



DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

A Guide for Teachers

Unique human beings

Every child is a unique human being. No one child achieves developmental milestones at the same time, even if they are the same age. Many books and early childhood researchers provide a span of when to expect a new skill to appear, and sometimes, those target ages can fluctuate. These charts are provided as references, not absolutes. The child is ultimately in charge of taking the next step in developmental skills. As teachers, we need to provide an accepting and exciting environment to ignite a child's passion for learning.

In the classroom

In the Musical Scholars™ curriculum, each lesson plan takes these varied developmental levels into consideration by including developmentally-appropriate activities. Every child in your classroom enters each day with their own set of environmental experiences and influences. Developmentally appropriate accommodates each child where they are, and allows them to grow at their own pace. The teacher may present a large movement activity, such as, galloping. However, not every child will be able to gallop, but they will create their own unique movement for galloping until their body catches up. For this reason, there are no wrong answers in our music class. As teachers, we act as tour guides for children as they journey through the wonderful world of early childhood development.

Teachers may refer to the developmental progression chart below as a guide for physical, social and language development for varied ages, and how it correlates to music development. Some children may reach these targets sooner than others. Always work in tandem with a child's developmental stage for maximum fun and learning. Present the musical activities, and watch how each child responds in their own way. This is the magic of early childhood, always exciting and always changing! Expect the unexpected! Set the stage now for a lifetime passion of music making and learning.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY – KNOW THE CHILD

AGE	MOTOR SKILLS	SOCIAL	LANGUAGE	ACTIVITIES	WHAT TO EXPECT
Birth – 8 months	<p>These children are learning to control their body. Early on most movements are reflexive.</p> <p>At 3 mos. bouncing and kicking with strength. Reaching for objects does not appear until 4 months.</p> <p>At 6 mos., may roll over. At 7 mos., enjoys banging objects together and likes to bounce. At 8 mos., learns to open fingers at will, and drop or throw objects, and may begin to crawl.</p>	<p>At 2 mos. the baby will begin to smile more, responding to new and familiar faces. Babies will enjoy when adults join them in vocal play.</p> <p>At 3 mos., baby will begin to initiate the play, and uses fingers to explore toes, eyes, mouth, and chin. At 4 mos., baby might initiate playful sounds to get attention.</p> <p>Between 5, 6, and 7 mos., the baby will make clear distinctions between new faces and familiar. At 8 mos., a child will be wary of a new environment.</p>	<p>Beginning sounds may turn into cooing by end of first month. More “ooh-ohh” and “ahh-ahh” sounds at 2 mos.</p> <p>At 3 mos., will begin to squeal, chuckle and gurgle. At 4 mos., may add inflection to babble. At 5 mos., child will watch mouths and try to imitate.</p> <p>At 8 mos. starts to imitate a broader range of sounds.</p>	<p>Bouncing on lap, dance into a mirror, tap body parts with egg shaker, massage body parts to the beat, change the feel of the music, bicycle exercise, make eye contact with baby, let baby see your mouth as you sing or chant, choose instruments with faces, change directions/positions when you dance, coo in descending pitches, changes starting pitch, imitate baby’s cooing in class, resting tone play. Coo or keep singing in between activities when appropriate.</p>	<p>Babies may respond with uncoordinated movements, bounce, coo, smile, kick feet. If a baby becomes irritable the baby may be over stimulated, adjust to calmer movements or just sit and rock.</p>
9 – 12 months	<p>At 12 mos., the baby may begin to take a few steps, but usually with help.</p>	<p>At 9 mos., the baby discovers the connection between people and their names, and will babble with more excitement for a familiar face.</p>	<p>At 9 mos., may respond to his name, likes to imitate coughing. At 10 mos., will add movement to words. At 11 mos., imitates words and actions. At 12 mos., may babble short sentences.</p>	<p>Will enjoy games like Peekaboo, and Pat-A-Cake. Tap body parts, resting tone play, dance with baby, will enjoy the large movement activities, and manipulating the instruments.</p>	<p>Children will begin to explore new space and leave the adults lap. They want to choose their own instrument. Also, you may find children may need the security of a familiar face or teacher nearby.</p>

Toddlers (Ages 1-2)	Children will keep improving their walking skills. You may see them use their arms for balance. Children like to hold their own instruments. At 15 mos., a child likes to build towers and stack objects. At 17 mos., a child will pick up a ball and throw. Begins to show control in stopping and starting when walking. Towards the end of this stage the child is climbing and running, in addition to walking. Jumping may still be a little awkward. By the age of 2 the child enjoys all kinds of movement.	The toddler likes to explore the setting. The toddler is using facial expression and increased vocabulary to communicate. The toddler does not recognize danger, and the focus becomes self.	At 13 mos., will not say full words, but will gesture to an object with a sound. By 15 mos., child will point to familiar items and will recognize body parts. At 16 mos., child may say six or seven words and enjoys singing games. At 18 mos., to two years vocabulary explodes. Will use words to express feelings or ideas.	The toddler tries to participate in all activities, but you will still see the child who is hesitant to leave the familiar adult. The toddler enjoys clapping and all kinds of games.	The toddler is the child usually cruising around the room. Monitor for each child's safety. The toddler will explore new ways to manipulate the instruments. This is the child you will see off on the other side of the room bouncing to the beat while everyone else enjoys playing the sticks. This is the child that will probably try and take instruments from another child, a perfect time to reinforce sharing and taking turns.
Preschooler (3-4 year old)	Likes to try out new types of movement like galloping, skipping, and trotting. Fine motor skills are improving. Will kick, throw, and catch a ball.	The preschoolers enjoy interaction with other children and adults. They will also create imaginary friends. The preschooler wants to be involved in the creative process.	Vocabulary grows and the child is communicating needs, ideas, and feelings in more competently, although the child may not use perfect diction.	Partner games like rowing boating, Pat-A-Cake work well. The preschooler enjoys all the large movement activities and the rhymes using finger plays and dramatic play.	The preschoolers will be eager to contribute variation ideas on movement and words. It is important to keep the 3-4 year old interested in class or you may have a classroom management issue. They like to leave the circle and take the other preschoolers with them. Use this social stage to work for you by including many dyad activities to refocus the preschooler.

Additional references in developmentally appropriate practice:

<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/developmentally-appropriate-practices-young-children-recommendations-teaching-practices>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/dap/infants-and-toddlers>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/dap/preschoolers>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/dec2015/explaining-developmentally-appropriate-practice>