

Babies IV: 12-18 months



The
Ounce
Scale

Observation Record

Child's name



The Observation Record is a practical method of documenting children's growth and development. Its purpose is to strengthen relationships among parents, their children, and the caregivers who work with them by providing caregivers with structured opportunities to learn more about children's everyday actions and behaviors. It is part of The Ounce Scale, an observational assessment that helps parents and caregivers recognize the significance of their children's behaviors and respond in ways that will encourage further growth. Eight age-specific Observation Records span the years from birth through age three and a half.

The Observation Record highlights the remarkable changes that occur during the early years. It is a guide to assist caregivers in starting conversations with parents about their children's development, understanding children's behaviors, and keeping track of children's growth in six areas of development. In home visits or conferences at center-based programs, the Observation Record offers caregivers a basis for reviewing the child's achievements and progress and beginning to think about the child's future development. All of the ideas and activities that are described apply to both boys and girls.

In the record, you'll find questions and rationales designed to guide your observations of the children in your care, along with brief explanations of developmental areas and examples of situations in which behaviors might be observed. This information will help you focus on key aspects of each child's development. The record includes space for you to write your own observations. To demonstrate growth, be sure to date your observations when you write them. A final section provides an opportunity for you to summarize what stands out about the child and to think about goals for the coming months.

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Observation Record
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The Ounce Scale™

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I. Personal Connections: It's About Trust

How babies show trust

1. How does the baby show that the presence of familiar adults helps him do things?

In the presence of trusted adults, babies feel safe to venture out into their surroundings to experiment and try new things. Still, they look back to their trusted adults to check in or return more than once for a reassuring touch, word, or smile.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Explore new territory**—crawl through a cloth tunnel when he sees a familiar face at the other end ready to meet him.
- **Try new things**—experiment with new materials only if someone he knows is sitting right beside him.
- **Be a bit bold**—continue to stack the large cardboard blocks after receiving a reassuring smile from a familiar adult sitting across the room.
- **Touch home base**—play on the rocky boat, go over to his caregiver and touch his or her leg, then go back to the rocky boat.
- **Wait for Mom or Dad**—stop playing when his parent leaves the room, then go back to his play when his parent returns.

What does *this* baby do around familiar adults? (Include dates.)

2. How does the baby respond to unfamiliar adults?

Babies often show worry and discomfort around unfamiliar people. Sometimes they may be both curious and cautious, alternating between approaching and moving away. They look to familiar adults for reassurance as they attempt to figure out what to do.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Play it safe**—move to the other side of the room when a new person enters.
- **Protest good-byes**—cry when his parent leaves him at child care but slowly settle into play with the caregiver's help.
- **Hold on for security**—cling to a familiar adult's leg when a new person speaks to him.
- **React to an unfamiliar face**—cry when he sees a face that is different from what he is used to, for example, someone with a beard.
- **Warm up to friendliness**—let a new adult get near only when that person does something familiar, such as start a game of peekaboo or play patty-cake.

What does *this* baby do around unfamiliar adults? (Include dates.)

II. Feelings About Self: Learning About Me

How babies express who they are

1. How does the baby show what she feels?

Babies are sorting out what they like and don't like. They often want to try more than they are able to do on their own and can become frustrated. Yet they may resist direct help from adults.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Shout for joy**—enthusiastically jump and shout so you will look at the way she piled the cardboard blocks.
- **Make a choice**—pick a graham cracker instead of a soda cracker when offered a choice between the two.
- **Make her needs known**—call insistently “buh, buh” when she wants a book that is on a high shelf.
- **Stake a claim**—hang on to the toy phone or other possession that she and another child struggle over.
- **Protest**—continue to play with her pegboard even after a caregiver has said that it's time to put it away.

How does *this* baby show how she feels? (Include dates.)

