

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If an infant or preschool child may be experiencing delays in his or her abilities or behaviours, or if parents/caregivers would like to know his or her current functioning, it is recommended that the child should undergo a comprehensive developmental assessment.

WHY SHOULD A CHILD BE ASSESSED AT PSYCHMATTERS?

PsychMatters is staffed by Educational and Developmental Psychologists with extensive experience in working with infants and preschool children. Each evaluation aims to:

- ★ Recognize a young child's strengths and weaknesses
- ★ Determine school readiness
- ★ Identify early predictors of cognitive and learning difficulties

Our philosophy is based on the notion that if we are able to ascertain specific problem areas during early childhood, we can then design and implement early intervention and treatment programs to minimize the impact of these difficulties in a child's primary and high school years.

OUR SERVICES

PsychMatters offers the following services that are specifically catered for children aged five years and below:

- ★ Comprehensive assessments in the following areas of development:
 - ☞ Cognitive functioning
 - ☞ Fine and gross motor abilities
 - ☞ Expressive and receptive language (including pre-literacy skills)
 - ☞ Adaptive behaviour
- ★ Design and implementation of early intervention programs according to the child's individual needs
- ★ Counselling for young children with emotional, social, and/or behavioural difficulties
- ★ Positive parenting advice

CONTACT DETAILS

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"Getting Connected to Learning"

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INFANTS AND PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

During the first five years of life, children develop functional or age-specific abilities and behaviours that allow them to explore their world. Developmental milestones include skills in the following areas:

- ★ **Cognitive:** Learning, understanding, problem-solving, planning, organizing, reasoning, and remembering certain information.
- ★ **Language:** Conveying thoughts into words (expressive) or comprehending what others have said (receptive).
- ★ **Social:** Interacting with people, forming relationships, recognizing feelings and emotions.
- ★ **Gross motor:** Turning over, crawling, sitting, standing, walking, running, jumping, keeping balance, dancing, skipping, etc.
- ★ **Fine motor:** Eating, drawing, playing with toys, writing, putting together puzzles, dressing, etc.

SIGNS THAT MAY INDICATE DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

Each child is unique, and may experience developmental milestones a little faster or slower than other children his or her age.

However, there are **early signs** to indicate that a child may not be developing their abilities to learn, speak, behave, play, and move at age-appropriate limits.

- ★ **11 months and below:** Feeds slowly, stiff or floppy muscles, poor gross motor ability, failure to grasp or reach for objects, does not respond to sounds, spontaneity of emotions or feelings are absent, problems in vision (focusing), shows no interest in games such as peek-a-boo, does not babble, seems inconsolable after repeated attempts to soothe.
- ★ **1 year:** Does not crawl, may drag one side of body while crawling, cannot stand when supported, does not search for hidden objects, says no single words (e.g. “mama”), does not learn simple gestures (e.g. waving), does not point to objects or pictures.
- ★ **2 years:** Difficulty in walking, does not speak at least 15 words or two-word sentences, does not imitate actions or words, cannot follow simple instructions or push toys.

- ★ **3 years:** Frequent falling and difficulty with stairs, unclear speech, inability to manipulate small objects, cannot communicate in short phrases, no involvement in “pretend” play, little interest in other children, inability in following simple instructions.
- ★ **4 years:** Gross and fine motor difficulties (cannot throw a ball, jump in place, grasp a crayon with thumb and fingers, difficulty in scribbling), extreme separation anxiety, shows no interest in interactive games, little self-control, does not use sentences of more than three words, does not use pronouns such as “me” appropriately.
- ★ **5 years:** Difficulties with behaviour (e.g. easily distracted), rarely uses imitation in play, does not express a range of emotions, little interest in being with peers, does not engage in a variety of activities, has troubles in eating/sleeping/toilet use, expressive language problems (e.g. inability in using plurals and past tense properly), cannot understand two-part prepositions (e.g. “Put the cup on the table”), gross and fine motor difficulties (e.g. cannot hold a crayon or build a tower of blocks).