Children go through different periods of development as they move from infants to young adults. During each of these stages multiple changes in the development of the brain are taking place. Our goal is to help parents understand what is taking place in their child’s brain and body during each period with the hope that they will be able to provide the necessary support, encouragement, structure and interventions to enable a child to progress through each stage as easily and successfully as possible based on each child’s unique set of traits and interests.
The Growing Child: 1-Year-Olds

After a baby’s first birthday, the rate of growth begins to slow down. The baby is now a toddler and is very active.

WHAT CAN MY BABY DO AT THIS AGE?
As your baby continues to grow, you will notice new and exciting abilities that develop. While babies may progress at different rates, the following are some of the common milestones your baby may reach in this age group:

- Walks alone by 15 months, then begins to run
- Can stop, squat, then stand again
- Sits down on small stool or chair
- Climbs stairs while holding on
- Dances with music
- Plays with push and pull toys
- Can build towers out of blocks
- Throws a ball overhand
- Puts two- to three-piece puzzles together
- Scribbles with crayon or pencil and may imitate drawing a straight line or circle
- Mostly feeds self with fingers
- Begins to feed self with spoon
- Drinks well from cup
- Can help with dressing and may be able to undress simple clothes (i.e., clothes without buttons/zippers)
- First molar (back) teeth appear
- Takes one afternoon nap
- May sleep 10 to 12 hours at night.

WHAT CAN MY BABY SAY?
Speech development is very exciting for parents as they watch their babies become social beings that can interact with others. While every baby develops speech at his or her own rate, the following are some of the common milestones in this age group:

- Imitates animal sounds and noises
- At one year, says four to six simple words
- At 18 months, says 10 to 15 words
- By 18 to 24 months, uses simple phrases or two-word sentences (i.e., “Mommy up”)
- By 2 years, says 100 or more words
- Asks “What is...?”
- Uses negative phrases such as “No want”

WHAT DOES MY BABY UNDERSTAND?
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- Asks “What is...?”
- Uses negative phrases such as “No want”
How to help increase your baby’s learning and emotional security:
Consider the following as ways to foster the emotional security of your 1-year-old:

■ Give your child toys that can be filled and emptied and toys for imaginary play.
■ Give your child simple two- to six-piece puzzles and balls of all sizes.
■ Help your child build towers of blocks.
■ Encourage your child to “help” you with household tasks.
■ Give your child paper and large crayons to scribble and draw.
■ Talk to your child with clear simple language about what you are doing.
■ Use the correct names for objects, even if your child does not. For example: your child might say “wa-wa,” and you say “Water, that is right.”
■ Expand your child’s sentences. If your child says, “Want cookie,” you say, “Do you want another cookie?”
■ Read to your child every day using picture and story books.
■ Feed your child at family mealtimes.
■ Provide consistent firm, appropriate discipline without yelling or hitting.

HOW DOES MY BABY INTERACT WITH OTHERS?
As children begin to walk, they may begin to show independence and will try to walk further away from the parent, but will return. Separation anxiety and fear of strangers may lessen, then return at about 18 months. While every child is unique and will develop different personalities, the following are some of the common behavioral traits that may be present in your child:

■ Plays along side others without interacting, called parallel play
■ May begin clinging to parents around 18 months
■ May begin to say “no” more frequently to commands or needs
■ May have temper tantrums
■ May use a blanket or stuffed animal as a security object in place of the parent
The Growing Child: 2-Year-Olds

After a child’s second birthday, the rate of growth continues to slow. Two-year-olds are very active and begin to lose the appearance of a baby. While all children may grow at a different rate, the following indicates the average for 2-year-old boys and girls:
- **Weight:** average gain of about 4 to 6 pounds per year
- **Height:** average growth of about 2 to 3 inches each year

**WHAT CAN MY CHILD DO AT THIS AGE?**

As your child continues to grow, you will notice new and exciting abilities that develop. While children may progress at different rates, the following are some of the common milestones your child may reach in this age group:
- Walks and runs well
- May jump awkwardly
- Begins to throw, kick, and catch balls
- Can stand momentarily on one foot
- Climbs on playground structures
- Turns doorknobs and lids
- Begins to ride a tricycle
- Builds towers of 10 blocks by 3 years old
- All 20 teeth appear by 3 years old
- Appetite decreases greatly
- Has developed right- or left-handedness by 3 years old
- Turns pages in a book, one at a time
- Has good thumb and finger control
- Can drink through a straw
- Begins to have bladder and bowel control
- May still take one afternoon nap
- May sleep 10 to 12 hours at night