2. How does the baby show that she is trying to manage her behavior?

Babies begin to show early forms of self-control by making choices and reacting to the limits set for them. Caregivers help babies manage their behavior by setting clear and firm limits and helping them manage in caring ways.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Respond to your request**—stop banging her spoon when a caregiver asks her to stop.
- **Consider the options**—pause after seeing her caregiver's warning look, then continue to climb on the back of the sofa or armchair.
- **Follow your lead**—pick up a used tissue or other scrap from the floor and place it into a wastebasket.
- **Monitor herself**—say, “No-no”, as she sits in the sandbox and throws a handful of sand over the edge.
- **Heed your warning**—stop before hitting another child when she hears someone call out her name.

In what way does *this* baby show she's learning to manage herself? (Include dates.)

III. Relationships With Other Children: Child to Child

How babies act around other children

1. How does the baby begin to play with other children?

Babies are curious about other children. They explore one another through mutual looking, touching, and laughing. They may have brief periods of shared activity with a toy or may push and poke other children to get and keep toys. But mostly they play beside another child.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Begin to give**—give another child a piece of his play dough after receiving much encouragement from the caregiver.
- **Get mad**—hit another child when she tries to take his ball.
- **Get silly**—make faces at a child sitting across from him at the lunch table.
- **React with curiosity**—reach out and tug another child’s curly hair.
- **Let older kids lead**—play with older siblings or playmates, doing what they suggest and following their lead.

How does *this* baby respond to other children? (Include dates.)

2. How does the baby show his awareness of other children’s feelings?

Although babies are mostly focused on their own ideas and feelings, they can recognize sadness, anger, and happiness in the expressions and behaviors of other children. They might get upset themselves when another child is unhappy, and they sometimes try to imitate the feelings they see other children expressing.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Personalize what he sees**—seek comfort when his brother is being scolded.
- **Connect emotionally**—look sad or worried when he sees two children fighting over a toy.
- **Do what you do**—imitate his caregiver when she claps for and praises another child.
- **Show his nurturing side**—help an adult comfort an infant by patting the baby’s back.
- **Show concern**—become quiet and watch closely when he sees another child who looks worried about something.

In what ways does *this* baby show he’s aware of other children’s feelings? (Include dates.)

IV. Understanding and Communicating: Baby Talk

How babies understand and communicate

1. How does the baby show her understanding of words and gestures?

Babies understand many more words and phrases than they are able to say. They begin to learn the meanings of words they hear repeated often. If daily routines such as sleeping and eating are fairly consistent and regular, babies begin to recognize the words that go along with these activities.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Know names**—look around for the family pet when she hears someone call its name.
- **Make the connection**—look up at the sky when someone points and says, “See the airplane?”
- **Do what you say**—take her hand away when told, “Don’t touch that flower!”
- **Show what she knows**—point to familiar body parts when asked where they are.
- **Follow simple directions**—respond when you point and say, “Bring me the book, please.”

How does *this* baby show what she understands? (Include dates.)

2. How does the baby use gestures, sounds, and some words to communicate?

Babies continue to use gestures even after they start saying words. Their babbling carries the sounds and rhythms of the language they hear around them. Their first spoken words reflect the words they hear most often.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Mimic spoken language**—use sounds that seem more and more like words as she plays with her toys.
- **Greet family members**—make a sound that resembles the word *hi* when a relative returns home.
- **Say what she means**—use words such as *up-up* or *da-da*.
- **Point it out**—point to the box of crackers or a book she wants.
- **Talk about pictures**—point to pictures in the book you are reading and jabber as though telling you something about the picture.

In what way does *this* baby use sounds and actions to communicate? (Include dates.)

V. Exploration and Problem Solving: Baby Discoveries

How babies explore and figure things out

1. How does the baby explore things around him?

Babies' energy, curiosity, and expanding ability to move support their interest in the world. They are exploring their ability to move as well as exploring the many new things now available to them.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Make toys move**—pull his wagon or push his carriage all around in his play space.
- **Play with clay**—pat, push, mound, squish, and pound his play dough.
- **See it go**—pour water into the water wheel and squeal with joy as he watches what it does.
- **Enjoy the string**—use the string attached to a toy to pull it toward him, often becoming more interested in the string than the toy.
- **Fill the holes**—explore the pegboard holes with his finger and then look around for something to put in them.

