

Masigcine Children's Home



Project Description

Masigcine Children's Home offers a place of safety for children in the Mfuleni township area, some 20km south east of Cape Town. Initially an informal settlement in the late 1970's, Mfuleni has grown alongside Khayelitsha township into a community with over 1 million people. Until South Africa's second free elections in 1999, hundreds of thousands lived without electricity, water, and sewerage. Today, although the infrastructure has improved and a vibrant culture and community exists in the area, many problems still remain including a 40% unemployment rate, a 40 – 50% HIV/AIDS infection rate and high infant mortality rates.

Children are referred to Masigcine by social workers from different welfare organizations via a children's court to the home. The children are referred in accordance with the Children's Act, because of desertion, abandonment as well as gross neglect due to a lack of parenting skills. Other reasons include mothers that are too young; the child may come from parents who have passed away as a result of HIV/AIDS and other related illnesses. Some of the children who are admitted are still babies and because of complications and deficiencies during pregnancy, which are a result of foetal alcohol syndrome disorder; HIV/AIDS; malnutrition etc, they may require special care.

Masigcine Children's Home, is attempting to address some of these problems. The word Masigcine in Xhosa means, "Let us protect". Masigcine can accommodate up to 28 children from 3 months to 10 years old.

The vision at Masigcine Children's Home is to ensure that each child receives emotional, physical and spiritual care in a loving, homely environment where family values are maintained by House Mothers who are fully equipped to raise healthy, happy and well balanced children. It is also the home's desire to see each child either reunited with their own family, or placed with a family who will adopt them as their own.

The house mothers are the central parental caregivers in the children's lives, and your support will assist them in providing the best possible care for these children. This is a very special project that will suit emotionally mature volunteers who are looking to make a positive difference to a wonderful group of young children.

Who can apply?

Anyone from the age of 18 can join us; all you need is to be young at heart, have the passion to make a difference, a fair grasp of the English language and to be in reasonably good physical condition.

Previous experience working with young children (mainly birth to 5 yrs) would be useful, as well as being flexible, open-minded and ready to work with a large team of international volunteers and local staff.



How long can I stay?

Placements are scheduled throughout the year with a minimum stay of 4 weeks. On our web site you will find start dates and prices for placements of 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 week durations. If you would like to stay for longer, please contact us for special long term rates.

What's Included?

Your Masigcine Children's Home Project includes everything below...

- Cape Town Airport collection and drop-off.
- A welcome brief from a member of the AVIVA team on arrival in Cape Town.
- Accommodation at AVIVA House (Table View) in Cape Town, with self-service breakfasts.
- A donation to Masigcine (payable by AVIVA).
- Transfers between AVIVA House & Masigcine.
- Orientation and welcome at Masigcine.
- An attractive certificate recognizing your contribution to the Masigcine Children's Home project.
- Free fundraising assistance.
- Access to MyTrip™, your personalized online trip planner.
- Advice and support from our experienced South African team during your stay.

How do I get there?

Masigcine Children's Home is based in Mfuleni, a township suburb of Cape Town. Volunteers are accommodated at our dedicated volunteer lodge, AVIVA House in Table View.

Getting there...

- You should aim to arrive in Cape Town on or before your start date (always a Monday).
- When you arrive in Cape Town, a member of the AVIVA team will be there to welcome you at the airport and escort you to AVIVA House.
- We provide all transfers between AVIVA House and Masigcine.

Depending on which team you have been allocated to, you may join Masigcine the next day or within a few days of your arrival. Your schedule will be available at AVIVA House so you will know which days you will be at Masigcine.

Working Routine

Volunteer teams work on shifts of 3 days at Masigcine, staying overnight in the volunteer room at the Home. This is followed by 3 days off, staying at AVIVA House in Table View which allows plenty of time to relax and explore Cape Town during your free time.

