



DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES: FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Age	Developmental Milestones	Possible implications if milestones not achieved
0 - 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reflexive grasp (at birth) ❖ Global ineffective reach for objects (3 months) ❖ Voluntary grasp (3 months) ❖ 2 handed palmar grasp (3 months) ❖ 1 handed palmar grasp (5 months) ❖ Controlled reach (6 months) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Poor muscle development ❖ Delayed ability to play independently ❖ Delayed sensory development due to delayed interaction with toys and other sensory objects
6 - 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reaches, grasps, puts object in mouth ❖ Controlled release of objects ❖ Pincer grasp ❖ Picks things up with pincer grasp (thumb and one finger) ❖ Transfers object from one hand to the other ❖ Drops and picks up toy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Poor development of hand and finger strength ❖ Poor manipulation of objects resulting in delayed play skills ❖ Delayed sensory development due to lack of sensory play experiences
1 - 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Builds tower of three small blocks ❖ Puts four rings on stick ❖ Places five pegs in pegboard ❖ Turns pages two or three at a time ❖ Scribbles ❖ Turns knobs ❖ Paints with whole arm movement, shifts hands, makes strokes ❖ Self-feeds with minimal assistance ❖ Able to use signing to communicate ❖ Brings spoon to mouth ❖ Holds and drinks from cup independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Poor development of hand and finger strength ❖ Delayed independent play skills ❖ Delayed development of self care skills such as eating ❖ Delayed manipulation skills
2 - 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Strings four large beads ❖ Turns single pages ❖ Snips with scissors ❖ Holds crayon with thumb and fingers (not fist) ❖ Uses one hand consistently in most activities ❖ Imitates circular, vertical, horizontal strokes ❖ Paints with some wrist action, makes dots, lines, circular strokes ❖ Rolls, pounds, squeezes, and pulls play-dough ❖ Eats without assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Delayed self-care skills such as eating ❖ Delayed pre-writing skills development ❖ Delayed manipulation of small objects such as toys, pencils and scissors ❖ Frustration when manipulating small toys and objects





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Age	Developmental Milestones	Possible implications if milestones not achieved
3 - 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Builds tower of nine small blocks ❖ Manipulates clay material (rolls balls, makes snakes, cookies) ❖ Uses non dominant hand to assist and stabilise the use of objects ❖ Snips paper using scissors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Delayed pre-writing skills development ❖ Frustration and/or avoidance of pencil based tasks ❖ Poor pencil grasp and pencil control ❖ Poor self-care skills such as eating ❖ Delayed drawing skills
4 - 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cuts on line continuously ❖ Copies cross ❖ Copies square ❖ Writes name ❖ Writes numbers 1-5 ❖ Copies letters ❖ Left or right handed determined ❖ Dresses and undresses independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Difficulties holding and manipulating a pencil ❖ Difficulties learning to write name and other letters of the alphabet ❖ Dependence on caregivers for every day activities such as dressing ❖ Frustration and/or avoidance of pencil based tasks
5 - 6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cuts out simple shapes ❖ Copies triangle ❖ Colours within lines ❖ Uses a 3 fingered grasp of pencil and uses fingers to generate movement ❖ Pastes and glues appropriately ❖ Can draw basic pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Difficulties learning to form letters correctly ❖ Poor handwriting ❖ Fatigue during pencil based tasks ❖ Frustration and/or avoidance of pencil based tasks
6 - 7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Forms most letters and numbers correctly ❖ Writes consistently on the lines ❖ Demonstrates controlled pencil movement ❖ Good endurance for writing ❖ Can build Lego / blocks independently ❖ Ties shoelaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Difficulties getting ideas down on paper ❖ Experiencing fatigue during handwriting tasks ❖ Difficulty keeping up in class due to slow handwriting speed ❖ Poor legibility of handwriting ❖ May impact on self-esteem when comparing work to peers ❖ Possible frustration and/or behaviour difficulties due to avoidance of pencil based tasks
7 - 8 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Maintains legibility of handwriting for entirety of a story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Difficulty completing handwriting tasks in a timely manner ❖ Experiencing fatigue during handwriting tasks ❖ Poor academic achievement due to difficulty getting ideas down on paper ❖ Difficulties due to avoidance of pencil based tasks