**WHAT DOES MY CHILD UNDERSTAND?**

While children may progress at different rates, the following are some of the common milestones children may reach in this age group:
- Understands possession, “Mine”
- Can tell his or her own age and name
- Knows if he or she is a boy or girl
- Counts up to three objects
- May begin to problem solve
- Names pictures
- May name some body parts

**WHAT CAN MY BABY SAY?**

Speech development is very exciting for parents as they watch their children become social beings that can interact with others. Speech at this age is becoming clearer and the child begins to form sentences. While every child develops speech at his or her own rate, the following are some of the common milestones in this age group:
- Says about 200 to 300 words
- Begins to put three words together (subject, verb, object), for example “Me want ball”
- Names pictures
- May name some body parts
2-YEAR-OLDS (CONT’D)

How to help increase your child’s learning and emotional security:
Consider the following as ways to foster the emotional security of your 2-year-old:
- Let your child have a choice when possible: for example, say, “Do you want a banana or an orange?”
- Let your child help around the house, such as dusting, sweeping, or sorting laundry.
- Read picture and story books with your child.
- Help your child learn to wash his or her hands.
- Let your child try to take off his or her own clothes and put on some simple clothes (i.e., clothes without buttons or zippers).
- Let your child play with blocks, balls, crayons, and/or clay. Supervise play so that your child does not put objects in his or her mouth, ears, etc.
- Sing songs, play children’s music, and dance with your child.
- Look at family pictures with your child and tell a story.
- Make cut-outs in a large cardboard box to pretend it is a house or car.
- Use toys during bath time; have fun pouring water from one cup to another.
- Let your child talk on a toy phone, or say a few words while you are talking on a real phone.
- Play “follow the leader” games.
- Teach body parts while dressing and bathing.
- Let your child put stickers on paper to make a design.
- Count things out loud to teach your child about numbers (i.e., count eggs in the carton, stairs as you go up, or fingers and toes).
- Play with soap bubbles.
- Use toys that sort shapes, such as a circle, square, or triangle.
- Give your child a doll or teddy bear.
- Read your child a book of rhymes.
- Give your child a toy to ride.
- Limit television and video time.
- Provide out-of-home social experiences.

HOW DOES MY CHILD INTERACT WITH OTHERS?
While every child is unique and will develop different personalities, the following are some of the common behavioral traits that may be present in your child:
- Shows independence from parents
- Does not understand sharing
- Continues to play along side others without interacting, called parallel play
- Acts as if other children are objects or toys
- Is negative and says “no” frequently
- Temper tantrums may continue
- Helps to get himself or herself dressed and undressed

Learn more at WestBocaMedCtr.com/Peds. For a physician referral, call 855.827.2691.
WHAT CAN MY CHILD SAY?
Speech development is very exciting for parents as they watch their children begin to speak clearly and interact with others. While every child develops speech at his or her own rate, the following are some of the common milestones in this age group:

- Should be able to say about 500 to 900 words
- Speech can be understood by others
- Speaks in two or three word sentences and progresses to four to five word sentences
- Can remember simple rhymes or lyrics
- Uses “please” and “thank you”
- Refers to self by using own name
- Names colors

WHAT CAN MY CHILD DO AT THIS AGE?
As your child continues to grow, you will notice new and exciting abilities that develop. While children may progress at different rates, the following are some of the common milestones your child may reach in this age group:

- Runs and jumps easily
- Walks up stairs unassisted
- Rides a tricycle
- Washes and dries hands
- Stacks 10 blocks
- Easily draws straight lines and copies a circle
- Can stand on tip-toes
- Uses spoon well and feeds self
- Dresses and undresses self except for buttons and laces
- Can concentrate on tasks for eight or nine minutes
- Has all 20 primary (“baby”) teeth
- Vision is nearing 20/20
- Bladder and bowel control are usually established; uses potty chair or toilet
- May sleep 11 to 13 hours total, may still take a short afternoon nap

HOW DOES MY CHILD INTERACT WITH OTHERS?
While every child is unique and will develop different personalities, the following are some of the common behavioral traits that may be present in your child:

- Begins to share and likes to play with other children
- Can take turns
- Temper tantrums are less frequent
- Begins to show feelings in socially acceptable ways
WHAT DOES MY CHILD UNDERSTAND?
While children may progress at different rates, the following are some of the common milestones your child may reach in this age group:

- Understands size differences (such as, big and little)
- Understands past tense (yesterday)
- Understands long sentences
- Understands prepositions (on, under, behind)
- Uses pronouns correctly (such as, I, you, he, and me)
- Asks “why” constantly
- Counts up to four objects by 4 years old
- Says full name and age
- May have fears of certain things (for example, dark, monster under bed and going down the drain)
- Attempts to solve problems
- Remembers certain events
- Can point to the correct picture when asked a simple question about it.