The working day usually starts at 7am and finishes around 7pm, however there are plenty of breaks during the day and you will have time to relax during the evening. The majority of your time will be spent with the younger children and babies (1 month to 6 years), although we do often have a small number of children aged between 7-10 years old.

During the day you will take part in various activities assisting the caregivers with their daily tasks such as:

- Preparing feed bottles and cooking meals
- Feeding babies and toddlers
- Changing nappies (gloves are provided if required), helping with potty training and taking children to the bathroom.
- Helping the children with teeth brushing, getting ready for school, and bath time.
- Providing structured play for the children.
- Washing up, hanging out the laundry, and changing bed linen.

Where there is time and you are keen to do more, there are always plenty of other tasks than can be taken on. This might include cleaning up an area, painting and decorating, sorting out donations. There may also be occasional outings or fun activities, which need volunteer assistance.

Weather

Cape Town weather can change quite often - in one day! With a Mediterranean climate the summers tend to be hot and humid and the winters mild with much needed rainfall concentrated during this time.

Temperatures can vary wildly outside of seasonal norms with sunny days and 26°C temperatures not uncommon during the winter. Daytime temperatures below 8° in the winter generally prompt headlines in the local papers, though you will feel the cold more here as the majority of properties are built for the predominantly warm weather and do not have central heating.

The South African sun can be unforgiving at any time of year, particularly during the summer months (November - March) so do take precautions to protect your skin with sunscreen, UV filter sunglasses and a hat. It is always advisable to pack a sweater to ward off the sometimes-chilly Cape Southeaster and to keep yourself warm if you find the evening braai stretching into the early hours of the next day.

Average maximum daily temperatures (°C) for Cape Town are as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
27	27	26	23	20	19	17	18	19	22	24	26

Food

Self-service breakfasts are provided at AVIVA House and the volunteer accommodation at Masigcine. Basic meals will be provided while you are at Masigcine (i.e. the same as the children's meals) and you will also have a fridge in your room to store extra food and drink items that you wish to take with you.

All other meals are self-catering with good shopping facilities close to AVIVA House for all your food and personal needs.

Accommodation at Masigcine

Volunteers will spend 3 out of every 6 nights in the volunteer accommodation at Masigcine. For your comfort, each team is normally limited to a maximum of 4 (occasionally 5) volunteers. This basic, comfortable accommodation includes:

- One air-conditioned bedroom with two bunk beds, good quality mattresses, quilts and pillows.
- Linen is provided for each team change.
- En-suite bathroom with a shower and bath.
- A fridge freezer for storing personal food items.
- Kitchen facilities – You will have use of the home's kitchen for preparing extra food, making tea etc.
- Shower and toilet facilities.

We will provide you with fresh linen for each shift. Please ensure that you take fresh linen from AVIVA House for your shift, and return this for washing after your shift. Your bare duvets and pillows should be neatly stacked on each bed ready for the next team to arrive.

There is no full-time housekeeper at Masigcine, so you will be responsible for keeping the accommodation tidy at all times, especially the fridge.

With each shift change, departing volunteers must ensure that they take their leftover food items, and empty the fridge/freezer of any perishables that belong to them.

Volunteers must not allow children to enter the volunteer accommodation. We will supply cleaning materials and consumable items (e.g. toilet rolls, hand soap, washing up liquid) for the volunteer accommodation. Please let your Volunteer Coordinator know if anything is in short supply so that she can purchase items ready for the next team change.

A volunteer shift handover book is kept at the Masigcine volunteer accommodation to allow volunteers to record daily activities, events and news that may be of value or interest to the next team. This, in conjunction with team handovers, provides much needed continuity for each team change.

Please note: Masigcine is strictly a NO SMOKING and NO ALCOHOL area.