What does *this* baby do to explore his world? (Include dates.)

2. How does the baby show his increased memory skills?

Mobile babies show increased memory skills. They're aware of outcomes of certain actions and they depend on routines to learn about sequence and that things happen in a certain order.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Take a turn**—push several large plastic pop beads together after he has seen you do it.
- **Try it himself**—turn the plastic screwdriver just the way he's seen other people do it.
- **Be persistent**—bang and pound at the puzzle piece as he tries to fit it into a hole in the puzzle board.
- **Recognize himself**—identify himself in a mirror or a photograph.
- **Imitate adults**—stir his spoon in his dish just the way he has seen adults stir their sugar and cream into their coffee or tea.

In what ways does *this* baby show his increasing memory skills? (Include dates.)

3. How does the baby use toys and other objects with a purpose?

Babies begin to understand that some things happen predictably as a result of their own actions. This awareness can make them appear quite inflexible and stubborn as they do things over and over again.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Play games**—roll a ball toward someone else and wait for him or her to roll it back, becoming agitated if they don't play along in just the right way.
- **Choose a book**—pick out a favorite book from a pile on the shelf, and after turning a few pages, take it to someone to read to him.
- **Put shapes in place**—place large round shapes in a form board with increasing accuracy.
- **Stack, kick, then stack**—stack a set of cardboard boxes, knock them down with a giant kick or a forceful swing, and then stack them back up again.
- **Use a key**—work and work with a set of keys on a key ring, trying to insert the key into the lock.

In what ways does *this* baby use toys and objects with a purpose? (Include dates.)

VI. Movement and Coordination: Babies in Motion

How babies move their bodies and use their hands

1. How does the baby show her growing ability to move?

Babies can move from place to place by crawling, walking, and climbing. They seem to be constantly on the move, although some show more caution than others. Since balance is still difficult, they stand with their legs far apart and walk with an awkward waddle.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Go down and up**—squat to get crumbs she’s discovered on the floor, then stand again.
- **Get into position**—climb up and turn around to sit in the chair at the table.
- **Hear the noise**—walk around in circles pushing or pulling a noisemaking toy.
- **Walk up stairs with help**—climb one step at a time up the stairs, putting both feet on each step, while holding someone’s hand.
- **Find a musical balance**—stand with her feet wide apart and sway from side to side in time with the music.

How does *this* baby move around? (Include dates.)

2. How does the baby use her hands to do things?

Babies are able to do fairly complicated things with their hands, but their whole arm continues to be involved when they are using their hands.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Dump and fill**—fill and empty containers with blocks, large beads, small figures, or any other nearby objects.
- **Fit things together**—try to fit graduated-sized cups inside each other, though not yet understanding the order.
- **Use a pincer grasp**—use her thumb and forefinger to pick up small things such as a crumb, a scrap of paper, or some cereal from the floor.
- **Turn and point**—turn the pages of a book and point to pictures as someone reads to her.
- **Play with two hands**—hold a toy in one hand and touch and explore it with the other hand.

How does *this* baby use her hands to play with things? (Include dates.)

3. How does the baby begin to participate in self-help activities?

Babies are beginning to show an interest in helping in daily care tasks such as dressing, feeding, and bathing. They are even able to participate in everyday routines.

The baby might do one or more of the following:

- **Hold it herself**—hold her cup when drinking, or put both hands around a small plastic glass.
- **Help with dressing**—poke her arms through the sleeve of her shirt, and pull up her own pants.
- **Undress herself**—pull off her socks or her hat right after they were put on her.
- **Be a helper**—help her caregiver put the toys back on the shelves when playtime is over.
- **Handle her spoon**—use her spoon to feed herself, even though she may be awkward and there is a lot of spilling.

In what way does *this* baby take part in self-help activities? (Include dates.)

