



If you answered "no" to any of these questions, you should talk it over with someone. Remember, all babies grow and develop at their own pace. But if you have any questions or concerns, please call First Steps at **1-800-234-1448**. There will be someone to help you get the answers you need. It could be the most important step you'll take for your child's future.

The Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services is grateful to the following organizations for their help in preparing and producing this brochure: the Virginia Interscholastic Coordinating Council (VICC) Public Awareness Committee; the Richmond Infant Council; the Richmond Regional Public Awareness Committee; and the Department's Multicultural Advisory Council for Vietnamese and Spanish translations. This brochure was produced with federal funds under the Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (Part H) Program.

The first few years of your baby's life are very important. It's the time when he or she is learning to walk, talk, recognize people and many other things.

Some babies may have trouble developing certain skills. Parents are often the first to notice when their child is not learning or growing like other infants they know.

If you have any concerns about your baby, there is someone who can answer your questions. You can call First Steps at **1-800-234-1448**. Remember too, it's important for all infants to have "well baby" check ups by their doctor every three months for the first year and a half, and at least every six months after that until they're three years old.

Here's a sample list of things babies are usually able to do at different ages.

Important For All Babies

(Check yes or no for each question)

Does your baby always ride in a car seat when riding in a car?

Do you have a regular place to go for your baby's health care (pediatrician, family doctor, public health clinic)?

Newborn to 3 Months Old

Does your baby smile back at you when you smile and talk to her or gently touch her face?

Is your baby making cooing sounds like **oooo** and **aaaaa**?

Does your baby lift her head and chest when lying on her tummy?

Does your baby watch you when you walk across the room?

Has your baby seen the doctor at least two times for well baby check-ups?



3 to 6 Months

- Does your baby laugh and babble (say **bababa** or **dada**)?
- Does your baby roll from his back to his tummy?
- Does your baby turn his head to sounds like your voice, radio or TV?
- Does your baby reach for and hold a toy?
- Does your baby play with his hands by touching them together?
- Has your baby seen the doctor at least one time for a well baby check-up since he was three months old?

6 to 9 Months

- Does your baby sit up by herself without falling?
- Does your baby look for a small toy when she sees you drop it?
- Is your baby beginning to play peek-a-boo or wave bye-bye after she sees you do it?
- Has your baby seen the doctor at least one time for a well baby check-up since she was six months old?

9 to 12 Months

- Does your baby look at the right thing when you say words like **bottle** or **ball**?
- Does your baby pull up to standing by holding onto furniture?
- Does your baby say **Mama** or **Dada** to the right person?
- Does your baby pick up small things (like a raisin or Cheerio) using his thumb and one finger.
- Has your baby seen the doctor at least one time for a well baby check-up since he was nine months old?

12 to 15 Months

- Does your baby point to or ask for things she wants?
- Does your baby feed herself with her fingers?
- Does your baby like being the center of attention?
- Does your baby walk by herself?
- Has your baby seen the doctor for her 12-month well baby check-up?

15 to 18 Months

- Does your baby drink from a cup?
- Does your baby point to body parts (like nose, eyes, feet) when you name them?
- Does your baby like to put things in and out of containers?
- Does your baby say words to tell you what he wants?
- Does your baby like to look at books and turn pages by himself?
- Has your baby seen the doctor for his 15-month well baby check-up?

18 to 24 Months

- Has your child begun to put two words together (**like Mama's shoe, Car go, Daddy bye-bye**)?
- Does your child point to pictures in a book when you name them?
- Does your child run?
- Does your child take off her sweater, hat or socks all by herself?
- Has your child had her 18-month well baby check-up?

24 to 30 Months

- Does your child walk up stairs?
- Does your child make a straight line with a crayon after you do it?
- Does your child ask to go to the bathroom?
- Does your child follow a simple two-step direction. (like "Go to your room and get me a diaper"?)
- Does your child put three words together (like "I want cookie"?)
- Has your child seen the doctor for his 24-month check-up?

30 to 36 Months

- Does your child know her first name?
- Does your child unbutton buttons?
- Does your child ask questions?
- Does your child jump up and down?
- Does your child understand the meaning of words like **in, out, on** and **behind**?
- Does your child understand **Bring me one diaper, or Give me one cookie**?

Questions Parents Have But May Not Ask

- Is this condition contagious?
- How will this affect other members of my family?
- Will this condition shorten my child's life? By how much?
- What caused the condition? Is it congenital? If we have another child, will he/she have the same condition? Was it my fault?
- Will my child have mental retardation, learning difficulties or other developmental or medical problems?
- What is available to help my family bear the expenses now and in the future?

We ask questions because we believe that something is wrong. We depend on you for candid answers not reassurances.

For more information on community-based early intervention services, call First Steps, toll-free, at 1-800-234-1448 (Voice/TT).



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During An Office Visit, Parents Want

RESPECT. Take time to get to know our family and, together, we can understand the best ways of treating our unique child in our family.

HONESTY. Complete, honest information. Ask if we have questions. Be patient if we ask the same question more than once. It takes time to comprehend the diagnosis, the treatment and the effects on our child and family. Pictures, diagrams, demonstrations and videos can reinforce the information you give.

REFERRALS. There are community-based resources and services that can help us in caring for our child. Refer us to those services that pertain to our child's specialized needs. Put us in touch with other families who have had similar experiences. And, if we ask a question for which you have no answer, please join us in finding one.



COORDINATED CARE. We need one source we can depend on for information about our child's care. Can you or someone in your office fill this role? Communicate with other professionals who work with our child. It is frustrating when we get conflicting advice or when others have questions we can't answer because we don't have enough information.

But, most important, we want you to get to know our child as a unique individual.



When A Child Is Hospitalized, Parents Need

FREQUENT PROGRESS REPORTS, especially when surgery or a radical change takes place.

ACCURATE INFORMATION and time to absorb it.

IMMEDIATE NOTICE on significant changes in our child's condition when our child is moved to or from intensive care or from one room to another.

INSTRUCTION on home care. Booklets, written medication schedules and practice on equipment that will be used at home help us feel more secure about taking over our child's treatment.

