



Speech and Language Development

This resource was developed to inform parents and early childhood educators regarding developmental guidelines and norms in the area of communication.



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Speech and Language “Lingo”



Communication: a means of sending and receiving information. ‘It’s a two-way street.’



❖ Receptive Language: comprehension or understanding of language



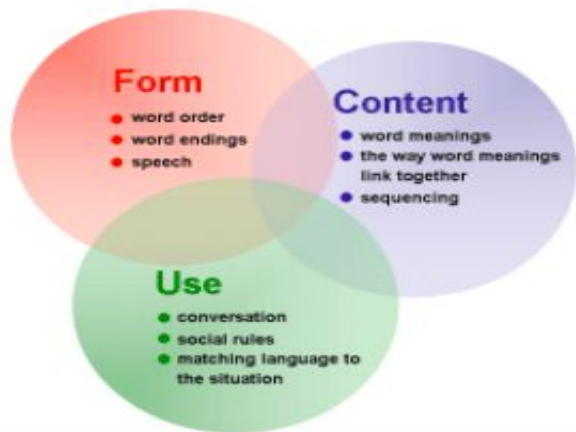
❖ Expressive Language: sharing thoughts, using vocabulary, forming phrases and sentences



❖ Social or Pragmatic Language: functionally and socially appropriate use of language

Language:

- ❖ Phonology: sound system
- ❖ Morphology: structure of words
- ❖ Syntax: order and combination of words to form sentences
- ❖ Semantics: vocabulary and word meanings
- ❖ Pragmatics: using language functionally and in a socially appropriate manner



Speech:

- ❖ Articulation: speech sound production
- ❖ Intelligibility: speech clarity, how well speech is understood by others
- ❖ Fluency: flow of speech, ease of producing speech
- ❖ Voice: vocal quality, pitch, loudness, resonance (hypernasal, hyponasal)





Age Range

Communication Expectations

What you can do

Birth to 1
year



By 1st birthday:

- ❖ Babbling (e.g., bababa, mamama)
- ❖ Eye contact
- ❖ Responding to his/her name
- ❖ Turns head to environmental sounds
- ❖ Using eye contact and facial expressions to connect with people
- ❖ 1-5 consistent word approximations by 12 months (e.g., ba for ball or da for dog)
- ❖ Produces /b/, /p/, /m/, /w/, /n/, and /d/ sounds



What to watch for:

If your baby is not making eye contact, has frequent ear infections, does not babble.

- ❖ Talk to your baby
 - Point to objects, label, and describe
 - Talk about what you and baby are doing
 - Use gestures and vocal inflection while communicating
- ❖ Look at books and read to your baby daily
- ❖ Imitate your child's babbling
- ❖ Engage in sound play (make animal, vehicle and other sound effects like "weee", "uh,oh", "yay", "mmm, yum yum")
- ❖ Yearly hearing screening by pediatrician



Coo- Goo



Babbling

Age Range

Communication Expectations

What you can do

1 year to
2 years



By 2nd birthday:

- ❖ Beginning to combine two words
- ❖ Understands simple one-step directions in familiar routines
- ❖ Beginning to ask simple questions
- ❖ Understanding simple questions such as who and where
- ❖ Has 50-100 words by second birthday
- ❖ Beginning to express feelings
- ❖ Engages in play side-by-side with peers
- ❖ Immaturities are heard in his/her speech, such as ba for ball, do for go.
- ❖ Produces /b/, /p/, /m/, /w/, /n/, and /d/ sounds



What to watch for:

If your child is not pointing, making eye contact to share attention, attempting to talk or communicate, interacting in play.

- ❖ Continue to build on previously listed skills
- ❖ Expand words into phrases or short sentences
- ❖ Sing songs and nursery rhymes
- ❖ Use pretend and imaginary play with your child
- ❖ Read with your child daily
 - > Label pictures and talk about what's happening
 - > Follow child's lead, create your own story if your child is not engaged
 - > Have your child point, for example, 'Where is the doggie?'
- ❖ Give your child simple directions to follow (retrieve familiar objects, bring things to people, etc.)
- ❖ Create opportunities for social experiences with same age peers (e.g., library groups, daycare, playground, religious groups)
- ❖ Use gestures and vocal inflection while communicating
- ❖ Yearly hearing screening by pediatrician

Observation:
Speech Milestones at Two Years
Alex, 24 Months

GeneticaLens®

Observation:
Echolalia
Lucas, 30 Months

GeneticaLens®

Age Range

Communication Expectations

What you can do

2 years to
3 years



By 3rd birthday:

- ❖ Can participate in an adult-directed activity for 5-10 minutes
- ❖ Makes requests, protests, comments, labels, and asks and answers questions
- ❖ Beginning to combine 2-3 words
- ❖ Directs someone's attention to preferred objects and activities
- ❖ Engages in pretend play
- ❖ Understands opposites
- ❖ Follows two-step related directions
 - "Get your napkin and put it in the trash"
- ❖ Talks about objects that are not present
- ❖ Using location words (in, on, under)
- ❖ Child's message is understood by familiar listeners. Speech may still be imprecise.



