

Speech and Language MILESTONES

If you are concerned that your child is having difficulty developing speech and language skills, please talk to your doctor. Your doctor may recommend that you seek advice of a certified speech-language pathologist, such as the professionals at *Speech Plus*.

Our certified speech-language pathologists specialize in helping infants and young children improve their ability to learn, communicate and interact with their peers. Early detection and treatment of delays involving communication skills can greatly improve a child's chances of success in school and in everyday life.

We work with children with communication and language-based learning difficulties as well as children who may just need a little extra help building language and learning skills. Our services include:

- ★ Diagnostic Evaluations for Speech-Language, Reading, ADHD, Dyslexia and other Learning Disabilities
- ★ Individual Speech and Language Therapy
- ★ Feeding Therapy
- ★ Social Skills Groups
- ★ Fast ForWord® Family of Programs
- ★ Educational Remediation
- ★ Wilson Reading Program

★ *Kindermusik*®

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FOUR YEAR OLDS

Telling Stories and Making Friends



Learn to Identify your Child's Speech and Language Milestones

Every child develops differently, but the following milestones can help you determine whether your child is gaining speech and language skills at an appropriate level for his or her age. Children typically do not master all items in a category until they reach the upper age range.

Language Comprehension

- ★ Shows interest in how things work
- ★ Understands concept of the numbers (e.g. "Give me 3".)
- ★ Knows the concepts "between", "above", "below", "top", "bottom"
- ★ Understands words that relate one idea to another "if", "why", "when"
- ★ Has receptive vocabulary of 2,800 or more words

Language Expression

- ★ Uses the same grammar as the rest of the family
- ★ "If" and "so" appear in sentences
- ★ Has an expressive vocabulary of 900 to 2,000 or more words
- ★ Uses sentences that give lots of details (e.g. "My dog is big, furry and brown.")
- ★ Uses "could" and "would" in sentences
- ★ Answers complex 2-part questions
- ★ Uses irregular plurals fairly consistently (child/children)
- ★ Uses "our", "they" and "their" consistently
- ★ Uses contractions such as "it's a" or "there's a"
- ★ Describes objects by function (e.g. "What do you do with a comb?")
- ★ Counts to 10 by rote
- ★ Names 3 colors

Speech

- ★ Produces consonants with 90% accuracy
- ★ May omit middle sounds in longer words ("butfly" for "butterfly")
- ★ Others outside the family usually understand speech

Pragmatics

- ★ Can discuss emotions and feelings effectively
- ★ Stories have sequence of events but no main character or theme
- ★ Possessive pronouns emerge (e.g. "his" and "hers")
- ★ Expresses anger verbally rather than physically
- ★ Talks about experiences at school, at friends' homes, etc.

Play

- ★ Shows off dramatically
- ★ Good imaginative play
- ★ Likes cutting out and pasting
- ★ Likes working on projects - may carryover from day to day
- ★ Plays in groups of 2 to 5
- ★ Watches life situation programs on TV and gains information from dialogue
- ★ Draws unmistakable human body with arms, legs, feet, nose and eyes

What Can Parents Do?

- ★ Make up short stories at the child's interest level. Reading and telling stories are essential to speech, language and listening development.
- ★ Point out categories of items and objects while grocery shopping (e.g. fruits, vegetables).
- ★ Praise your child for asking questions.
- ★ Ask questions often to get information. This provides a model for your child to imitate. Include your child in as many conversations as possible.
- ★ If your child appears to have trouble retrieving specific words when they are talking, give them additional time and ask question prompts (e.g. "What does it look like?")
- ★ Repeat new words and sounds over and over and use them often in conversation

