

CHILDREN'S JOBS & NEEDS: WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Birth to 12 Months	
Their Jobs	So they Benefit from
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop trust • To attach to one or more adults • To thrive physically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictability, consistency • A safe routine • Stable, secure relationships • Being held as much as possible • Being handled with respect and care • Baby-proofing the house BEFORE they begin to crawl
What Parents Can Do	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to respond to infant. Babies may need even more attention during times of family stress. • Nurture and protect. Meet all baby's needs and remember: You can't spoil a baby! They are too young to be spoiled! • Be patient: even grownups can have difficulty voicing their feelings and needs. Babies depend on you to interpret their cries and behaviors. • Be peaceful with baby. Take time to hold the baby while bottle feeding. Rocking baby soothes you as well! • Don't argue while holding baby. Try to schedule time to discuss stressful topics while baby is not present. Babies sense caregivers' emotions and it can delay their development if they are constantly reacting to anger, anxiety, and hurt. • Even though this may be a difficult time, take time to enjoy the wonder of your growing, innocent, beautiful infant! • My ideas: 	
Developmental Milestones	
<p>By 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleeps 11-13 hours at night, takes naps • Begins to eat finger foods • Crawls well • Says first word 	<p>Signs of Distress [When needs go unmet]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive crying, inability to be comforted • Feeding or sleeping problems • Withdrawal, lack of response • Irritability
<p><i>Ask baby's doctor or visit library or internet for detailed lists of milestones! So many changes happen this year!</i></p> <p><i>Be sure to speak with baby's doctor if any of these signs persist or if you have any other concerns.</i></p>	

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One to Two Years	
Their Jobs	So they Benefit from
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the world To develop language To begin to develop self control To develop opinions To learn by doing To become concrete thinkers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing a loving adult is always available Predictability, routine, and structure Security, love, and flexibility A safe and stimulating environment Having adults listen to their vocalizations and respond to them Repetition in games, books, singing, and talking
What Parents Can Do	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a safe environment for exploration. Babies put things in their mouth to explore them! Keep vocabulary simple. Repeat sounds that baby makes. Have "conversations" with baby. Provide consistency among caregivers as much as possible. Work on cooperation between/among caregivers. Keep things as calm and stable as possible. Take care of yourself so you can take care of your baby. Be patient with baby's demands. Talk to baby's doctor about any concerns. Doctor should be able to help you tell the difference between normal behaviors and excessive ones. Make sure all environments are baby-proofed. My ideas: 	
Developmental Milestones	Signs of Distress [When needs go unmet]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likes to push, pull, and dump things; stacks two blocks Turns pages in a book; loves to be read to Gestures or points to indicate wants Plays Peek-a-boo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At around 18 months: Begins to have own opinions Asserts self, establishes independence, says "No!" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crying and clinging that lasts more than 20 minutes after a separation Delay in development Regressing to earlier behavior Excessive irritability Withdrawal (not normal shyness or fear of strangers)

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Three to Five Years	
Their Jobs	So they Benefit from
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage with outside world • To develop a sense of initiative ("I do it myself!") • To develop relationships with other children • To begin to understand limits set by adults • To begin to explore gender roles • To learn by DOING, exploring like a scientist! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued predictability, routine, structure • Consistent discipline between parents, if possible • Freedom from parental conflict • Blocks of time with each parent, if appropriate • Lots of opportunities to problem solve and explore through playing • Parents' patience when going back & forth between homes
What Parents Can Do	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEVER speak badly about the other parent. Give child "permission" to love both parents. • Use simple rules with consequences related to behavior (ex: clean up messes before next activity begins). • Offer lots of choices to increase self esteem and self control ("Do you want the blue sweater or the green sweater?"). • Provide time to play and interact with other children. Supervise play and teach cooperative skills. • Be models for them to copy: speak respectfully about other parent, family members. • Limit TV, video games, continue to read to children and encourage imaginative play. • Listen to children: repeat what they have said to you. Teach them that you are a good, safe listener and they will want to talk to you when they get older! • Give them time to transition between parents' houses. They may need privacy, or may act out. Don't jump to the conclusion that they are having trouble because there is something wrong at the other house. 	
Developmental Milestones	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagination grows; make-believe is normal • Can dress self, but not quickly; may need help! • Asks, "Why....?" • Beginning to discover and understand consequences • Still common to wet bed occasionally • Begins to recognize numbers, letters, shapes. 	Signs of Distress [When needs go unmet] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regression in toileting, sleeping, eating • Irritability, clinging • Anger and behavior problems