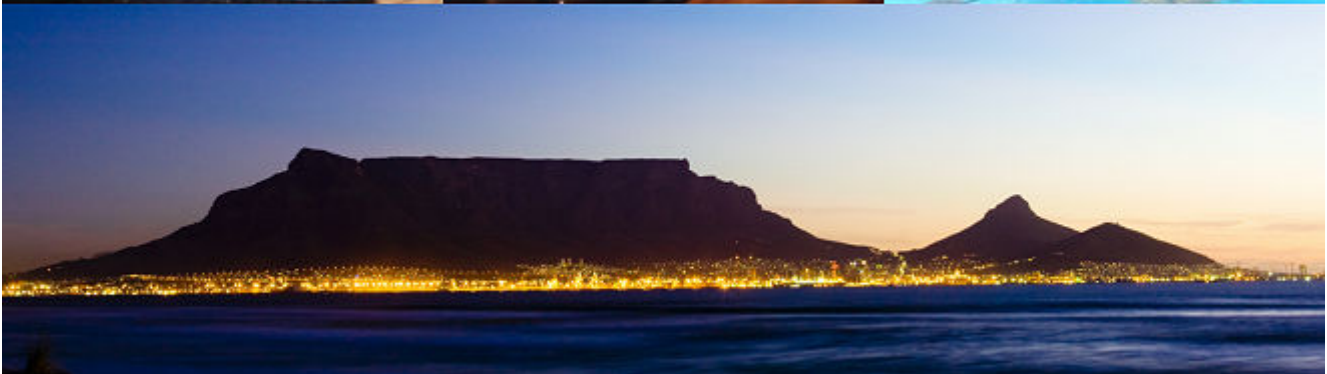
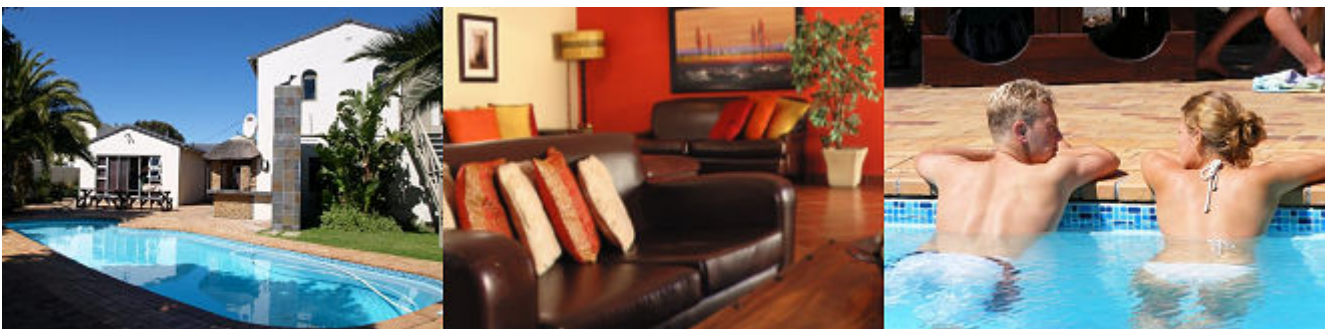
Accommodation at AVIVA House

AVIVA House in Table View (a suburb of Cape Town) provides a safe, secure home from home for volunteers who are working at local projects or taking time-out from projects further afield to explore Cape Town and the Western Cape. This will be your home for your entire stay and you will be able to leave any of your belongings here while you are on shift at Baphumelele.

AVIVA House is close to the main bus links, giving you easy cheap access to the centre of Cape Town and the rest of the Western Cape. In Table View you will find a wide range of shops and restaurants, and of course, some great beaches with scenic views of Table Mountain and Cape Town across the bay.

AVIVA House is comfortably furnished with all the facilities you might expect to help make your stay as enjoyable as possible.

