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Speech and Language Milestone Guide - Birth to Age 5

Published by Jet 2 Speech

Use the age ranges to notice change over time. Age ranges are guides for conversation and do not screen or diagnose. If you are concerned, talk with a pediatrician, audiologist or speech-language pathologist.

Birth to 3 months

Notice responses to familiar voices or sounds, early coos and short exchanges of sounds.

Try: Answer a coo gently and pause for another turn.

4 to 6 months

Notice laughter, responses to faces or sound-making toys, and a wider range of sounds in play.

Try: React to a playful sound and let your baby set the pace.

7 to 9 months

Listen for strings of babble, recognition of familiar words and gestures such as raised arms to be picked up.

Try: Put their message into a short phrase: “Up you go.”

10 to 12 months

Watch for pointing, giving or showing, copying gestures, responding to familiar phrases and emerging words.

Try: Play peekaboo and follow your baby’s lead.

13 to 18 months

Look for understanding of short directions, gestures to share interests and words for familiar people or things.

Try: Name a toy your child shows you and add one action word.

Sources

ASHA · Communication Milestones: Age Ranges

NIDCD · Speech and Language Developmental Milestones

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19 to 24 months

Notice a growing vocabulary, early word combinations, two-part directions and requests for help.

Try: If your child says “water,” try “more water.”

Ages 2 to 3

Listen for more word combinations, early questions and a growing range of sounds in familiar words.

Try: Talk together about something you just did.

Ages 3 to 4

Look for simple storytelling, location words, more complete speech sounds and pretend reading or writing.

Try: Let your child tell you where to put a toy.

Ages 4 to 5

Notice longer sentences, more detailed stories, early letter knowledge and increasingly understandable speech.

Try: Invite your child to tell what happened first and next.

Ask a question

Sources

ASHA · Communication Milestones: Age Ranges
NIDCD · Speech and Language Developmental Milestones