

# Child Development

	Development Characteristics	Safety Issues	Age Appropriate Play Ideas
<b>6 to 23 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has difficulty with balance</li> <li>• Fascinated by movement</li> <li>• Enjoys pretend play</li> <li>• Likes to explore surroundings</li> <li>• Experiments with sense stimulus (touch, smell, taste)</li> <li>• No sense for danger</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide constant supervision</li> <li>• Requires fenced in play area with latched gate</li> <li>• Avoid uneven or slippery surfaces</li> <li>• Keep away from moving machinery</li> <li>• Place chemicals and sharp objects out of reach or locked up</li> <li>• Following play provide good handwashing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandbox</li> <li>• Playhouse</li> <li>• Low climbing objects</li> <li>• Swing set</li> <li>• Water table with cups/funnels</li> <li>• Balls to toss or roll</li> <li>• Small steps to climb and tires/barrels to crawl through</li> <li>• Bubbles</li> </ul>
<b>2 to 5 year olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energetic</li> <li>• Can jump over objects 5-6 inches high</li> <li>• Balances and hops on one foot</li> <li>• Can solve problems if simple and concrete</li> <li>• Will play alone or with others</li> <li>• Enjoys mimicking adults</li> <li>• Does not understand hazards</li> <li>• Has illogical or imaginative thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide constant supervision</li> <li>• Requires a physical barrier from work areas</li> <li>• Attracted to adult farm activities and will want to help</li> <li>• Watch for tripping hazards</li> <li>• Teach and require child to wear safety helmets</li> <li>• Teach and provide good handwashing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swing set</li> <li>• Balls to throw, kick and catch</li> <li>• Balance beam or stepping stones</li> <li>• Props for imaginative play</li> <li>• Bubbles</li> <li>• Sand box with tools</li> <li>• Group games: Duck Duck Goose</li> <li>• Playhouse</li> <li>• Water table with cups/funnels</li> <li>• Tire jungle for climbing</li> <li>• Toy tractors</li> </ul>
<b>6 to 8 year olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor hand-eye coordination</li> <li>• Seeks parental approval</li> <li>• Operates with concrete facts</li> <li>• Unable to have abstract thought</li> <li>• Enjoys quiet activities</li> <li>• Curious about how things work</li> <li>• Short attention span, like to remain active</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide constant supervision</li> <li>• Child will attempt adult activities to impress parents</li> <li>• Child is not ready for responsibility</li> <li>• Set boundaries for play area and enforce rules</li> <li>• Require safety helmets when appropriate</li> <li>• Require handwashing after play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kite flying</li> <li>• Bicycles with helmet</li> <li>• Jumping rope</li> <li>• Tree house</li> <li>• Pretend school or farm store</li> <li>• Balance beam</li> <li>• Stepping stones</li> <li>• Swing set</li> <li>• Sandbox</li> <li>• Garden tools</li> <li>• Group games: Hide and Seek</li> <li>• Tire jungle for climbing</li> </ul>
<b>9 to 10 year olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has good coordination skills, but will have awkward moments</li> <li>• Desires peer and social acceptance</li> <li>• Desires to be independent from adults; will attempt to do activities without adults</li> <li>• Successes are important</li> <li>• Improvements in reaction time</li> <li>• Specialized motor skills have developed</li> <li>• Body strength and dexterity increase</li> <li>• Does not fully understand consequences</li> <li>• Risk taker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide intermittent/periodic supervision during play</li> <li>• Set and enforce simple rules on boundaries of play area with consistent consequences</li> <li>• Reward child for good behavior</li> <li>• Assign low risk takers with hand tools</li> <li>• Remove keys from ignition of tractors and other vehicles; keep keys in safe location away from children</li> <li>• Instruct children to stay away from work area</li> <li>• Instruct workers to return child to play area if found in work area</li> <li>• Provide safety helmets</li> <li>• Require handwashing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team and individual sports</li> <li>• Monkey bars and other climbing structures</li> <li>• Tire swing</li> <li>• Sandbox</li> <li>• Chalk board with colored chalk</li> <li>• Tree house</li> <li>• Airplanes</li> <li>• Snow forts</li> <li>• Sprinklers</li> <li>• Bicycle with helmet</li> <li>• Skates and protective gear</li> </ul>

**All Children under 10: Do not allow child to be an extra rider on tractor, ATV, lawn mower, or other machinery.**

Concepts referenced from:  
 Esser, N., Heiberger, S. and Lee, B. (Eds.) (2003). Creating Safe Play Areas on Farms. Marshfield, WI: Marshfield Clinic  
 Murphy, D., Hackett, K. (1997). Children and Safety on the Farm. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University

This fact sheet can be downloaded and printed from: <http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/safeplay/keystocreate/>