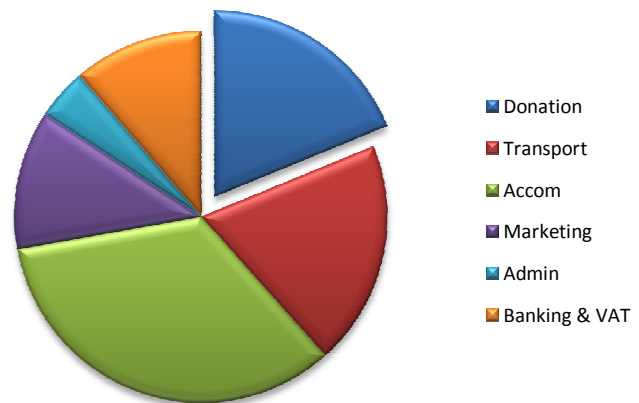
- A full-time Volunteer Coordinator (Mon-Fri 8am-5pm), who is also available for emergencies during evenings, weekends and Public Holidays.
- Separate Male and Female dormitory accommodation - spacious with good quality mattresses, bedding and linen provided.
- Full kitchen facilities - Oven, fridges, microwave, toaster, kettle and everything you need for preparing your meals.
- A selection of cereals, fruit, yoghurts, milk, bread, margarine, tea, coffee, sugar etc are provided for you to create your own breakfast every day - All other meals are self-catering.
- A telephone for incoming calls.
- Comfortable lounge with a Hi-Fi, Satellite TV and DVD.
- A lockable cupboard for your valuables and groceries.
- Showers and toilet facilities.
- Premises are cleaned and inspected daily (Mon-Fri)
- A private garden for entertainment/relaxation complete with breakfast tables, a built in braai (A South African style bbq), and a large pool.
- A Wi-Fi Hotspot and computer are available for you to access the Internet at very cheap rates (approx 45c per Mb). You can also logon to the Internet if you bring a Wi-Fi enabled laptop.
- Extra storage cupboards for luggage and personal items.
- AVIVA House is safe and secure with electrical fencing and a magnetic lock on the entrance gate.
- You will be issued with a coded magnet key to allow you to come and go 24 hours a day.



Where does my money go?

We believe that it is important for you to know how your money is spent and ensure that your fee is structured to give you maximum value for money whilst benefitting the children at Masigcine.

As you will see from the chart and fee breakdown below, the majority of your fee goes towards your project, accommodation & transport...



For example, the cost of a 4-week stay at R7,450

R1400	Donation to Masigcine
R1460	Airport & project transfers
R2520	Accommodation & breakfasts
R900	Marketing
R330	Administration
R840	VAT & Banking

Testimonials... lots more on our web site!

AnnMarie Jefferies – 22, from the UK

“Volunteering for AVIVA in Masigcine Children's Home has completely changed my life.

Working with the children was unbelievable, I didn't know it was possible to love so many children and by giving them a small amount of love and attention you change their lives.

AVIVA was an awesome company to volunteer with, everyone was so helpful and I always felt safe!!

Thanks guys and hope to see you again soon!!!”



Amanda Watchorn – 20, from Canada

“I went to South Africa to make a difference, to change someone's life, and I hope that I did. But what I didn't expect is how much my life would change as well. Volunteering at Masigcine Children's Home was the most rewarding and most impacting experience of my life, and AVIVA made it all possible.”

Malene Ovreliid Bigset – 19, from Norway

“I had the time of my life, I met so many amazing people from all over the world and I will never forget them or this experience! Thank you AVIVA! =)”

Ideas for Your Spare Time

Without doubt, Cape Town is South Africa's most beautiful, romantic and popular city and recently came in 5th in a survey to find the top 50 'must see' places in the world. Few places can match its unique setting - in the natural bowl formed by Devil's Peak, Table Mountain, Lion's Head, Signal Hill and Table Bay.

With its unique blend of microclimates, the Cape Peninsula has its own floral kingdom with an amazing variety of plants and wildlife. There are also some of the world's most beautiful beaches along its shores.

