

Language Development

The following are guidelines to give you an idea of what to expect from your child at different ages. Many factors such as heredity, birth order, and gender may affect where your child falls within these ranges.

0-3 Months

- Cries for assistance
- Quiets when picked up
- Begins to recognize Mommy and Daddy
- Responds to smiling and cooing
- Discriminates voices and speech sound

3-6 Months

- Responds to voices and sounds
- Babbles (bababa, gagaga)
- Laughs out loud
- Protests with cries
- Imitates sounds (vowels and a few consonants)

6-12 Months

- Begins using syllables (ga, da, goo)
- Says "mama" and "dada"
- Imitates speech and rhythms, claps hands
- Recognizes words for objects
- Follows simple directions
- Plays "Peek a Boo"

12-18 Months

- Recognizes name
- Understands "No"
- Indicates wants in ways other than crying
- Says 2-3 words in addition to "mama" and "dada"
- Begins to combine words
- Waves Bye-Bye
- Begins to use the words "no" and "mine"

18-24 Months

- Vocabulary increases to 10-20 words
- Recognizes pictures of familiar objects
- Masters no, mine, thank you
- Combines words (get down, doggie go)
- Scribbles on paper
- Begins to lose "baby talk"

2 years

- Vocabulary increases to approximately 30 words
- Listens for meaning of words
- Understands simple commands
- Knows some body parts
- Sentence length increase to 2-3 words
- Uses past-tense (-ed)
- Combines nouns and verbs (Mommy come)
- Uses language more to communicate wants and needs but no real conversation
- Talks to toys and self
- Enjoys nursery rhymes and knows own name
- Uses plurals (-s) ex. "toys"

3 years

- Vocabulary increases to approximately 1,000 words
- Sentence length increases to 3-4 words
- Begins to use simple sentences, both questions and statements but syntax may not be correct (Me no want)
- Knows his/her full name
- Can tell age
- Can repeat parts of familiar songs and nursery rhymes
- Has some concept of immediate time such as nap time, dinner time, and tomorrow or later

4 years

- Vocabulary increases to 1,500 words
- Can identify a color and may know some names of colors
- Sentence length increase to 4-5 words
- Asks A LOT of questions
- May be able to count to 4-5 but does not understand how to count objects
- Sentences become more complex and include contractions (can't), past tense (-ed), and pronouns (she/he)

5 years

- Vocabulary increases to 2000 words
- Understands simple opposites (up, down)
- Can identify which is larger or smaller or the same
- Responds to questions
- Sentence length is 5 words or more
- Sentences are simple and complex and include future, past, and present tense