SUMMARY REPORT

Pulling It All Together

1. Describe this baby.

2. List what this baby is especially good at.

3. Note anything that seems difficult for this baby.

4. What more do you want to know about this baby?

Completed by _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

SETTING GOALS

Putting What You've Learned to Work

1. What are some "next steps" for this baby? What goals do you have for this baby in the coming months?

2. What are your plans for helping this baby meet these goals?

Completed by _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Areas of Development

I. Personal Connections: It's About Trust

How children show trust

1. How children build relationships with familiar adults
2. How children respond to unfamiliar adults

II. Feelings About Self: Learning About Me

How children express who they are

1. How children express who they are, their personality, their temperament, the way they are building self esteem, learning independence
2. How children manage their own behavior, self regulation
3. Expressing feelings: learning social skills when expressing feelings, needs, wants¹

III. Relationships With Other Children: Child to Child

How children act around other children

1. How children show awareness of other children, interact and play with them
2. Recognizing and responding to other children's feelings (empathy)²

IV. Understanding and Communicating: Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Talk

How children understand and communicate

1. Receptive language: understanding gestures, words, directions, questions, and routines
2. Expressive language: using gestures, words, several words together, conventions of speech, expressing thoughts and ideas
3. Participating in conversations³

V. Exploration and Problem Solving: Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Discoveries

How children explore and figure things out

1. How children attend, pay attention, explore, and understand concepts of color, size, matching, weight, and number
2. Memory, reasoning ability, imagination⁴
3. Making things happen, purposeful activity, expectations for planned results, anticipating consequences, solving problems

VI. Movement and Coordination: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers in Motion

How children move their bodies and use their hands

1. Gross motor: controlling body, moving around, combining movements, playing games
2. Fine motor: reaching, holding, letting go, intentional exploration, eye-hand coordination, creative activities
3. Self-help activities²

Observation Record
Babies IV
12-18 months

Child's name

From / / to

Date of birth

Caregiver/Home Visitor

¹This Indicator begins with Toddlers II.

²This Indicator begins with Toddlers IV.

³This Indicator begins with Toddlers I.

⁴This Indicator begins with Toddlers II.

The Ounce Scale Overview

The Ounce Scale™ is a functional, or practical, assessment that enables caregivers and families to record, understand, and evaluate young children's development. With The Ounce Scale, parents and caregivers have numerous opportunities to document, monitor, and participate in evaluating their children's progress and accomplishments continuously from birth to three and a half years of age. The Scale also assists providers in program planning, design, and implementation by improving parent and caregiver skills in observing and interpreting young children's behavior, and by providing information that parents and caregivers can use in everyday interactions with their children.

The Ounce Scale has three elements:

- The **Observation Record**, which helps child care professionals document and shape their observations.
- The **Family Album**, which encourages parents to understand and participate in their child's development.
- The **Developmental Profile**, which enables caregivers and other staff to evaluate each child's development and progress over time and to compare that development to specific performance standards.

The scale is organized around six areas of development:

- I. **Personal Connections—It's About Trust: How children show trust**
- II. **Feelings About Self—Learning About Me: How children express who they are**
- III. **Relationships With Other Children—Child to Child: How children act around other children**
- IV. **Understanding and Communicating—Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Talk: How children understand and communicate**
- V. **Exploration and Problem Solving—Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler Discoveries: How children explore and figure things out**
- VI. **Movement and Coordination—Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers in Motion: How children move their bodies and use their hands**

The scale provides an interactive system of documentation, monitoring, and evaluation of development for Early Head Start programs, Even Start programs, early intervention programs (including children at risk for special needs or those with disabilities), and other home- and center-based infant, toddler, and preschool child care in the community. It provides a meaningful way to evaluate children's accomplishments, areas of difficulty, and approaches to learning, as well as guidance in determining future goals toward which to work. Families and caregivers using The Ounce Scale learn to observe their children and to use this information to enhance relationships and support development. A User's Guide is available to assist you in implementing The Ounce Scale.

