



Toddler TALK



Speech and Language Developmental Milestones

Understanding	Talking	What can I do?
Birth to 12 months		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turns head toward you when you speak Responds to name (6-10 mos) Notices environmental sounds (doorbell, dog barking) Looks at objects when someone talks about them Knows words to common items Plays peekaboo Follows one-step directions when accompanied by a gesture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes cooing and gurgling sounds (0-3 mos) Begins to repeat simple sounds (aah, ooh) Squeals, plays with voice (4-6 mos) Babbles even when alone - is noisy Can sign several words Points to familiar objects and people Uses at least one word consistently Babbling sounds like 'real words' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read lots of books with simple pictures Sing songs Introduce sign language at about 6-9 months Talk about what you are doing using simple sentences Imitate sounds and words that your child says
12-24 months		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows simple directions without being shown Points to some body parts Answers simple yes/no questions (do you want to eat?) Understands simple phrases (on the table, in the crib) Understands and responds when you call from a different room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses about 50 words, even if pronunciation is unclear Asks for food by name Uses possessive pronouns (mine) Regularly uses 2-3 word phrases (18-24 mos) Makes animal sounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk about common vocabulary during daily routines Points to pictures in books Label actions and items in the environment Make it clear to your child that what they say is more important to you than how they say it
24-36 months		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can choose things by size (show me the little block) Understands "not now" and "no more" Can follow two step directions (get your toy and come here) Understands many action words (run, jump) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary increases to between 250-1000 words Speech is clear to most familiar people Uses simple pronouns correctly (me, you, her) Uses descriptive words (big, happy) Knows some spatial words (in, on, under) Begins to use or experiment with past tense (I jumped) and plurals Uses inflection when asking questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep reading together Don't correct pronunciation or grammar but model correct versions (i.e., child: "I do'ed it!"; parent: "yes, you did it!") Describe events that happen throughout the day (first we'll go to the store; then to the playground. Expand on what your child says without expecting them to repeat. So, your child says, "bird", you might say, "I see the bird too. A pretty red bird. She says tweet tweet."

Understanding	Talking	What can I do?
3-4 years		
<p>Answers a variety of simple "wh" questions (who, what doing, where)</p> <p>Understands a sequence of events described to them (first we'll ____; then we'll ____)</p> <p>Understands most of what is said to them about events in the immediate past, present, future that are directly related to them</p> <p>Understands terms like yesterday, later today and tomorrow</p> <p>Points to pictures in books based on a verbal description (which cat is sleeping?)</p>	<p>Can identify colors</p> <p>Accurately groups items by category (animals, foods, clothing)</p> <p>Strangers can understand most of what your child says</p> <p>Has fun with language (reacts to silly questions, like: is there a giraffe in your bed?)</p> <p>Begins to express complex ideas of feelings</p> <p>Uses consonants in beginning, middle, and ends of words and tries to pronounce all consonants clearly (/r/, /l/, "sh" and 'ch' might not be clear yet)</p> <p>Uses -ing verbs (walking, eating)</p>	<p>Make silly sounds and silly words together</p> <p>Keep reading!</p> <p>Respond to your child's stories and comments with encouragement for more: "wow - what else happened?"</p> <p>Label feelings for your child: "when you fell down you felt really hurt and mad and sad"</p> <p>Cook with your child to work on sequencing and vocabulary</p>
4-5 years		
<p>Understands most of what is said to them about recent past, present and future events.</p> <p>Understands terms like "in the fall", "next week"</p> <p>Knows variety of shapes and colors, including less common ones (light blue, diamond)</p> <p>Answers "why" questions</p> <p>Follows complex directions (after you ____, get your ____)</p>	<p>Understands complex questions</p> <p>Understands more complex spatial descriptors (next to, behind)</p> <p>Speech is reliably intelligible to family and strangers</p> <p>Uses 1500 words</p> <p>Defines words</p> <p>Can describe how to do something familiar (make a sandwich, paint a picture)</p>	<p>Listen to and enjoy the unique thoughts of your child</p> <p>Ask open ended questions: "what do you think will happen"</p> <p>Provide definitions for new words</p> <p>Encourage your child to "read" and "write" by drawing pictures and dictating a story to you; making a shopping list, etc.</p>
5 years and beyond		
<p>Understands the majority of what is said to them AS WELL AS what is said AROUND them.</p> <p>Learns new vocabulary easily</p> <p>Recognizes letters</p> <p>May know some letter sounds</p> <p>May recognize some words in context, on signage</p>	<p>Uses 2000+ word vocabulary</p> <p>Can explain and follow at least 3-stage sequence</p> <p>Sentences can be more than 8 words long</p> <p>Actively uses imagination to tell stories</p> <p>Uses multiple descriptors (including comparisons) to describe an object</p> <p>Engages in elaborate conversation with adults and peers</p>	<p>Pay attention to your language and topics around your child</p> <p>Explain new vocabulary clearly</p> <p>For complex topics (sex, religion, race, etc.) answer the question your child asks (not the one you think they meant to ask)</p> <p>Talk TO your child - they are good company!</p> <p>Point out signs in the environment that your child may recognize</p>