

Language Development Summary

Birth to 1 year

Sound play and babbling

- Baby plays with sounds and mouth movements
 - cooing from 4 – 6 weeks
 - babbling from 4 – 6 months
 - blowing raspberries, squealing
- Learns sounds that are useful for communication
- Hearing is very important for speech and language development
- Starts to understand simple instructions, “Wave bye bye”, “Clap hands”

When to be concerned: Not babbling by 10 months



1 – 2 years

Single word stage

- Understands simple instructions and questions, eg. “Give me the ball, teddy, baby?” “Where is daddy?”
- Understands much more than he/she can say
- Uses gestures paired with single words (and sometimes two words) to communicate
- Starts to name people (mummy), familiar objects (teddy), and actions (jump)
- Needs a vocabulary of up to 50 words before putting two words together.
- From 18 months – 2 years starts putting two words together, “mummy gone” “more bikkie” “baby up”

When to be concerned: No words by 18 months. Not responding to language

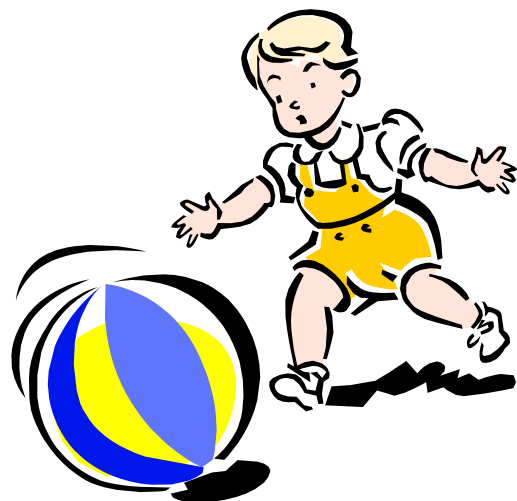


2 – 3 years

Phrase stage

- Understands longer instructions containing two parts, “Go to your room and get your shoes”, “Give the cup to daddy.”
- Understands and starts to use what and where questions, “Where daddy gone?”
- Puts words together to make short sentences though often with many grammatical errors, “Daddy run”, “I goed beach”, “Where ball?”
- Can be difficult to understand at times

When to be concerned: Single words only.
Difficulty following instructions.





3 – 4 years

Grammar growth and question stage

- Vocabulary growing rapidly and grammar improving
- Follows longer and more complex instructions
- Starts to use longer and more complex sentences and starts to use simple joining words, I went to the beach and had a swim.
- Asks lots of questions, Why does the pool have walls?
- Understands and uses early concepts, hot/cold, big/little, first/last
- Speech becoming clearer with less articulation errors

When to be concerned: Speech is very difficult to understand, using only short, simple 2 – 3 word phrases, difficulty following instructions

4 – 5 years

Grammar refining stage

- Understands the majority of what is said
- Can answer more complex questions, “How did the cat get onto the roof?”
- Most sentences are grammatically correct with only a few errors
- Vocabulary growing especially descriptive words, angry, disgusting
- Starting to use more complex joining words, while, unless

When to be concerned: Difficult to understand, poor grammar or simple sentences with no joining words



5 – 6 years

Flexible language stage

- Has mastered the bulk of language learning
- Comprehends and uses most time based concepts, before, after
- Uses language for different functions including negotiation, explaining, telling stories
- Language is descriptive and long
- Sentences are well formed and adult like with occasional grammatical errors

When to be concerned: Difficulties following instructions, learning difficulties at school, ongoing speech errors or poor grammar.