What to watch for: Not using language to communicate, frustration due to inability to effectively communicate, only using single words, not interacting with peers, consistently not understood by familiar listeners. Child does not make eye contact or look at others.

- ❖ Continue to build on previously listed skills
- ❖ Read with your child daily
 - Talk about the book
 - Ask your child questions about the pictures and story
 - Give your child opportunities to label
 - Ask your child what might happen next
- ❖ Offer your child choices for activities, foods, and objects (Do you want milk or juice?) instead of asking a yes/no question (Do you want milk?)
- ❖ Ask your child questions and have them label objects and actions
- ❖ Encourage and support pretend play
- ❖ Expand on your child's words (e.g., child: "dog" parent: "yes, I see the dog. It's a big dog.")
- ❖ Yearly hearing screening by pediatrician

Intelligibility Norms

— Speech Intelligibility Expectations —

Age	Intelligibility Level
19 – 24 months	25% – 50%
2 – 3 years	50% – 75%
4 – 5 years	75% – 90%
5+ years	90% – 100%

Data from Peña-Brooks & Hegde (2007)






Age Range	Communication Expectations	What you can do
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3 years to 4 years



By 4th Birthday:

- ❖ Responds when you call from another room
- ❖ Answers simple who, what, and where questions
- ❖ Puts 4 words together. May make some mistakes, like “I goed to school.”
- ❖ Rhymes words, like *hat*–*cat*
- ❖ Uses pronouns, like *I*, *you*, *me*, *we*, and *they*
- ❖ Uses some plural words, like *toys* and *buses*
- ❖ Familiar people understand what your child says most of the time
- ❖ /k/, /g/, /f/, and /v/ sounds are emerging
- ❖ Asks when and how questions
- ❖ Talks about what happened during the day
- ❖ Can follow simple multi-step related directions (e.g. ‘Go to your cubby, get your lunch box, and sit down at the table.’)
- ❖ Follows more complex single step directions (e.g. ‘Get the big green ball under the table’)

 *What to watch for: Speech clarity is not improving and frustration is increasing. Child has frequent difficulties playing cooperatively with peers. Child has difficulty following familiar routines and completing simple multi-step directions. Child frequently repeats phrases and lines from movies or interactions instead of generating their own language. Child does not make eye contact.*

- ❖ Read, sing, and talk about what you do and where you go. Use rhyming words.
- ❖ Sort pictures and objects into categories, like food, animals, or shapes.
- ❖ Read books with a simple story. Talk about the story with your child. Help them retell the story, or act it out. Ask for their favorite part.
- ❖ Look at family pictures. Have your child tell a story about the picture.
- ❖ Act out daily activities, like cooking food or going to the doctor. Use dress-up and role-playing to help your child.
- ❖ Talk to your child in the language you are most comfortable using.
- ❖ Yearly hearing screening by a pediatrician

4 Years - Tells stories



Christmas

Q + A

with a 4 year old





Age Range

Communication Expectations

What you can do

4 years to
5 years



By 5th Birthday:

- ❖ Understands words for order, like *first*, *next*, and *last*.
- ❖ Understands words for time, like *yesterday*, *today*, and *tomorrow*. Talks about past and future events.
- ❖ Follows longer directions, like “Put your pajamas on, brush your teeth, and then pick out a book.”
- ❖ Follows classroom directions, like “Draw a circle on your paper around something you eat.”
- ❖ Understands most of what he/she hears at home and in school
- ❖ May make mistakes on sounds that are harder to say, like /l/, /s/, /r/, /z/, ‘ch,’ ‘sh,’ ‘j,’ and ‘th.’
- ❖ Responds to “What did you say?”
- ❖ Names letters and numbers

- ❖ Talk about order and location of things, using words like *first* and *last* or *right* and *left*.
- ❖ Talk about opposites, like *up* and *down* or *big* and *little*.
- ❖ Sort items into categories. Have your child tell you which item does not belong. Talk about why it doesn’t belong.
- ❖ Let your child tell you how to do something.
- ❖ Pay attention when your child speaks. Get his attention before you speak.
- ❖ Keep teaching your child new words. Define words to increase understanding. For example, say, “This *vehicle* is on the highway. It is a car. A bus is another kind of vehicle.”