During your stay, you will have the option of joining the following tours at discounted rates to coincide with your time off. Each tour includes pick-up and drop-off from AVIVA House:

- **Peninsula** - A full-day Peninsula Tour which includes lunch, visits to Hout Bay, Chapman's Peak Drive, Cape Point, Simon's Town, Boulders Beach Penguin Colony and much more. An incredible day rich with history and some of the world's most beautiful scenery.
- **Cultural** - A half-day Cultural Tour, a fascinating introduction to South Africa's recent political history before and after Apartheid, includes highlights of Khayelitsha, South Africa's second largest township after Soweto.
- **Winelands** - A full-day tour to the beautiful mountains of the Cape Winelands including the Paarl, Franschoek and Stellenbosch regions. Chocolate, Cheese & Wine tastings and lunch are included.

For the rest of your spare time, a huge variety of attractions and events are available year round.

Sports enthusiasts can choose from nearly every water- and land-based sport imaginable, or watch a game of cricket or rugby at Sahara Park Newlands International Stadium.

If you want adventure, you will find plenty to keep your adrenalin flowing with shark cage diving, sky diving, paragliding and abseiling from Table Mountain being some of the many activities available.

For a more relaxed pace, you can explore the city and its many museums on foot or perhaps taste some great South African wine at a nearby estate (of which there are hundreds).

The Artscape Theatre in Cape Town has a year round program of ballet, shows and theatre, and the Grand West Arena is a regular stop for international singers and bands.

Whatever you want to do, your Volunteer Coordinator will be very happy to assist you with bookings and useful advice on the best local service providers.



Packing for Your Trip

Volunteers often ask about bringing items for the children such as books, clothing etc. These are always welcome (if you have room in your suitcase!), though, if you are considering purchasing anything for Masigcine, we would recommend that you bring your money with you, as you are likely to get much better value for your Euro or Pound in South African stores. This will also allow you to see what's actually needed at the time – for example, nappies, wet wipes and food are always high on the list.

For your work at Masigcine, comfortable clothes, which can be washed easily, are best (you may wish to bring old clothes as you are likely to get some marks on you from the children!). Please note that clothing must be appropriate for working with all ages of children and young adults (e.g. no short shorts or revealing tops).

For the winter months you are advised to bring some warm clothes as the early mornings and late evenings can be very cold then. Sunscreen is an absolute must at any time of year, along with a hat and UV protected sunglasses.

If you are bringing your mobile phone and would like to take advantage of cheaper local call rates in South Africa, you can purchase a South African Sim card and Airtime Vouchers here. Please remember to unlock your phone before you leave home, and don't forget your Sim Unblocking Pin Code!

Hand Baggage: Normal limit 5-7kg depending on airline

Passport
Visa (if required for stays of more than 90 days)
Tickets
Insurance Policy
Mobile Phone
Contact Numbers & a copy of your Travel Itinerary (print from MyTrip™).
Wallet/Purse
Approx R500 in cash for initial spending money
ATM & Credit Cards (Don't forget your PIN's)
Photo ID Driving Licence (if you plan to hire a car at any time)
Toiletries/Make-up – Be aware of limits on the quantities of fluids that can be carried in hand baggage.
Personal Medication (if required)
Book/Magazine for the flight
Camera, Film/Card, Batteries
Binoculars – 8x42 or 10x42 are ideal for wildlife, birds, whale watching etc.
ipod / mp3 player – don't forget your charger
UV Filter Sunglasses - if you wear glasses or contact lenses, be sure to bring an extra pair.
Student ID Card (student discounts are available on a variety of attractions in Cape Town)

Suitcase: Normal limit 20-64kg depending on airline

Casual / long trousers / Jeans
Shorts / Skirts / Beach-shorts / Bikini
Long sleeve Sweater / Blouse / Shirts / Polo / T-Shirts
Jacket – Waterproof
Trainers / Walking shoes / boots / Beach Sandals / Flip flops
Sun hat
Underwear
Electric Razor/Hairdryer
Washing Gear & Toiletry bag, Toothbrush, Paste & Towels
Comfortable clothes for use during project time (or any clothes that you don't mind getting dirty!)



