

Growth and development

Erikson across the lifespan

Stage	Age	Conflict
Infancy	0—1 y	Trust vs mistrust
Early childhood	1—3 y	Autonomy vs shame and doubt
Play age	3—6 y	Initiative vs guilt
School age	6—12 y	Industry vs inferiority
Adolescence	12—18 y	Identity vs role confusion
Young adult	18—40 y	Intimacy vs isolation
Middle adult	40—65 y	Generativity vs stagnation
Maturity	65+ y	Ego integrity vs despair

Infant and toddler milestones

- ✓ **Gross motor** — head steady 3 mo → rolls front-to-back 4 mo → rolls back-to-front and sits with support 5—6 mo → **sits independently and crawls 7—8 mo** → pulls to stand and cruises 9—10 mo → **first steps ~12 mo**
- ✓ **Fine motor** — grasp reflex 0—3 mo → holds objects 4—5 mo → **transfers hand to hand 6 mo** → raking grasp 7—8 mo → **pincer grasp 9 mo** → finger-feeds 12 mo
- ✓ **Language** — cooing 2 mo → laughing 4—5 mo → **babbling 6 mo** → responds to name and understands “no” 9 mo → **1—2 meaningful words 12 mo**
- ✓ **Social** — **social smile 2 mo** → **stranger anxiety 6—8 mo** → **separation anxiety strongest 8—12 mo** → waves bye-bye and plays peek-a-boo 12 mo
- ✓ **Birth weight doubles by 6 months and triples by 12 months.** Development runs **cephalocaudal, proximodistal, gross to fine, simple to complex**
- ✓ **Toddler and preschool** — walks 12—18 mo • runs at 2 y • **tricycle and copies a circle at 3 y** • **hops on one foot and copies a cross at 4 y** • **skips and balances on one foot at 5 y.** Half of adult height by age 2; gains 4—6 lb and 2—3 in/year
- ✓ **Play** — parallel (2—3 y) → associative (3—4 y) → cooperative by 5

Piaget

- ✓ **Sensorimotor (0—2 y)** — learns by senses and movement; **object permanence ~9 months**; cause and effect by 12 months
- ✓ **Preoperational (2—7 y)** — **egocentric**, magical thinking, pretend play, no conservation
- ✓ **Concrete operational (7—11 y)** — logical and rule-based: **conservation, reversibility, classification, seriation**
- ✓ **Formal operational (11 y—adult)** — abstract and hypothetical reasoning. **The prefrontal cortex keeps maturing into the mid-20s, so impulsivity persists**

Red flags requiring referral

- ✓ **No social smile by 3 months** • poor head control at 4 months • **no rolling by 6 months** • **no babbling by 6 months** • no sitting by 9 months • **no gestures (pointing, waving) by 9 months** • **no pulling to stand or bearing weight by 12 months** • **no words by 12 months**
- ✓ **No walking by 18 months** • no two-word phrases by 2 years • no pretend play by 3 years • persistent toe-walking or hand flapping • poor eye contact
- ✓ **Any loss of previously acquired skills is urgent.** Persistent primitive reflexes (Moro past 6 months) are abnormal
- ✓ **Autism screening at 18 and 24 months**; structured developmental screening at 9, 18, and 30 months

Nutrition and safety by age

- ✓ **Exclusive breast milk or iron-fortified formula for the first 6 months.** Introduce one new food every 3—5 days
- ✓ **No honey before 12 months (botulism), no cow's milk before 12 months,** no choking hazards (whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hot dogs), no juice in bottles. Whole milk 12—24 months, then low-fat after age 2. Limit juice to **4—6 oz/day**
- ✓ **Supine to sleep; water heater ≤120 °F (49 °C)**
- ✓ **Car seat progression** — rear-facing to the seat's height/weight limit (often past age 2) → forward-facing harness to at least age 4 → **booster until 4'9"** (typically ages 8—12)
- ✓ **Toilet training at 2—3 years** when ready (dry 2 hours, follows directions, expresses the need, shows interest). Never force
- ✓ **Sleep** — toddlers ~12 h with 1—2 naps • preschoolers 10—13 h • school age **9—12 h** • teens **8—10 h** • adults 7—9 h
- ✓ **Activity** — children and adolescents **≥60 min/day**; adults **150 min/week moderate or 75 min/week vigorous**, plus strengthening twice weekly