

The Right Track Program for *Infants & Toddlers*

WHAT IS THE RIGHT TRACK PROGRAM?



Children experience the greatest amount of growth and development in their first three years of life.

The goal of the Right Track program is to provide every child with the best opportunities in their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. The Right Track Program for Infants and Toddlers provides free developmental screenings for North Dakota children from birth to their third birthday. Screenings are provided in the comfort and privacy of the family's home. Our professional consultants can provide ideas on stimulating your child's development as well as information and referrals to local, state, and national organizations.

This wonderful program is provided through the North Dakota Department of Human Services with funding through the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act Part C for Infants and Toddlers.

*Here is information about your child's
development (9-12 months)...*

Development At A Glance—*Nine to Twelve Months*

You will continue to see your baby become more and more independent with mobility and communication during this stage of development. You will also see your baby understanding more of what you say to him as well as trying to communicate with you using a few simple words or gestures. Your baby will also engage in simple games and increasingly imitate your actions and words.

What your baby can do:

Nine—Twelve Months

- I use “mama” and “dada” correctly to name my parents.
- I use one other word besides “mama” and “dada.”
- I will engage in games such as “Pat-a-Cake” or “Peek-a-Boo.”
- I can stand without holding on for a few seconds.
- I cruise, or take side steps, around furniture to get around in an upright position.
- I will indicate what I want and/or do not want by using my voice and or gestures such as pointing or pushing things away from me.
- I am able to finger feed myself part of a meal.

To encourage development, parents and caregivers can:

- Keep talking to your baby and encouraging imitation of sounds and words. Reading is also very important in continuing to build baby's vocabulary and attention span.
- Play games and sing songs with your baby and encourage him to participate. If your baby initiates a game such as “Pat-a-Cake” be sure to respond and join in right away.
- Encourage your baby to let you know what he wants. If he is giving any indication he wants something, respond immediately to encourage communication. Try using simple signs with your baby such as “more” and “all done.” A few signs will decrease frustration for both you and your baby.
- Provide opportunities for your baby to feed himself as much as possible during mealtimes.
- Keep encouraging your baby to explore his environment using his own mobility. Encourage upright movement such as walking with hands held, walking behind a push toy and cruising. Make sure that the environment is safe and he is supervised.

Your Baby's Motor Development

Your baby is now moving around your home independently either by crawling on all fours, walking behind a push toy, sidestepping or cruising along furniture or walking independently. He will continue to figure out how his body works to help him explore new spaces in your home and in public. It is important to closely supervise your child, especially in areas that may not be "child-proof" such as other people's homes or public places. Safety is very important.

You will also see your child repeating the same activity over and over, this is how he learns. He may take objects out of a container or place them in and out of a container several times. Imitating motor movements such as actions to songs is also an important motor learning opportunity. Provide a variety of toys and objects for your child to play with and explore. This is how he learns how things work. Examples may be stacking or banging blocks, playing with a unique rattle, or using a simple container to place objects in, wear it as a hat, or turn it upside down to cover up toys.



Your Baby's Language and Cognitive Development

During this stage your baby is paying attention to how you communicate and experimenting with his own communication. He may use a variety of voices or gestures to communicate his wants. He may even start to use a few simple words when communicating. Encouraging imitation of sounds and gestures, such as simple signs, will encourage your baby to "tell" you what he wants. During play sing songs that require motor actions such as "Itsy Bitsy Spider" or "If You're Happy and You Know It." These types of activities encourage participation in games as well as motor imitation.

Keep talking to your baby. Tell him what is happening and what is going to happen. Your baby is listening and understanding what you are telling him. At his age he, may even start to follow a simple direction such as when you ask "where is your blanket?" he may look to where it is in the room. Referring to yourself by name frequently such as, "Do you want to read a book with Mommy/Daddy?" will encourage him to start to use mama and dada to refer to you by name.

Your baby will also start to understand when something is "out of sight," but it is still there. This is called object permanence. Playing "Peek-a-Boo" with a toy or yourself encourages this understanding. This is why your baby cries when you leave the room, because he knows you are still there and he wants you to come back.

When reading to your baby continue to encourage your baby to turn pages and pat or point to pictures. Keep the books simple, bright and colorful to maintain your baby's interest.

Every parent wants their child to start on the RIGHT TRACK...

**FREE SCREENINGS are available for
all children in North Dakota from birth to age three.**

If you have a concern or just want to be sure your child is developing as he/she should, schedule a developmental specialist to come to your home and provide a screening by calling (701) 252-2131 or mail this form to your regional office address listed on the back page of this brochure.

Name of Child: _____ DOB: _____

Gender: _____ Parent Name: _____

Complete Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work: _____