

Speech and Language Milestone Chart

Developmental milestones

The course of children's development is mapped using a chart of developmental milestones. These milestones are behaviors that emerge over time, forming the building blocks for growth and continued learning. Some of the categories within which these behaviors are seen include:

- [Cognition](#) (thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, understanding)
- [Motor coordination](#) (gross/fine motor, jumping, hopping, throwing/catching, drawing, stacking)
- [Social interaction](#) (initiating peer contact, group play)
- [Adaptive](#) (dressing, eating, washing)

By age one

Milestones

- Recognizes name
- Says 2-3 words besides "mama" and "dada"
- Imitates familiar words
- Understands simple instructions
- Recognizes words as symbols for objects: Car - points to garage, cat - meows

Activities to encourage your child's language

- Respond to your child's coos, gurgles, and babbling
- Talk to your child as you care for him or her throughout the day
- Read colorful books to your child every day
- Tell nursery rhymes and sing songs
- Teach your child the names of everyday items and familiar people
- Take your child with you to new places and situations
- Play simple games with your child such as "peek-a-boo" and "pat-a-cake"

Between one and two

Milestones

- Understands "no"
- Uses 10 to 20 words, including names
- Combines two words such as "daddy bye-bye"
- Waves good-bye and plays pat-a-cake
- Makes the "sounds" of familiar animals
- Gives a toy when asked
- Uses words such as "more" to make wants known
- Points to his or her toes, eyes, and nose
- Brings object from another room when asked

Activities to encourage your child's language

- Reward and encourage early efforts at saying new words
- Talk to your baby about everything you're doing while you're with him
- Talk simply, clearly, and slowly to your child
- Talk about new situations before you go, while you're there, and again when you are home
- Look at your child when he or she talks to you
- Describe what your child is doing, feeling, hearing
- Let your child listen to children's records and tapes
- Praise your child's efforts to communicate

Between two and three

Milestones

- Identifies body parts
- Carries on 'conversation' with self and dolls
- Asks "what's that?" And "where's my?"
- Uses 2-word negative phrases such as "no want".
- Forms some plurals by adding "s"; book, books
- Has a 450 word vocabulary
- Gives first name, holds up fingers to tell age
- Combines nouns and verbs "mommy go"
- Understands simple time concepts: "last night", "tomorrow"
- Refers to self as "me" rather than by name
- Tries to get adult attention: "watch me"
- Likes to hear same story repeated
- May say "no" when means "yes"
- Talks to other children as well as adults
- Solves problems by talking instead of hitting or crying
- Answers "where" questions
- Names common pictures and things
- Uses short sentences like "me want more" or "me want cookie"
- Matches 3-4 colors, knows big and little

Activities to encourage your child's language

- Repeat new words over and over
- Help your child listen and follow instructions by playing games: "pick up the ball," "Touch Daddy's nose"
- Take your child on trips and talk about what you see before, during and after the trip
- Let your child tell you answers to simple questions
- Read books every day, perhaps as part of the bedtime routine
- Listen attentively as your child talks to you
- Describe what you are doing, planning, thinking
- Have the child deliver simple messages for you (Mommy needs you, Daddy)
- Carry on conversations with the child, preferably when the two of you have some quiet time together
- Ask questions to get your child to think and talk
- Show the child you understand what he or she says by answering, smiling, and nodding your head
- Expand what the; child says. If he or she says, "more juice," you say, "Adam wants more juice."

Between three and four

Milestones

- Can tell a story
- Has a sentence length of 4-5 words
- Has a vocabulary of nearly 1000 words
- Names at least one color
- Understands "yesterday," "summer", "lunchtime", "tonight", "little-big"
- Begins to obey requests like "put the block under the chair"
- Knows his or her last name, name of street on which he/she lives and several nursery rhymes
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Activities to encourage your child's language

- Talk about how objects are the same or different

- Help your child to tell stories using books and pictures
- Let your child play with other children
- Read longer stories to your child
- Pay attention to your child when he's talking
- Talk about places you've been or will be going

Between four and five

Milestones

- Has sentence length of 4-5 words
- Uses past tense correctly
- Has a vocabulary of nearly 1500 words
- Points to colors red, blue, yellow and green
- Identifies triangles, circles and squares
- Understands "In the morning", "next", "noontime"
- Can speak of imaginary conditions such as "I hope"
- Asks many questions, asks "who?" And "why?"

Activities to encourage your child's language

- Help your child sort objects and things (ex. things you eat, animals...)
- Teach your child how to use the telephone
- Let your child help you plan activities such as what you will make for Thanksgiving dinner
- Continue talking with him about his interests
- Read longer stories to him
- Let her tell and make up stories for you
- Show your pleasure when she comes to talk with you

Between five and six

Milestones

- Has a sentence length of 5-6 words
- Has a vocabulary of around 2000 words
- Defines objects by their use (you eat with a fork) and can tell what objects are made of
- Knows spatial relations like "on top", "behind", "far" and "near"
- Knows her address
- Identifies a penny, nickel and dime
- Knows common opposites like "big/little"
- Understands "same" and "different"
- Counts ten objects
- Asks questions for information
- Distinguished left and right hand in herself
- Uses all types of sentences, for example "let's go to the store after we eat"

Activities to encourage your child's language

- Praise your child when she talks about her feelings, thoughts, hopes and fears
- Comment on what you did or how you think your child feels
- Sing songs, rhymes with your child
- Continue to read longer stories
- Talk with him as you would an adult
- Look at family photos and talk to him about your family history
- Listen to her when she talks to you