



Early Autism Milestone Checklist:

Your child should:

- ☐ Pretend to be something else during play, like a teacher, a superhero, or a dog
- ☐ Ask to go play with children if none are around, like “Can I play with Alex?”
- ☐ Comfort others who are hurt or sad, like hugging a crying friend
- ☐ Avoid danger, like not jumping from tall heights at the playground
- ☐ Like to be a helper
- ☐ Change behavior based on where they are
- ☐ Say sentences with four or more words
- ☐ Say some words from a song, story, or nursery rhyme
- ☐ Talk about at least one thing that happened during their day, like “I played soccer.”
- ☐ Answer simple questions like “What is a coat for?” or “What is a crayon for?”
- ☐ Name a few colors of items
- ☐ Tell what comes next in a well-known story
- ☐ Draw a person with three or more body parts
- ☐ Catch a large ball most of the time
- ☐ Serve themselves food or pour water, with adult supervision
- ☐ Unbutton some buttons
- ☐ Hold a crayon or pencil between fingers and thumb, not with a fist

**At 48 Months
(4 years)**



Ways to support your child's development:

- Help your child be ready for visiting new places and meeting new people. For example, read or tell stories about the new place/ person or role play what the experience will be like to help them feel comfortable.
- Read with your child. Ask them what's happening in the story and what they think might happen next.
- Help your child learn about colors, shapes, and sizes. For example, ask the color, shapes, and size of things they see during the day.

Signs to watch for that could indicate autism:

- When playing, your child doesn't pretend to be something or someone else, like a teacher, a superhero, or an animal.

Source: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)



Early Autism Milestone Checklist:

Your child should:

- ☐ Follow rules or takes turns when playing games with other children
- ☐ Sing, dance, or act for you
- ☐ Do simple chores at home, like matching socks or clearing the table after eating
- ☐ Tell a story they heard or made up with at least two events. For example, a cat was stuck in a tree and a firefighter saved it.
- ☐ Answer simple questions about a book or story after you read or tell it to them
- ☐ Keep a conversation going with more than three back-and-forth exchanges
- ☐ Use or recognize simple rhymes, like bat-cat and ball-tall
- ☐ Count to 10
- ☐ Name some numbers between 1 and 5 when you point to them
- ☐ Use words about time, like “yesterday,” “tomorrow,” “morning,” or “night”
- ☐ Pay attention for 5 to 10 minutes during activities. For example, during story time or making arts and crafts. Screen time doesn’t count!
- ☐ Write some letters in their name
- ☐ Name some letters when you point to them
- ☐ Button some buttons
- ☐ Hop on one foot

**At 60
Months
(5 years)**

Ways to support your baby’s development:

- Your child might start to talk back in order to feel independent and test what happens. In response, limit the attention you give to negative words. Find alternative activities for your child that allows them to take the lead and be independent. Make a point of noticing good behavior. “You stayed calm when I told you it’s bedtime.”
- Ask your child what they are playing. Help them expand their answers by asking “Why?” and “How?” For example, say “That’s a nice bridge you’re building. Why did you put it there?”
- Encourage your child to play with toys where that focus on putting things to together, such as puzzles and building blocks.

Signs to watch for that could indicate autism:

- Your child doesn’t sing, dance, or act for you.



Source: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)



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Early Autism Milestone Checklist:

Your child should:

- ☐ Show more independence from parents and family
- ☐ Start to think about the future
- ☐ Understand more about their place in the world
- ☐ Pay more attention to friendships and teamwork
- ☐ Want to be liked and accepted by friends
- ☐ Show rapid development of mental skills
- ☐ Learn better ways to describe experiences
- ☐ Learn better ways to talk about thoughts and feelings
- ☐ Have less focus on themselves and more concern for others

**At 6-8 Years
of Age**



Source: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

 972.312.8733



behaviorexchange.com



enroll@behaviorexchange.com



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Ways to support your child's development:

- Talk with your child about school, friends, and things they look forward to in the future.
- Talk with your child about respecting others. Encourage them to help people in need.
- Do fun things together as a family, such as playing games, reading, and going to events in your community.
- Get involved with your child's school. Meet the teachers and staff and get to understand their learning goals and how you and the school can work together to help your child do well.
- Continue reading to your child. As your child learns to read, take turns reading to each other.
- Support your child in taking on new challenges. Encourage them to solve problems, such as a disagreement with another child, on their own.
- Encourage your child to join school and community groups, such as team sports, or to take advantage of volunteer opportunities.
- Show affection for your child. Recognize their accomplishments.
- Help your child develop a sense of responsibility—ask them to help with household tasks, such as setting the table.
- Help your child learn patience by letting others go first or by finishing a task before going out to play. Encourage them to think about possible consequences before acting.
- Make clear rules and stick to them, such as how long your child can watch TV or when they have to go to bed. Be clear about what behavior is okay and what is not okay.
- Use discipline to guide and protect your child, rather than punishment to make them feel bad about themselves. Follow up any discussion about what not to do with a discussion of what to do instead.
- Praise your child for good behavior. It's best to focus praise more on what your child does ("you worked hard to figure this out") than on traits they can't change ("you are smart").
- Help your child set their own achievable goals—they'll learn to take pride in themselves and rely less on approval or reward from others.
- Teach your child to watch out for traffic and how to be safe when walking to school, riding a bike, and playing outside.
- Make sure your child understands water safety, and always supervise them when they are swimming or playing near water.
- Supervise your child when they are engaged in risky activities, such as climbing.
- Talk with your child about how to ask for help when they need it.
- Keep potentially harmful household products, tools, equipment, and firearms out of your child's reach.

**At 6-8 Years
of Age**



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Signs to watch for that could indicate autism:

- Your child has difficulty interacting with classmates and making friends at school.
- Your child has difficulty participating in a classroom environment.
- Your child doesn't react appropriately to social cues.
- Your child doesn't display empathy or compassion for their peers.
- Your child has difficulty following and participating in a conversation.
- Your child doesn't understand the basics of sportsmanship, like following the rules and showing courtesy and respect to participants.
- Your child doesn't respond appropriately to a group leader, like a teacher.
- Your child has repetitive behaviors, like rocking back and forth, flapping their hands, or spinning in circles.
- Your child repeats words and/or phrases over and over and over again.
- Your child gets upset at minor changes in their life.
- Your child is hyperactive, impulsive, and/or has inattentive behavior

**At 6-8 Years
of Age**



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