4 years to
5 years

5

By 5th Birthday Continued:

- ❖ Uses sentences that have more than one action word, like *jump*, *play*, and *get*. May make some mistakes, like “Zach got two books, but I got one.”
- ❖ Tells a logical short story
- ❖ Takes turns talking in a conversation
- ❖ Talks in different ways, depending on the listener and place. Your child may use short sentences with younger children. He/she may talk louder outside than inside.
- ❖ Can identify letters in their name
- ❖ Can identify first sound in words



What to watch for: Speech clarity is not improving and frustration is increasing. Child has frequent difficulties playing cooperatively with peers. Child has difficulty following familiar routines and completing multi-step directions. Child frequently repeats phrases and lines from movies or interactions instead of generating their own language. Child does not make eye contact. Cannot sit at a table and complete a game/activity for 10-15 minutes.

What you can do (continued)

- ❖ Teach your child to ask for help
- ❖ Talk about what makes objects the same or different (e.g. both are animals, one is big and one is little)
- ❖ Act out stories. Play house, doctor, and store using dolls, figures, and dress-up clothes. Have the dolls talk to each other.
- ❖ Help your child guess what will happen next in a story. Ask who, what, when, where, or why questions about the story.
- ❖ Play games like “I Spy.” Describe something you see, like, “I spy something round on the wall that you use to tell the time.” Let your child guess what it is. Let your child describe something he sees.
- ❖ Play board games with your child to help him learn to follow rules.
- ❖ Have your child help you plan daily activities. For example, have her make a shopping list for the grocery store.
- ❖ Talk to your child in the language you are most comfortable using.
- ❖ Yearly hearing screening by pediatrician



5 Years - Tells a simple story using full sentences



[cdc.gov/Milestones](https://www.cdc.gov/Milestones)



5 years to
6 years



By the end of kindergarten:

- ❖ Early reading skills: rhyming, blending sounds to make simple words, knows all letter names and most letter sounds, can identify the sounds in CVC words (e.g. cat)
- ❖ Shares simple stories using sequential order
- ❖ Knows more spatial relationship terms (beside, under, through, etc)
- ❖ Asks a variety of question forms
- ❖ Uses more complex sentences, for example, "Let's go to the store after we eat."
- ❖ Can use functional descriptive language, for example, "a fork is for eating."
- ❖ Can explain newly learned vocabulary and concepts



What to watch for: Kids and teachers are not understanding the student. Student has difficulty using language to solve problems. Student has difficulty following classroom rules and expectations and completing multi-step directions. Student frequently repeats phrases and lines from movies or interactions instead of generating their own language. Student doesn't make eye contact. Cannot sit at a table and complete a game/activity for 10-15 minutes; frequently confuses or doesn't remember letter sounds and names. Communication impacts the students academic or social performance.

- ❖ Play "I Spy" with beginning sounds (I spy something that begins with the sound "d") or with descriptions (I spy something that flies)
- ❖ Sing songs and rhymes with your child
- ❖ Read longer stories
- ❖ Avoid "baby talk"
- ❖ Listen to and respond to your child when she talks
- ❖ Play letter and number games
- ❖ Praise your child when he talks about his feelings
- ❖ Yearly hearing screening by pediatrician



Once there's a alien have a dog. (7 seconds)

And there's a space alien. (2 seconds)

Um the. Um it's real. (4 seconds)

Then a spaceship. (13 seconds)

Um but there is a dog.

And. (10 seconds)

And. (6 seconds)

There's. (3 seconds)

And there is the money. XXX clouds. (7 seconds)

And there's a table. (23 seconds)

Um because I see a spaceship on the alien was in the spaceship!





Frequently asked questions

- ❖ Q: My child has started stuttering. Should I be concerned?
A: It is normal for children to go through a period of up to six months of developmental stuttering. This developmental stuttering is characterized by repetition of initial sounds, syllables or words. Contact a Speech-Language Pathologist if there is a family history of stuttering, if sounds are being prolonged or if your child is physically struggling to get sounds or words out.

- ❖ Q: My child's language is delayed. We have a bilingual household. Should we only use one language at home?
A: Continue to use both languages at home, but speak to your child in the language you are most comfortable with. It is not uncommon for children in a bilingual home to be slightly delayed in language through the age of three years old.

- ❖ Q: People are having trouble understanding my two-year old. Should I be concerned?
A: Two-year olds are still beginning to develop many speech sounds and they may be difficult to understand, especially to unfamiliar listeners.

- ❖ Q: How much screen time should my child have each day?
A: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that for children 2 to 5 years of age, screen time should be limited to one hour per day.

- ❖ Q: My child is in preschool, is it okay for her to use a pacifier, bottle and/or sippy cup?
A: No. These items interfere with your child's palate growth, oral motor development, dental growth, and swallowing. It is best to transition your child from a bottle to an open cup with a straw or a Trainer Cup.

If you have concerns about a child's development and notice they are not reaching the majority of milestones outlined in the chart then contact the Early Learning Department and/or your local public school with your concerns.



Questions?



Reference

ASHA resources were used as a reference for our presentation