

Resources

New York State Office of Mental Health

1-866-270-9857 (information and referral)
<http://www.omh.ny.gov>

The Children's Plan

<http://www.omh.ny.gov/omh/web/engage>

Local County Mental Health Department Contact Information

<http://www.clmhd.org/about/countydirectory.aspx>

Families Together of NYS

518-432-0333
<http://www.ftnys.org>



*Helping
New York's children
grow up healthy*

Snapshots

of Your Child's Social and Emotional Well-being

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Birth to Age 5
(early childhood)



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More is known now than ever before about how young children learn, think and grow. From birth to the first day of kindergarten, development proceeds at a pace exceeding that of any other stage of life.

Social and emotional learning is the way a child develops the ability to experience, regulate and express emotions; form close, secure relationships; explore the environment; and learn.

Social and Emotional Milestones

Children develop at their own unique pace, so it's impossible to tell exactly when your child will learn a given skill. The developmental milestones below will give you a general idea of the changes you can expect as your child gets older, but don't be alarmed if your child takes a slightly different course.

- q By the end of three months, **infants begin to develop a social smile and become more expressive with their faces and bodies. They enjoy attention and may cry when it stops.**
- q By the end of 7 months, **they will respond to other people's expressions of emotions.**
- q By the end of one year, **they may become shy or anxious around strangers; prefer the company of their mother or primary caregiver and often cry when they leave; show specific preferences for certain people and toys; will test parental responses—especially during feedings; repeat sounds and gestures to gain attention; can finger feed themselves and may extend an arm or leg to help when being dressed.**
- q By the end of two years, **babies are much more aware of themselves as separate beings; get more excited in the company of other children; and will imitate the behavior of adults and other children.**
- q By the end of three years, **they can understand the concept of "mine" and "yours"; can take turns at playing games; and spontaneously show affection for familiar playmates.**
- q By the age of four, **children become much more independent; can dress and undress themselves; are able to cooperate with other children; can negotiate solutions to conflicts; are increasingly interested in new experiences and inventive in "fantasy" play; often cannot tell the difference between fantasy and reality; and view themselves as whole persons—with a body, mind and feelings.**
- q By the age of five, **children show more independence; like to sing, dance and act; are more likely to agree with rules; want to please and be like their friends; are aware of their gender; are able to distinguish fantasy from reality; can be demanding and eagerly cooperative.**