

Guide targets newborn development

Parents should seek help if child isn't reaching levels

The U.S. Department of Education has formulated a guide for parents observing their newborn's development.

If your child does not show the signs outlined, talk with a health professional.

■ At 3 months of age, your baby should be listening to your voice, cooing, gurgling and trying to make the same sounds you make.

■ At 8 months, your baby

plays with sounds like "baba" or "dada." The baby smiles after hearing a happy voice, and cries or looks unhappy after hearing an angry voice.

■ At 10 months, the baby should understand simple words. He or she should stop to look at you if you say, "No-no."

■ At 12 months, your baby should say one or two words and understand 25 words or more. The child will give you a toy if you ask for it. Even without words, the baby can ask you for something by pointing, reaching for it or looking at it and babbling.

■ At 18 months, most children can say "thank you" and

at least 30 other words, and can follow simple directions like "jump!"

■ At 20 months, children can put two words together in a sentence, such as "car go" or "want juice." He or she can follow directions when you say things like "close the door," and can copy you when you say several words close together.

■ At 24 months and older, your child adds endings to words, like "running" or "played" or "toys." He or she likes hearing simple children's stories and can understand three words about place, such as "in," "on" or "at."

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