



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Developmental Milestones – the first year (LOVE)**

Guidelines to the presenter

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

Topic:

Developmental milestones – the first year. What to expect.

Objectives:

- To give parents some broad guidelines on developmental milestones in the first year across development domains.
- To help parents understand that babies’ rates of development differ and that normal attainment of milestones covers quite a broad age range.
- To encourage parents to be observant of their baby’s development.
- To inform them about some of the developmental delays to watch for.
- To inform them to maintain regular clinic visits.

Introduction

Today, we're going to look in more detail at some of the developmental milestones you can expect your baby to reach in his or her first year of life in the different developmental domains. We'll also look at some of the signs of developmental delays and at what point you need to have your baby checked at the clinic or by a doctor. Join us now as we discuss this on

Questions	Facts/Information
<p>1. <i>Please remind us again what is meant by developmental domains?</i></p>	<p>As we know, babies start developing from the time they are conceived and this development takes place across a number of different areas of development or domains. These areas are generally described as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical development – the baby's growth and ability to control his movements, both large muscle movements of the head, arms and legs as well as the small muscle movements of her hands and fingers plus coordinating his eyes and his hand movements• Cognitive development: this is the area of brain growth and mental development and the baby's understanding of his world and ability to remember, think, reason and problem solve.• Language development: this is

<p>2. <i>So should these developmental domains or areas of the baby's development be seen as separate?</i></p>	<p>closely related to the baby's cognitive development as her growing use of language is the way the baby understands, relates and responds to her world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social and emotional development: Social and emotional development are closely interlinked. This domain focusses on the baby's ability to feel and respond to his various emotions and relate to the people in his world.• Moral and spiritual development: this is the babies growing understanding of right and wrong, as well as socially acceptable behaviour within what you, her family and community value and believe. <p>No, not at all. These developmental areas together make up the whole child and development happens across all the developmental areas at the same time. The developmental areas fit closely together and influence each other. Healthy physical, cognitive, language and socio-emotional development need a combination of opportunities for growth in all areas at the same time. In reality, we can't separate one development area from another, but we need to understand the different domains of development to help children to reach their full potential in all areas.</p>
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<p>3. <i>Can you also explain what is meant by developmental milestones and do all babies reach milestones at the same age?</i></p>	<p>Developmental milestones are the markers or signs of development taking place. For example Mums and Dads get very excited to see their baby's first smile, or when they can sit. Baby's first steps are often an occasion for family members to take photographs and celebrate. However, we must remember that each baby will develop at his or her own pace. Some babies will walk much earlier than others; one baby may say her first word long before another. Milestones marking normal development can be reached at different ages and stages.</p>
<p>4. <i>You mentioned earlier that the baby's development starts from conception and that a lot of development happens even before the baby is born. So what preparation can a pregnant mother-to-be make to support her baby's development?</i></p>	<p>As we've stressed in previous programmes, it's really important that pregnant mothers-to-be take great care of their health. She should visit the clinic as soon as she knows she is pregnant and at least 4 more times to monitor her pregnancy and check on the development of her unborn child. Clinic and health visits are free for pregnant mothers and the clinic will give you vitamin and mineral supplements that will support your baby's development. They will also check your HIV status to see if you need medication to prevent the passing of the HIV virus to your baby. Pregnant mums need to be careful of what they eat & to eat</p>

	<p>lots of nutritious vegetables and fruit, as well as drinking lots of clean water. They need regular exercise and rest and must try not to get stressed. Her growing baby is very sensitive to everything that happens to mum! That means that most importantly the pregnant mum-to-be MUST NOT drink alcohol, take drugs or smoke, as this can seriously damage her developing baby.</p>
<p>5. <i>When the baby is born, what stage of development are they at?</i></p>	<p>When your baby is born he is completely helpless and dependent on you. The most important way you can support your baby on its path of development is to cuddle and hold him close, skin to skin, as often and for as long as you can. This time of bonding, loving and nurturing your baby is the foundation for her future development. An important part of this early care is for you to breastfeed exclusively (that means giving your baby nothing but breast milk; not even water and not starting solid food until 6 months)</p>
<p>6. <i>How soon does the baby start to develop physically and what milestones should parents be looking out for?</i></p>	<p>Babies are born with all their senses working and ready to develop: their eyes, ears, sense of smell and taste; their ability to feel and to sense movement. The first year is a time of astounding growth and</p>

development! Mums and Dads who watch their baby's development closely will find each week and month brings new and exciting developments.