Useful Information...

The following guidelines will help you to make the most of your time at Masigcine and enable you to make a positive and beneficial contribution to the lives of the children at the Home.

At all times, please remember that these children live here and treat Masigcine as you would someone else's home. This is especially important at a children's home where children do not have the luxury of privacy.

Health & Safety

- Although no compulsory inoculations are required for travel to South Africa, we do advise that you ensure your Polio and Tetanus vaccinations are in date prior to arrival. Please note: a Rabies vaccination is not required.
- Please consult your doctor before volunteering if you are pregnant or on medication.
- In the unlikely event that you are become ill or are injured, we have excellent medical and hospital facilities within the local area.
- You must also ensure that you have adequate medical/travel insurance for the duration of your stay.
- Some of these children are HIV positive. Playing, cuddling, kissing and touching are NOT ways in which HIV can be transmitted. Please treat them as you would any other child. Detailed information on working with HIV is provided in the Volunteer handbook (available on arrival).
- Hygiene is of special importance when dealing with so many children and we recommend that you pay special attention to personal cleanliness.
- To prevent the spread of infection, please wash your hands before, during and after interaction with the children, preferably with the anti-septic soap provided.
- For the same reason, do not allow the children to put their fingers in your mouth.
- Similarly, it is recommended that you wash your hands before eating or drinking.
- Set aside 3 sets of clothes for working at the Home and wash them regularly.

Volunteer rules...

As you will be working with children and young adults in protected care, there are certain rules, which, if broken, will result in the immediate termination of your services at Masigcine. These are:

- Any behaviour of an aggressive nature, either physical or otherwise, towards any of these children or young adults.
- Any removal of a child from the premises of Masigcine without the prior agreement of the Manager.
- Consumption of alcohol on the premises of Masigcine
- Smoking in view of the children or inside the buildings of Masigcine

Emotional attachment...

It is often difficult for volunteers to remain emotionally detached from the children that they come into contact with, and this is entirely understandable. We are all human after all, and when a child is so happy to see you, it is easy to see how strong emotional feelings can develop, even to the extent where a particular child becomes your 'favourite'.

This possibly presents the most difficult aspect of providing valuable volunteering assistance, as these natural feelings on your part are often not in the best interests of the child. Volunteers should avoid favouritism towards a particular child as this can result in a child becoming dependant on you, leading to a prolonged period of emotional trauma for you and the child when you finally have to leave for home.

Favouritism can also adversely affect the other children who are equally deserving of love and attention (even infants are acutely aware of the amount of attention they are receiving relative to their playmates). No matter how hard it may be for you, please treat all the children as equally as you can.



How do I book?

1 You can make an application using any of the following methods...

- ✓ Apply online using the simple booking form on our web site - www.aviva-sa.com/booking.php
- ✓ Email your requirements to - info@aviva-sa.com
- ✓ Call one of our friendly team during office hours on +27 (0) 21 557 4312
- ✓ Fax your requirements to +27 (0)86 634 2063
- ✓ Chat to us online for free, directly from our web site!

2 We will reply to your application by the next working day...

When you book a placement, we will send you a login username and password which will allow you to access your personalised **MyTrip™** page on our web site. With **MyTrip™** you will be able to:

- ✓ View and check your full itinerary, which includes recommended arrival and departure dates.
- ✓ View useful information relevant to your trip.
- ✓ Approve your quote & make secure payments on line.
- ✓ Update your personal information and travel details (when you have them!).
- ✓ Get useful advice about qualifying for discounts, fundraising and much more...

3 Pay your deposit...

- ✓ When you are happy with everything, you can secure your place by paying your deposit.
- ✓ Your remaining balance will only be due 4 weeks before you arrive in South Africa.

4 Contact us at any time for help and advice...

- ✓ We guarantee you a prompt response to your enquiries.
- ✓ Our friendly, professional team in Cape Town have a wealth of experience and are on hand to assist you with all aspects of your journey.

