

Developmental  
Practitioners Association  
Therapy Outcomes  
Measures  
(TOMs)  
Supplementary Guidance 5

**Activity/Independence  
Social Participation  
Milestones**

April 2024

When assessing Activity/ Independence and Social Participation, there are not many developmental guides available and so many of us simply rest upon our own personal experience. Pete Griffin developed these some a developmental milestone list as an aid when writing reports on some of his clients. He has adapted them for TOMs assessment. Not every milestone is covered, and they are intended to show developmental change over time so the age references should be taken as an approximate guide. He uses a highlighter to highlight any milestones below chronological age that have not yet developed.

He has made them free to DPA members but would insist that they are not copied and shared with non-members, who can purchase the set for £30 from Pete Griffin email: [mapretep@aol.com](mailto:mapretep@aol.com), tel: [07504305038](tel:07504305038)

## Activity/Independence milestones

### 6-9 months –

- Can hold own feeding bottle.
- Finger feed themselves.
- Pull off their hat.

### 9-12 months

- Pointing at things they want/interested in
- Put arms up to be picked up.
- Can drink from open cup if held to lips.
- Recognise and respond to image of self in a mirror.

### 12-18 months

- Independent Play – can play for a short time by self.
- Functional Play – more deliberate rather than random actions.
- Tolerates/enjoys messy play.
- Settles self to sleep.
- Points and looks at things they want/interested in.
- Responds to simple request like, 'Give me the cup.' Will fetch and show/give to carer.
- Pick up and drink from lidded cup.
- Use a spoon for feeding (messily!).
- Remove socks and shoes.
- Explores independently.
- Helps with very simple tasks.

### 18-24 months

- Parallel play – copying carer.
- Symbolic Play – feeding doll.
- Pretend play – talk on a toy phone, play shop.
- Help put toys away/imitate household chores (wash window with cloth.
- Indicate toilet needs by gesture or pointing.
- Use toilet with help.
- Puts arms up, push legs through, to help dressing.
- Pull off a T shirt.
- Use a spoon reasonably well.
- Drink from an open cup.
- Drink through a straw.
- Can wash and dry hands perhaps with supervision.

### 24-30months

- Greater awareness of gender emerging
- Use fork and a spoon.
- Independently wash and dry hands.
- Can brush teeth with guidance.

### 30-36 months

- Knows their age.
- Most children toilet trained perhaps with rare accident.
- Attempt to brush teeth with help.
- Feed self independently if food cut into bite size chunks.
- Mostly able to dress selves...help with buttons, ties etc.

### 3-4 Years

- Play imaginatively...playing a storyline or topic – ‘in their own world.’
- Take themselves to toilet in familiar places.
- Toilet independently during the day perhaps with occasional accident.
- Can successfully and independently wash face and hands.
- Undo buttons.
- Put on shoes without laces.
- Know where familiar objects are kept and will fetch them.

#### 4-5 Years

- Brush teeth independently.
- Toilet independently during day but may have occasional accident at night.
- Put on coat, or cardigan.
- Know their name and family name.
- Dress independently but some clothes may be inside out or back to front or may occasionally get stuck.
- Able to open lunch box, zip locks and most food packaging.

#### 5-6 Years

- Choose weather or familiar-occasion appropriate clothes.
- Able to dress independently and competently.
- Toilet independently day and night. Accidents rare.
- Follow simple rules enough to play simple competitive game such as snap, hopscotch, Simon Says.
- Can spread with a knife.
- Do complex chores with help such as lay the table.
- Pack school bag with a little prompting.
- Independently do simple regular routines, such as put shoes away, put clothes in draw, put reading book in bag etc.

#### 6- 7 years

- Play board games such as snakes and ladders, matching games etc.
- Play games with more complex rules such as football, dominoes, draughts etc.
- Independently toilet trained with no accidents.
- Independently dress and undress.
- Feeding self with no problems.
- Prepare simple meals such as cereal, sandwich etc.
- Do complex chores such as lay the table with light touch supervision.

#### 7-8 years

- Greater understanding of responsibility , so will take responsibility for things like doing their homework, packing school bag, remembering PE Kit, putting clothes away, putting toys away etc.
- Bath, shower, shampoo hair by themselves.
- Tie shoelaces (if having been taught).
- Do complex chores such as lay table without supervision.

## Social Participation Milestones

### 6- 12 months

- Joint attention – follow carers gaze and look back at carer to acknowledge shared experience.
- Attachment to main carers with separation anxiety when carer not there.
- Vocalise to gain attention of carer.
- Play next to other children but not with them.
- Will watch other children play but not necessarily join in.
- Aware of carer's approval/disapproval,
- When engaged in activity, will regularly 'check in on carers.
- Take part in shared play like 'peek a boo' and 'pat a cake.'
- Respond to their name called.
- Give affection – kiss. Cuddle
- Clings to carers./Shy around strangers
- Uses gestures/sounds to indicate needs.
- Wave goodbye.

### 12 -18 months

- Express emotions
- Enjoys sharing a book with carers.
- Some empathy with others – cry when others cry, laugh when others laugh.
- Play along parents but unlikely to share play with other children.
- Enjoys sharing a book with carers.
- Respond to simple commands – give me Teddy.
- Indicate some basic needs by gesturing.

### 18-24 months

- Indicate some basic needs by gesturing.
- Take part in pretend/react/social play – peek-a-boo, talk to a toy, chase games.
- Self-identity emerging ...!' 'Mine'. Strong sense of ownership.
- Tends not to share/play co-operatively with peers.
- Shows defiance – refusing to do something.

### 24-30 months

- Beginning to show awareness of others' feelings and their own feelings.
- Social etiquette emerging ...saying thank you, please.

- Beginning to adapt mannerisms, emotions to suit the social situation.
- Begin to share and join in with co-operative play for short sessions.
- Join in in simple competitive group activities, musical statues, follow my leader.

### 30-36 months

- Better at co-operative play – taking turns, coping when not win etc.
- Better at sharing toys/object with others, may need prompting.

### 3-4 years

- No longer clings to main carers.
- Without prompting will show concern and affection for others
- Share toys/object with others without prompting.
- Play cooperatively with group of peers, taking turns, joint purpose such as building a sandcastle, use Lego. Hence issues with peer relationships might appear.
- Try to negotiate solutions to conflict.
- May have one or two special friends, usually carer initiated.

### 5-6 years

- Choose their own special friends.
- Wants to please their friends and others that they socialise with.
- Tend to spend more time in group play/activities than by self.
- Social etiquette quite advanced...praise others and apologise for unintended mistake. Praise scorer in football and apologies for accidentally tripping someone over.
- Able to take turns in conversation.
- Greater social awareness:
  - how to modify behaviour to different situations.
  - Aware of why they like/dislike someone.
  - Pick up on and react to others emotional states.
- Able to comply with social rules of a game and situations.
- Cope with losing.

### 6-7 years

- Can rationalise why fall outs/arguments/disputes happen.
- Can rationalise why different people like/dislike each other.

- Play board games with rules and cope with competitiveness of others and with losing.
- Join in and negotiate roles/rules in play.

#### 7-8 years

- Morality developed...fully understands right from wrong.
- Better understanding/willingness to help others.
- Delay gratification and patiently wait turn.
- Prefers to play with friends of same gender identity.
- Spending time playing with friends rather than family becomes increasingly more important.