- Their little eyes start to focus and from 3 months most babies can track the movement of an object that Mum or Dad moves from one side to the other across their baby's field of vision. Soon your baby will delight in looking at your face and responding to your smile with a smile of his own. What a joy that is – your baby's first smile!
- Your baby should also respond to a loud noise and will certainly start to respond to your voice.
- Most babies start to roll over by 4 to 6 months and to start sitting with some support as they gain control over their heavy heads!
- Crawling or moving along on her bottom can start as early as 7 months up to 1 year.
- Soon your baby will be standing and taking his first steps anytime between 8 to 18 months.
- And her control over her hands and fingers will be developing as well,

<p>7. <i>How will parents know if their baby is reaching her cognitive or brain development milestones?</i></p>	<p>from grasping and holding an object to being able to reach out and grab something, then shake, bang or throw it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As baby's eye-hand coordination improves, she can point, pick things up, put them into a container and take them out, as well as start to feed herself at about a year old. <p>Your baby's cognitive or mental development is very closely linked to his development of language, as it's through language that your baby understands and makes sense of his world. And this is where you, Mum or Dad play such an important role in talking, singing & playing sound games with your baby from the time he is born. Within a couple of weeks, your baby will start to make different sounds and the variety of the sounds she makes will grow and grow. She will start to babble and imitate the sounds you make until she starts to say her first words, usually mamma or dadda, and usually between the ages of 10 to 18 months.</p> <p>As his eyes become better focussed, he will start to take an interest in the faces he sees and starts to recognise, as well as the</p>
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objects around him, which he will want to touch, hold & put in his mouth. So make sure the objects are safe, not sharp and can't be swallowed!

Your baby will be curious and start to explore, especially once she starts to crawl or toddle. This is the time to baby-proof your home & make sure it's safe for this fearless explorer!

He will love to play peek-a-boo as you hide your face and another brain development milestone will be when he looks for an object he cannot see, but remembers it is there. From 10 months she will start to stack objects or put one inside the other, and by 11 months, some babies can start to turn the pages of a book. By one year, your baby might start to imitate some of the things you do, like talking on the cell phone!

8. *If language is so closely linked to brain development, is it also linked to the baby's social and emotional development?*

Absolutely and so is baby's first smile! This is her first social connection and interaction with the most important people in her world –you, her parents! Anytime from 4 months, he will delight you by laughing at just about anything you do to amuse or entertain him. From 5 months she may reach up to tell you she wants to be picked up, and will certainly recognise familiar

people in her environment. From about 9 months he may display stranger anxiety and go through a clingy stage when Mum leaves him. She starts to respond to the sound of her name at about 8 months and will love to look at herself in the mirror, copy her own movements and responses. By 9 months he may well be able to wave and try to say 'bye-bye' showing that he can connect sound, gesture and has some understanding of the meaning. This is the time when the very important bonds of love and trust are being built through the strong attachment your baby has with you his parents. This relationship with you is the foundation for all the future relationships your baby will have with other people in his life. Most importantly, this is the time when your baby will be establishing his self-confidence and self-belief that he is loved and capable.

9. It's very important for Mums and Dads to be aware of the developmental milestones of their baby and to observe, notice and take delight in each milestone reached. But what happens if parents notice that some of the milestones have not been reached?

As we have said often, there is a wide range of what is the normal age for babies to reach milestones. Every baby is an individual and develops at his or her own pace. It's very important for parents to take their baby to the clinic regularly for his or her growth monitoring, development checks and obviously his immunisations and

<p><i>What should they be looking out for & what should they do about it?</i></p>	<p>other health services. Remember, your health services are free for your child up until he is 6.</p> <p>If you are concerned about any aspect of your baby's development, make a note of what you have observed and when, and ask the clinic staff. Some of the development delays you need to look out for are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If your baby doesn't respond to loud sounds or later doesn't make sounds of his own.• If your baby doesn't watch things as they move (from 4 months) or later, doesn't respond to objects in her environment.• If your baby doesn't smile or later laugh, or doesn't show affection or respond to people in his life.• If your baby doesn't bring his hands & later objects to his mouth.• If your baby seems very stiff or very floppy & can't hold her head steady by about 5 months, is not sitting by 6 months or standing by 18 months.
<p><i>10. Why is it important for parents to notice these things and to seek help?</i></p>	<p>It's important because if developmental delays are picked up early, sometimes they can be corrected. Sometimes this may need help from someone in the medical</p>

	<p>profession, and clinic staff or the pre-school teacher may be able to advise parents what they can do to support their baby's development in that particular area. In some cases, your baby may need specialist help.</p>

Conclusion

So today, we have identified some of the normal developmental milestones that Mums and Dads can expect to see as they watch and take delight in their precious baby's development. And once again we have seen how critically important you are in your baby's life and how spending quality time loving, cuddling, talking and playing with your baby, while noticing what she does and how she is developing, plays such a very important role in supporting your baby to develop to his or her potential.

Learning outcomes

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Be able to identify some of the key developmental milestones in the various domains of a baby's development.
- Know that all babies develop at their own pace and that there is a wide range of normal in the attainment of developmental milestones.
- Be aware of the critically important role parents play in their baby's development and the need to carefully observe the progress of development.
- Know how to identify some important developmental delays & the need to seek

help from the clinic as first port of call.

- Be reminded that clinic visits are free for pregnant mums and children under age 6.