beads
- Throws
- Imitates
- Imitates a horizontal line and a circle
- Pours well from glass to glass.

### Motor Development for 3 Year Old Children

#### BODY SCHEME

- Able to identify front, back and side of body. Also knows chin, neck and forearm.

#### GROSS MOTOR

- Jumps from small height.
- Walks upstairs one foot per step, without support.
- Walks downstairs two feet per step without support
- Hop on one foot 2-3 times
- Climbs a small ladder
- Squats without falling
- Walks swinging arm with opposite leg
- Pedals tricycle

#### VISUAL PERCEPTION

- Imitates a cube bridge
- Recognizes two colors

#### EYE - HAND CO-ORDINATION

- Able to put 10 pellets in a bottle in 30 seconds
- Builds a tower of 9-10 cubes
- Copies a horizontal line and a circle
- Holds pencil with a digital pronate grasp
- Unbuttons
- May shift handedness from left to right or visa versa
- Catch a large ball with their arms extended

### Motor Development for 4 Year Old Children

#### BODY SCHEME

- Draws man with head and legs

#### GROSS MOTOR

- Stands on one foot for 4 seconds
- Manages a broad jump
- Runs with good arm & leg co-ordination
- Goes up and down steps with one foot per step
- Gallops

#### VISUAL PERCEPTION

- Builds a 6 block pyramid
- Matches shapes of the same color and size
- Beginning to distinguish foreground from background
- Copies block model of a gate

#### EYE - HAND CO-ORDINATION

- Follows moving objects smoothly with eyes
- Copies a cross
- Imitates a square
- Able to put 10 pellets into a bottle in 25 seconds
- Bounces a ball awkwardly
- Tries to cut on a straight line

### Motor Development for 5 Year Old Children

#### BODY SCHEME

- Copies "Simon Says" postures
- Draws 6 part recognizable man
- Can point to the front, back, near, up and down with eyes closed
- Aware of but confuses left and right

#### GROSS MOTOR

- Walks down stairs alternating feet with no support
- Balances on one foot 6-8 seconds
- Begins to balance on tiptoes
- Able to do a running broad jump
- Begins to walk backward along a balance beam
- Attempts roller skates, jump rope and stilts
- Marches in time to music
- Reproduces simple rhythmic clapping

#### VISUAL PERCEPTION

- Imitates a ten block pyramid
- Begins to mentally rotate puzzle pieces

#### EYE - HAND CO-ORDINATION

- Develops tripod pencil grip
- Copies diagonal lines, a square and a diagonal cross
- Imitates a triangle
- Able to slowly thumb-finger touch
- Throws and catches large playground ball

After working with many children we have found that the majority would significantly benefit if their parents, grandparents, nannies or sitters simply sat down with them, one-on-one, to teach them some skills for school.

The problem is that most people don't know what basic skills to teach their preschooler or even where to start!

**Early Intervention is the key.**  
**You can help your child.**

To find out more simply  
log on to our website.