How to help increase your child’s learning and emotional security:
Consider the following as ways to foster the emotional security of your 3-year-old:

- Spend time allowing your child to talk with you.
- Teach your child how things work.
- Encourage play with other children.
- Encourage your child to tell you stories.
- Listen to your child and show that you are pleased by your child’s talking.
- Let your child do as much as possible for themselves when getting dressed, brushing teeth and combing hair.
- Have your child help with simple chores such as picking up toys.
- Give your child old clothes for “dress up” and allow him/her to pretend being a mom, dad, doctor, cowboy, etc. Old sheets or towels can become skirts, capes or turbans. You can also pretend you’re an elephant, butterfly, robot or other character and play with them.
- Sing songs or nursery rhymes and teach your child the words.
- Read stories with your child and ask your child to name pictures in the stories or retell part of the story.
- Help your child play with crayon and paper or chalk and chalkboard by showing how to draw circles and lines and then put them together to make a stick figure. Make figure faces that are happy, sad, or surprised, and talk about the different feeling pictured.
- Let your child build things with blocks or boxes.
- Provide a safe place for your child to ride a tricycle.
- Listen to children’s music with your child and dance.
- Practice counting with your child.
- Give your child the chance to play with other children. Church groups, YWCA/YMCA or libraries often have preschool programs.
- Put puzzles together with your child.
- Let your child have pretend playtime with dolls, cars, or toy cooking utensils.
- Practice playing hide and seek and follow the leader.
- Let your child use his or her imagination by playing with play dough or clay.
- Trace your child’s hand or whole body and make a picture.
- Show your child you are proud of any artwork and hang it up for display.
- Teach your child colors.
- Play ball with your child. Play different games with the ball, such as tossing a ball into a box or rolling the ball up and down an incline.
The Growing Child: Preschool (4-5 Years)

Children progress at different rates. They have different interests, abilities, and personalities. But there are some common milestones many children reach from ages 4 to 5.

WHAT CAN MY CHILD DO AT THIS AGE?
As your child grows, you’ll notice him or her developing new and exciting abilities.

A child age 4:
- Sings a song
- Skips and hops on one foot
- Catches and throws a ball overhand
- Walks downstairs alone
- Draws a person with 3 separate body parts
- Builds a block tower with 10 blocks
- Understands the difference between fantasy and reality

A child age 5:
- Jumps rope
- Walks backward
- Balances on one foot with eyes closed
- Uses scissors
- Begins learning to tie shoes
- Copies shapes while drawing
- Dresses himself or herself
- Knows his or her address and phone number
- Recognizes and recites the alphabet

WHAT CAN MY CHILD SAY?
Speech development in children is very exciting for parents. They can watch their children become social beings that can interact with others.

A child age 4:
- May put 4 to 5 words together into a sentence
- Will ask questions constantly
- May know 1 or more colors
- Likes to tell stories
- May use some “bad” words (if he or she has heard them spoken repeatedly)

A child age 5:
- May put 6 to 8 words together into a sentence
- May know 4 or more colors
- Knows days of the week and months
- Can name coins and money
- Can understand commands with multiple instructions
- Talks often
WHAT DOES MY CHILD UNDERSTAND?
As a child’s vocabulary gets larger, so does his or her understanding of the world around them. Children at this age begin to understand concepts and can compare abstract ideas.

A child age 4:
■ Begins to understand time
■ Begins to become more aware of people around him or her
■ May obey parent’s rules, but doesn’t understand right from wrong
■ Believes that his or her own thoughts can make things happen

A child age 5:
■ Has more understanding of time
■ Is curious about real world facts
■ May compare rules of parents with that of friends

HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE MY CHILD’S SOCIAL ABILITIES?
You can help boost your preschool child’s social abilities by:

■ Offering compliments for good behavior and achievements
■ Encouraging your child to talk to you and be open with his or her feelings
■ Reading to your child, singing songs, and talking with him or her
■ Spending quality time with your child and showing him or her new experiences
■ Encouraging your child to ask questions and explore
■ Encouraging physical activity with supervision
■ Arranging times for your child to be with other children, such as in play groups
■ Giving your child the chance to make choices, when appropriate
■ Using time-out for behavior that isn’t acceptable
■ Encouraging your child to express his or her anger in an appropriate manner
■ Limiting TV time (or other screen time) to 1 to 2 hours a day, and encouraging free time to be used for other activities
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