

# the pattern of development in the first 3 years of life essay sample

[Health & Medicine](#), [Body](#)



Early childhood is a time of massive growth in all areas of development. A needy newborn grows into a little person who can take care of their own body and interact with others. Because of this, the primary developmental task of this stage is 'skill development'. Between birth and age three, physically, a child typically quadruples in weight and doubles in height. Bodily proportions also shift, so that the infant, whose head accounts for almost one-fourth of total body length, becomes a toddler with a more balanced, adult-like appearance. Despite these rapid physical changes, the average three-year-old has mastered many skills, including walking, sitting, toilet training, using utensils, scribbling, and enough hand-eye coordination to catch and throw a ball. Skills typically acquired at each stage

#### At Birth

Babies are born with some gross motor & fine motor skills, they are; When on their backs, they lay with their head turned to one side When placed on their front, again with their head to one side, the buttocks is humped and the knees are tucked under the abdomen When pulled to a sitting position, the head lags

When held up by a hand under the chest, the head drops below the plane of the body, and the arms and legs are partly bent Babies usually hold their hands tightly closed, but the hands may open spontaneously during feeding or when the back of the hand is being stroked They often hold their thumbs tucked in under their fingers

#### 1 – 3 months

Keep their head to one side when lying on their back, with arm and the leg

on the face side outstretched, the knees apart, and the soles of the feet turned inwards Can turn from their side to their back

Will lift their head briefly from the prone position

When held in 'ventral suspension', will keep the head in line with the body and the hips semi-extended Make jerky and uncontrolled arm & leg movements

If pulled to a sitting position, will show head lag

Beginning to take their fists to their mouth

Open their hands from time to time

Show interest and excitement by their facial expressions

Open their hands to grasp an adult's finger

Keep their head in a central position when lying supine

Can now fit both their head and their chest in the prone position, supported on their forearms When held in ventral suspension, keep their head above the line of the body Have almost no head lag in moving into the sitting position When held, can sit with their backs straight

Kick vigorously, with their legs alternating or occasionally together Can wave their arms and bring their hands together over their body Move their head to follow adults' movements

Watch their hand and play with their fingers

Clasp and unclasp their hands at the midline of the body, and take them to the mouth Can hold a rattle for a brief time before dropping it

6 months

If lying on their back can roll over onto their stomach

If lying on their stomach can lift their head & chest, supporting themselves on their arms & hands  
Can use their shoulders to pull themselves into a sitting position  
Can bear almost all their own weight

When held standing, do so with a straight back

When held sitting, do so with a straight back

When held on the floor, bounce their feet up & down

Lift their legs into a vertical position and grasp one or both feet with their hands  
Kick vigorously with their legs alternating

Move their arms purposefully and hold them up, indicating a wish to be lifted

Change the angle of their body to reach out for an object

Reach and grab when a small toy is offered

Use their whole hand to pass a toy from one hand to the other  
Poke at small objects with their index finger

Explore objects by putting them in their mouth

9 months

Can maintain a sitting position with a straight back

Can sit unsupported for upto 15 minutes

Turn their body to look sideways when stretching out to pick up a toy from the floor  
Pull themselves to a standing position, but are unable to lower themselves and tend to fall backwards with a bump  
Stand holding on to furniture

Find ways of moving about the floor - for example, by rolling, wriggling, or crawling on their stomach  
May take some steps when both hands are held

Manipulate toys by passing them from one hand to another

Can grasp objects between finger and thumb in a 'pincer grasp' Can release a toy from their grasp by dropping it, but cannot yet put it down voluntarily

Move arms up & down together when excited

1 Year

Can rise to a sitting position from lying down

Can rise to standing without help from furniture or people

Can stand alone for a few moments

Can crawl on their hands & knees, bottom-shuffle, or use their hands and feet to move rapidly about the floor Can 'cruise' along using furniture as a support

Can probably walk alone, with their feet wide apart and their arms raised to maintain balance – or walk with one hand held Can pick up small objects with a fine pincer grasp

Can point with the index finger at objects of interest

Can release a small object into someone's hand

Can hold a crayon in a palmar grasp, and turn several pages at once Show a preference for one hand over the other, but use either Drop and throw toys deliberately – and look to see where they have fallen Build with a few bricks and arrange toys on the floor

18 months

Can walk steadily and stop safely, without sitting down suddenly Can climb forward into an adult chair and then turn around and sit Can kneel upright without support

Can squat to pick up or move a toy

Can move without support from a squatting position to standing Can climb up and down stairs if their hand is held or using a rail for balance - they put two feet on each step before moving on to the next step Can crawl backwards (on the stomach) down stairs alone

Can run steadily but are unable to avoid obstacles in their path Can point to known objects

Can build a tower of three or more bricks

Can use a delicate pincer grasp to pick up very small objects Can use a spoon when feeding themselves

Can hold a pencil in their whole hand or between the thumb & the first two fingers (primitive tripod grasp) Can scribble to & fro with a pencil

Can thread large beads onto a lace or string

Can control their wrist movement to manipulate objects

Can remove small objects from a bottle by turning it upside-down

2 years

Can run safely, avoiding obstacles, and are very mobile

Can climb up onto furniture

Can throw a ball overhand, but cannot yet catch a ball

Push & pull large, wheeled toys

Walk up & down stairs, usually putting both feet on each step Walk into a large ball when attempting to kick it

Sit on a tricycle and propel it with their feet - they cannot yet use the pedals

Squat with complete steadiness

Draw circles, lines and dots using their preferred hand

Pick up tiny objects using a fine pincer grasp

Can build a tower of 6 or more blocks, with a longer concentration span

Enjoy picture books and turn the pages singly

Can copy a vertical line and sometimes a ' V' shape

Can drink from a cup with fewer spills, and manage scooping with a spoon at mealtimes 3 years

Can jump from a low step

Can walk backwards and sideways

Can stand and walk on tiptoe, and stand on one foot

Can ride a tricycle using pedals

Climb stairs with one foot on each step, and go downwards with two feet on each step Have good spatial awareness - they can manoeuvre themselves around objects Can throw a ball overhand, and can catch a large ball with arms outstretched Use their whole body to kick a ball with force

Can copy a building pattern of 3 or more cubes, including a bridge Can build a tower of 9 or 10 cubes

Can control a pencil using their thumb and the first two fingers (the dynamic tripod grasp) Can copy a circle and the letters ' V', ' H' and ' T' Enjoy standing at an easel and painting with a large brush

Can draw a person with a head, and sometimes with legs and (later) arms coming out from the head - squiggles inside the head represent a face Can cut paper with scissors

Can thread large beads onto a lace

Can eat using a fork or spoon