Booking & Travel Notes...

We work hard to ensure that your trip preparations are as enjoyable and stress free as your stay with us in South Africa. Here are a few useful notes for your peace of mind...

- You do not make any payments until you are happy with everything, so making a booking is a great, risk-free way to check everything out on your MyTrip™ profile before making a final decision to join us in South Africa.
- If, when booking your international flights, you find that you can get a cheaper flight that arrives earlier, or leaves later than the dates we recommend, we can arrange extra accommodation for you to match your flight dates. This is often worthwhile, as the cost of extra accommodation can be far outweighed by savings on your flight ticket.
- Please don't worry about what time your flight arrives in South Africa as we can pick you up at any time of day. We also monitor expected landing times for inbound flights, so if your flight is early or delayed, we will still be there to welcome you.

Developmental milestones...

On these next two pages we have noted some important developmental milestones. Please remember that these are guidelines only and will depend on the ability of the child.

It is important that the child is encouraged to move towards the next milestone at his/her own pace. Talking to the baby, laying them on their belly and letting them play with different objects are important for stimulations and development at every age.

Age	Expected Milestone	Developmental Exercises
1 month	Grasps things placed in hand. Moves or cries at a loud noise. Grips finger put into hand. Cries when wet, hungry or uncomfortable.	Hold and interact with baby, talking, feeding and placing objects into baby's hand.
2 months	Follows close objects with eyes.	Move objects in front of baby's face.
3 months	Holds up head briefly. Rolls back to belly. Sits with some support. Coos when comfortable. Takes everything to mouth. Plays with own body. Begins to creep. Turns head to sound.	Hold baby upright against the shoulder allowing them to move their head from side to side. Hold the baby in sitting position. Put baby on belly on the floor and allow to move around.
4 months	Begins to reach towards objects. Enjoys bright colours.	Hold things out of their reach to encourage them to reach forward. Remember to reward them by giving them the object. Use objects of different colours, textures and shapes.
5 months	Plays with simple objects. Makes simple sounds. Holds up head and shoulders.	Talk to the baby and make sounds to encourage them to talk. Mimic the noise the baby makes. Place on belly on the floor and rattle and make noise above them so that they attempt to lift their head up to look.
6 months	Crawls. Reaches and grabs with whole hand. Turns head and shifts weight. Sits with hand support.	Place baby on belly in crawling position and place object a short distance in front to encourage them to crawl to it. Place in sitting position on ground and support back.
8 months	Enjoys rhythmic music. Chews solid food. Recognises faces.	Play music to baby. Be expressive with face when interacting with baby.
9 months	Uses certain sounds for different things. Begins to enjoy first social games (peek-a-boo, etc.) Passes from one hand to another. Rolls over and over easily in play. Eyes focus on far objects. Pulls to standing. Hold head up well when lifted. Begins to sit without support.	Continue exercises outlined above. Hold baby's hands and encourage them to standing position.
10 months	Begins to feed self.	Continue exercises outlined above.
1 year	Moves and holds head easily in all directions. Imitates and copies people. Understands simple words. Takes steps. Drinks alone from a glass. Twists and moves easily while sitting.	Place in standing position and hold child's hands and walk them alongside you. Place in standing position against the wall and hold your hands out to the child to encourage them to walk to you.

15 months	Walks. Grasps things with thumb and forefinger. Looks at small things/pictures.	Continue exercises outlined above. Hold object out to child and encourage them to grasp it. Show child pictures and objects.
2 years	Runs. Begins to play with other children. Takes off simple clothes. Hears and understands most simple language.	
2 ½ years	Begins to use words together. Can walk on tiptoes and heels.	
3 years	Sees small shapes clearly at 6 meters. Toilet trained. Walks easily backwards. Throws and catches ball.	
4 years	Bathes and dresses self.	