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Six to Eight Years	
Their Jobs	So they Benefit from
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase their understanding of the difference between fantasy & reality To deepen attachments with people outside the family To increase connections with school and community To develop self esteem through learning new skills and increasing responsibility for behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being given information in terms they can understand Parent support at school & activities Support for expanding interests and relationships Having a say in the parenting plan (if they want to) Reminders that the divorce/separation is not their fault Encouragement and permission to love both parents
What Parents Can Do	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with teachers and other school professionals to support child. Communicate regularly with teacher. Make sure the teacher knows about any changes in custody arrangements or other family changes. Offer consistent place and time for homework to be done. Encourage reading by continuing to read together; write stories about experiences. Help with homework ONLY if this is not stressful for you and child. Listen well to child. Be respectful of needs and ideas. Teach values; child is increasingly affected by media and other children. Limit TV, internet, and video games. Continue to model respect and cooperation with other parent. Allow child to begin to make some decisions about time spent together, if appropriate. Be patient if bedwetting occurs: don't punish bedwetting. Be understanding and work on self esteem. My ideas: 	
Developmental Milestones	Signs of Distress <small>[When needs go unmet]</small>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to understand time, days of the week Increases social skills: cooperation, sharing, communication More aware of safety (ex. using scissors and small tools) Understands & uses more words Views things as black and white, good or bad, with very little middle ground Increases problem solving ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical complaints (stomach aches, headaches, etc.) Sleep problems Expression of anger and behavior problems with parent most attached to Bed wetting, baby talk, whining School problems

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Nine to Twelve Years	
Their Jobs	So they Benefit from
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop & test values & beliefs To be connected with school & community To feel good about their physical development To develop good relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency and predictability in schedules & routines Parent support in school & activities Encouragement and permission to love both parents Reminders that the divorce/separation is not their fault Better communication with parents
What Parents Can Do	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen well to child. Be the best listener they know. Try to avoid interrupting them with advice, stories of your own. Encourage activities with other children; get to know their friends' parents. Set clear limits and consequences. Try to coordinate the most essential rules with other parent. Differences between households are normal and children can adjust, but safety rules should be consistent if possible. Understand that they are entering the identity stage of development soon, and that they still see themselves as extensions of their parents. So if you insult the other parent, your child feels directly insulted. Take care of yourself and learn about the upcoming adolescent years. Get support from other parents. Listen and talk to your child about sex, drugs, and other important issues. Teach safety. My ideas: 	
Developmental Milestones	Signs of Distress <small>[When needs go unmet]</small>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls as much as 2 years ahead of boys in physical maturity Improved coordination and reaction time May develop special interests Becomes more goal oriented Friends become increasingly important Tends to see things as right or wrong; no in-between 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of interest in friends and other relationships Isolating themselves Becoming "too good" Depression and extreme rebellion Alcohol and drug use

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Thirteen to Eighteen Years	
Their Jobs	So they Benefit from
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a sense of identity • To develop separation from parents • To develop moral values • To express resistance to authority • To be hyper loyal to peers • To be passionate about their beliefs and values • To have heightened self consciousness, especially about their changing bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and understanding from their parents • Parents who expect them to be teens, not adults • Reminders that the divorce is not their fault • Many teens want a say in the parenting plan • Positive role models • Reasonable, firm, fair guidelines • Good communication with parents
What Parents Can Do	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure teen eats a well balanced diet and encourage enough rest. • Get to know their friends, offer a "teen-friendly" environment (food, friendliness) so that their friends like to visit. • Stay involved in school, talking with teachers frequently. • Allow teens more say in living arrangements, when appropriate. • Continue to be the best listener in their life; don't push too much since they value privacy, but listen without judgment. • Continue to support teen's relationship with other parent. Continue to remind them that the divorce/separation is not their fault in any way. • Reinforce the idea that they can grow up and have a strong, lasting marriage: divorce isn't inevitable for them. • My ideas: 	
Developmental Milestones	Signs of Distress <small>[When needs go unmet]</small>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hormones/puberty cause emotional "surges" and moods • Thinking becomes more analytical • Normal to feel that they are the "center of the universe" • Intense loyalty towards peers • Increased interest in community, world, politics. Beliefs may differ from parents' beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive anger and negativity • Excessive isolation, depression • Trying to be "too good" • Difficulty with school or peers • Alcohol and drug use, sexual promiscuity • Eating too much or too little