

What should my child be able to do?

Birth-12 months

Hearing and Understanding

Birth–3 Months

- Startles to loud sounds
- Quiets or smiles when spoken to
- Seems to recognize your voice and quiets if crying
- Increases or decreases sucking behavior in response to sound

4–6 Months

- Moves eyes in direction of sounds
- Responds to changes in tone of your voice
- Notices toys that make sounds
- Pays attention to music

7 Months–1 Year

- Enjoys games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake
- Turns and looks in direction of sounds
- Listens when spoken to
- Recognizes words for common items like "cup", "shoe", "book", or "juice"
- Begins to respond to requests (e.g. "Come here" or "Want more?")

Talking

Birth–3 Months

- Makes pleasure sounds (cooing, gooing)
- Cries differently for different needs
- Smiles when sees you

4–6 Months

- Babbling sounds more speech-like with many different sounds, including *p*, *b* and *m*
- Chuckles and laughs
- Vocalizes excitement and displeasure
- Makes gurgling sounds when left alone and when playing with you

7 Months–1 Year

- Babbling has both long and short groups of sounds such as "tata upup bibibibi"
- Uses speech or noncrying sounds to get and keep attention
- Uses gestures to communicate (waving, holding arms to be picked up)
- Imitates different speech sounds
- Has one or two words (hi, dog, dada, mama) around first birthday, although sounds may not be clear

1-2 years

Hearing and Understanding

- Points to a few body parts when asked.
- Follows simple commands and understands simple questions ("Roll the ball," "Kiss the baby," "Where's your shoe?").
- Listens to simple stories, songs, and rhymes.
- Points to pictures in a book when named.

Talking

- Says more words every month.
- Uses some one- or two- word questions ("Where kitty?" "Go bye-bye?" "What's that?").
- Puts two words together ("more cookie," "no juice," "mommy book").
- Uses many different consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

2-3 years

Hearing and Understanding

- Hears you when you call from another room.
- Hears television or radio at the same loudness level as other family members.
- Understands words for some colors, like red, blue, and green
- Understands words for some shapes, like circle and square
- Understands words for family, like brother, grandmother, and aunt

Talking

- Talks about activities at school or at friends' homes.
- Talks about what happened during the day. Uses about 4 sentences at a time.
- People outside of the family usually understand child's speech.
- Answers simple "who?", "what?", and "where?" questions.
- Asks when and how questions.
- Says rhyming words, like hat-cat
- Uses pronouns, like I, you, me, we, and they
- Uses some plural words, like toys, birds, and buses
- Uses a lot of sentences that have 4 or more words.
- Usually talks easily without repeating syllables or words.

3-4 years

Hearing and Understanding

- Hears you when you call from another room.
- Hears television or radio at the same loudness level as other family members.
- Understands words for some colors, like red, blue, and green
- Understands words for some shapes, like circle and square
- Understands words for family, like brother, grandmother, and aunt

Talking

- Talks about activities at school or at friends' homes.
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- Says rhyming words, like hat-cat
- Uses pronouns, like I, you, me, we, and they
- Uses some plural words, like toys, birds, and buses
- Uses a lot of sentences that have 4 or more words.
- Usually talks easily without repeating syllables or words.

4-5 years

Hearing and Understanding

- Understands words for order, like first, next, and last.
- Understands words for time, like yesterday, today, and tomorrow.
- 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."
- Hears and understands most of what is said at home and in school.

Talking

- Says all speech sounds in words. May make mistakes on sounds that are harder to say, like *l*, *s*, *r*, *v*, *z*, *ch*, *sh*, *th*.
- Responds to "What did you say?"
- Talks without repeating sounds or words most of the time.
- Names letters and numbers.
- Uses sentences that have more than 1 action word, like *jump*, *play*, and *get*. May make some mistakes, like "Zach got 2 video games, but I got one."
- Tells a short story.
- Keeps a conversation going.
- Takes in different ways depending on the listener and place. May use short sentences with younger children or talk louder outside than inside.