

Communication Milestones

What to expect as your child grows

A PARENT-FRIENDLY GUIDE TO SPEECH, LANGUAGE, AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

0-6 MONTHS

Your child can:

- quiet to the sound of your voice
- make different cries for different needs
- coo and make some vowel sounds
- smile and interact with familiar people
- turn towards voices
- respond to facial expressions



Try this:

- talk during everyday routines
- copy your baby's sounds
- sing simple songs



Consider reaching out if your child:

- rarely responds to sounds
- doesn't make sounds by 6 months
- has limited social engagement

7-12 MONTHS

Your child can:

- babble often
- respond to their name
- understand simple words ("milk", "yay")
- use gestures or simple signs
- begin to say real words
- try to copy sounds you make



Try this:

- label items and actions
- read books together
- respond to babbling like conversation



Consider reaching out if your child:

- doesn't babble
- rarely interacts with people
- uses few or no gestures

1-2 YEARS

Your child can:

- follow simple directions
- look around when asked "where?"
- point to make requests or comments
- use and understand 50 words
- use words to ask for help
- use words like "me," "mine," and "you"



Try this:

- use short words and sentences
- name pictures in story books
- talk about and practice sounds



Consider reaching out if your child:

- isn't using any words
- doesn't point or gesture
- seems uninterested in conversation

2-3 YEARS

Your child can:

- combine words into phrases
- say their name when asked
- sometimes be difficult to understand
- produce *p, b, n, m, h, w, and d* in words
- ask "why" and "how"
- answer questions like "what" or "which"



Try this:

- add to what your child says
- practice counting
- practice describing things



Consider reaching out if your child:

- isn't putting 2 words together
- doesn't produce consonant sounds
- has difficulty following simple directions

3-4 YEARS

Your child can:

- tell you stories from books or shows
- pretend to read alone or with others
- produce *t, k, g, f, y, and 'ing'* in words
- use comparison words correctly
- talk so most people understand them
- say all sounds in a consonant cluster



Try this:

- sorting pictures into categories
- take turns asking questions
- act out daily activities



Consider reaching out if your child:

- struggles to express ideas
- seems frustrated when communicating
- has difficulty following conversations

4-5 YEARS

Your child can:

- use grammatically correct sentences
- follow simple rules to play games
- be understood during conversation
- identify rhyming words
- understand and use location words
- correctly produce most consonants



Try this:

- use words like "first" and "last"
- define unknown words for your child
- play "I Spy" games



Consider reaching out if your child:

- is difficult to understand
- avoids communicating
- frequently misunderstands directions

When in doubt, reach out.

If communication feels difficult, progress seems slow, or if you simply have questions, it's okay to check in.

You know your child best.

Trust your instincts, and if something doesn't feel right, reach out to your pediatrician or a speech-language pathologist (SLP). We are here to help!