

Milestones of Speech Development by Age

Birth - 3 Months

- Startles to loud sounds
- Quiets or smiles when spoken to
- Seems to recognize your voice and quiets if crying
- Increases or decreases sucking behavior in response to sound
- Makes pleasure sounds (cooing, gooing)
- Cries differently for different needs
- Smiles when sees you

4 - 6 Months

- Moves eyes in direction of sounds
- Responds to changes in tone of your voice
- Notices toys that make sounds
- Pays attention to music
- Babbling sounds more speech-like with many different sounds, including, p, b, and m
- Vocalizes excitement and displeasure
- Makes gurgling sounds when left alone and when playing with you

7 Months - 12 Months

- Enjoys games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake
- Turns and looks in direction of sounds
- Listens when spoken to
- Recognizes words for common items like "cup", "shoe," "juice."
- Begins to responds to requests ("Come here," "Want more?")
- Babbling has both long and short groups of sounds such as "tataupup bibibibibi."
- Uses speech or non-crying sounds to get and keep attention
- Imitates different speech sounds
- Has 1 or 2 words

12 Months

- Responds to their name
- Understands simple directions with gestures
- Uses a variety of sounds
- Plays social games like peek a boo

15 Months

- Uses a variety of sounds and gestures to communicate
- Uses some simple words to communicate
- Plays with different toys
- Understands simple directions

18 Months

- Understands several body parts
- Attempts to imitate words you say
- Uses at least 10 - 20 words
- Uses pretend play

24 Months

- Uses at least 50 words
- Recognizes pictures in books and listens to simple stories
- Begins to combine two words
- Uses many different sounds at the beginning of words

2 to 3 Years

- Speech is understood by familiar listeners most of the time.
- Understands differences in meaning (go-stop, in-on, big-little, up-down)
- Follows two requests ("Get the book and put it on the table.")
- Combines three or more words into sentences
- Understands simple questions
- Recognizes at least two colors
- Understands descriptive concepts

3 to 4 Years

- Uses sentences with 4 or more words
- Talks about activities at school or at friends' homes
- People outside family usually understand child's speech
- Identifies colors
- Compares objects
- Answers questions logically
- Tells how objects are used

4 to 5 Years

- Answers simple questions about a story
- Voice sounds clear and says most sounds correctly
- Tells stories that stay on topic
- Communicates with other children and adults
- Can define some words
- Uses prepositions
- Answers why questions
- Understands more complex directions

Please note: Grammar (i.e. pronouns) develops beyond the ages outlined above.