



BOUND TOGETHER
Harford County Education Foundation

A Treasure Bag of Activities to Help Your Child Learn and Grow



YOU ARE EXTRAORDINARY

Parents and caregivers have a unique and powerful role as your child's first teacher. Your love, guidance, and daily interactions lay the foundation for their growth and future. Bound Together offers the tools to help create a home environment that promotes literacy and learning through play and reading.

Playing with your child is an engaging and comprehensive way to foster learning. It not only helps them develop specific skills but also instills a positive attitude towards education, setting the stage for a lifelong love of learning and exploration.

Reading together builds strong bonds between an adult and a child, and sparks a passion for books. Storytelling becomes a special tradition, introducing your child to the magical world of literature. This not only improves their language abilities but also fuels their imagination.

Your time and presence are invaluable gifts. Engaging in these meaningful moments will create lasting memories while cherishing the journey of parenthood. Your active involvement not only shapes their childhood but also influences their school readiness skills, academic accomplishments, and the adults they will become.

THE POWER OF PLAY

Parents and caregivers play a crucial role in providing environments that support and encourage various forms of play to support their child's growth and learning. Here are some key aspects to the power of play.

1. Play Boosts Creativity

- Play provides opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and problem-solving.
- Imaginative play fosters creativity and critical thinking.

2. Play Has Awesome Social Benefits

- Play situations allow children to practice sharing, taking turns, and negotiating, building a foundation for positive social interactions.

3. Play Helps Kids Build Confidence

- Success in play activities contributes to the development of self-esteem and confidence, promoting emotional well-being.

4. Play is Natural Exercise

- Engaging in active play promotes coordination, balance, and spatial awareness in early childhood.

5. Play Builds Language Skills

- Play activities encourage language development through vocabulary expansion, and the use of narrative skills.
- Imaginative play, such as role-playing and storytelling, enhances language comprehension and expression.

Milestones matter! How your baby plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about his or her development. Check the milestones your baby has reached by 2, 4 and 6 months. Take this with you and talk with your baby's doctor at every well-child visit about the milestones your baby has reached and what to expect next. Read the full CDC Milestone Checklist at www.cdc.gov/Milestones



What most babies do by this age: 2 months

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Calms down when spoken to or picked up
- o Looks at your face
- o Seems happy to see you when you walk up to her
- o Smiles when you talk to or smile at her

Language/Communication Milestones

- o Makes sounds other than crying
- o Reacts to loud sounds

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o Watches you as you move
 - o Looks at a toy for several seconds

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Holds head up when on tummy
- o Moves both arms and both legs
- o Opens hands briefly

What most babies do by this age: 4 months

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Smiles on his own to get your attention
- o Chuckles (not yet a full laugh) when you try to make her laugh
- o Looks at you, moves, or makes sounds to get or keep your attention

Language/Communication Milestones

- o Makes sounds like "oooo", "aahh" (cooing)
- o Makes sounds back when you talk to him
- o Turns head towards the sound of your voice

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o If hungry, opens mouth when she sees breast or bottle
 - o Looks at his hands with interest

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Holds head steady without support when you are holding her
- o Holds a toy when you put it in his hand
- o Uses her arm to swing at toys
- o Brings hands to mouth
- o Pushes up onto elbows/forearms when on tummy

What most babies do by this age: 6 months

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Knows familiar people
- o Likes to look at himself in a mirror
- o Laughs

Language/Communication Milestones

- o Takes turns making sounds with you
- o Blows "raspberries" (sticks tongue out and blows)
- o Makes squealing noises

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o Puts things in her mouth to explore them
 - o Reaches to grab a toy he wants
 - o Closes lips to show she doesn't want more food

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Rolls from tummy to back
- o Pushes up with straight arms when on tummy
- o Leans on hands to support himself when sitting



You know your baby best. Don't wait. If your baby is not meeting one or more milestones, has lost skills he or she once had, or you have other concerns, act early. Talk with your baby's doctor, share your concerns, and ask about developmental screening. Check the milestones your baby has reached by 1, 2 and 3 years. Read the full CDC Milestone Checklist at www.cdc.gov/Milestones



What most babies do by this age: 12 months

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Plays games with you, like pat-a-cake
- ### Language/Communication Milestones
- o Waves "bye-bye"
 - o Calls a parent "mama" or "dada" or another special name
 - o Understands "no" (pauses briefly or stops when you say it)

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o Puts something in a container, like a block in a cup
 - o Looks for things he sees you hide, like a toy under a blanket

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Pulls up to stand
- o Walks, holding on to furniture
- o Drinks from a cup without a lid, as you hold it
- o Picks things up between thumb and pointer finger, like small bits of food

What most toddlers do by this age: 2 years

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Notices when others are hurt or upset, like pausing or looking sad when someone is crying
- o Looks at your face to see how to react in a new situation

Language/Communication Milestones

- o Points to things in a book when you ask, like "Where is the bear?"
- o Says at least two words together, like "More milk."
- o Points to at least two body parts when you ask him to show you
- o Uses more gestures than just waving and pointing, like blowing a kiss or nodding yes

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o Holds something in one hand while using the other hand; for example, holding a container and taking the lid off
 - o Tries to use switches, knobs, or buttons on a toy
 - o Plays with more than one toy at the same time, like putting toy food on a toy plate

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Kicks a ball
- o Runs
- o Walks (not climbs) up a few stairs with or without help
- o Eats with a spoon

What most toddlers do by this age: 3 years

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Calms down within 10 minutes after you leave her, like at a childcare drop off
- o Notices other children and joins them to play

Language/Communication Milestones

- o Talks with you in conversation using at least two back-and-forth exchanges
- o Asks "who," "what," "where," or "why" questions, like "Where is mommy/daddy?"
- o Says what action is happening in a picture or book when asked, like "running," "eating," or "playing"

- o Says first name, when asked
- o Talks well enough for others to understand, most of the time

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o Draws a circle, when you show him how
 - o Avoids touching hot objects, like a stove, when you warn her

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Strings items together, like large beads or macaroni
- o Puts on some clothes by himself, like loose pants or a jacket
- o Uses a fork

For families of children ages 3-5 who have concerns regarding their child's development, please contact Harford County Public Schools' **Child Find** at 410-638-4386.

www.harfordeducation.org

Eat meals with your child when possible. Let them see you enjoying healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and drinking milk or water. Take time to answer your child's "why" questions. If you don't know the answer, say "I don't know," or help your child find the answer in a book, on the Internet, or from another adult. Check the milestones your child has reached by 4 and 5 years. Read the full CDC Milestone Checklist at www.cdc.gov/Milestones



What most toddlers do by this age: 4 years

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Pretends to be something else during play (teacher, superhero, dog)
- o Asks to go play with children if none are around, like "Can I play with Alex?"
- o Comforts others who are hurt or sad, like hugging a crying friend
- o Avoids danger, like not jumping from tall heights at the playground
- o Likes to be a "helper"
- o Changes behavior based on where she is (place of worship, library, playground)

Language/Communication Milestones

- o Talks about at least one thing that happened during his day, like "I played soccer."
- o Answers simple questions like "What is a coat for?" or "What is a crayon for?"

- o Says sentences with four or more words
- o Says some words from a song, story, or nursery rhyme

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o Names a few colors of items
- o Tells what comes next in a well-known story
- o Draws a person with three or more body parts

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Catches a large ball most of the time
- o Serves himself food or pours water, with adult supervision
- o Unbuttons some buttons
- o Holds crayon or pencil between fingers and thumb (not a fist)

Preparing for Kindergarten: 5 years

Social/Emotional Milestones

- o Follows rules or takes turns when playing games with other children
- o Sings, dances, or acts for you
- o Does simple chores at home, like matching socks or clearing the table after eating

Language/Communication Milestones

- o Tells a story she heard or made up with at least two events. For example, a cat was stuck in a tree and a firefighter saved it
- o Answers simple questions about a book or story after you read or tell it to him
- o Keeps a conversation going with more than three back-and-forth exchanges
- o Uses or recognizes simple rhymes (bat-cat, ball-tall)

Cognitive Milestones

- (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- o Counts to 10
- o Names some numbers between 1 and 5 when you point to them
- o Uses words about time, like "yesterday," "tomorrow," "morning," or "night"
- o Pays attention for 5 to 10 minutes during activities. For example, during story time or making arts and crafts (screen time does not count)
- o Writes some letters in her name
- o Names some letters when you point to them

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- o Buttons some buttons
- o Hops on one foot

Harford County Resources

Access Harford County Public Schools Community Resource Guide filled with information on local assistance programs.
bit.ly/HarfordCountyResources



Learning Activity Cards

Need some guidance on how to make the most of the items in the activity bag? Look no further! All the information you need is available right here.
bit.ly/bound-together



Free Zoo Coloring Book!

Complete a short survey and your child will receive a Zoo Coloring Book and information on how to get more free books as our thank you!
bit.ly/boundtogethersurvey

