



Milestone Checklist



speech & language experts

Alpin Rezvani M.A., CCC-SLP (646) 265-7234

Debbie Shiwbalak M.A., CCC-SLP (917)-373-0511

Speech & Language Milestones Birth-5 Checklist

0-6 months

Expressive

- Coos, gurgles, laughs
- Sustained eye contact
- Uses different cries
- Produces vowel-consonant (e.g. - ah goo) and at the end of this period consonant - vowel combinations (ma)
- Uses phonemes /b/, /p/, and /m/ in babbling
- Uses sounds or gestures to indicate wants
- Initiates smiles and smiles when spoken to

Receptive

- Recognizes faces and voices
- Localizes sound by turning head or with eyes

Pragmatics/Cognition

- Manipulates objects (e.g. - mouthing)

Feeding

- Reflexive sucking motions
- Starts solids around 6 months
- Will suck off of a spoon

7-12 months

Expressive

- Imitates some sounds and initiates vocalization
- Uses sounds to request instead of crying
- Changes babbling to jargon
- Uses mostly nouns
- Shakes head “no”
- Waves “bye”

Receptive

- Understands “no” and “hot”
- Responds to their name
- Recognizes common words (shoe, ball) and people
- Follows simple routine commands

Pragmatics/Cognition

- Functional play (e.g. – banging drum)
- Plays social games such as peek a boo

Feeding

- Holds own bottle
- Feeds self finger food
- Holds spoon by handle
- Cup drinking with assistance

13-18 months**Expressive**

- Uses adult-like intonation pattern
- Uses jargon to fill gaps while talking
- Drops beginning and ending sounds of words
- Produces animal sounds
- Has 3-20+ words (e.g. – milk, juice, bye, hi, no)

Receptive

- Follows simple 1-step commands
- Identifies 1-3 body parts
- Looks at objects others refer to

Pragmatics/Cognition

- Demonstrates self-directed play (e.g. – will feed mommy or daddy with spoon; comb caregiver’s hair)
- Copies stacking blocks
- Gives kisses and hugs
- Begins to show sense of humor
- Engages in turn-taking activities (e.g. – rolling ball back and forth)

Feeding

- Raises cup to mouth and drinks
- Feeds self with spoon
- Drinks from straw

19-23 months

Expressive

- Uses words more frequently than jargon
- Uses 50-100+ words
- Starts to produce 2-word phrases (e.g. – mama juice, daddy up)
- Begins to use pronouns
- Uses appropriate intonation for questions
- Filling in the blanks of songs or phrases (e.g. – The Wheels on the _____”)
- 25-50% of speech is understandable to the unfamiliar listener

Receptive

- Understands 50 -100+ words
- Understands quantity of “one”
- Answers “What’s that?” questions
- Points to common objects (e.g. – clothing items, body parts)

Pragmatics/Cognition

- Relational play (e.g. – puts passenger in car and pushes it; uses spoon to feed baby doll); at the end of this period, child begins to perform action sequences (e.g. – kisses the doll and then puts doll to bed)
- Parallel play – plays side by side with others

Feeding

- Feeds self with fork and spoon

2-3 years

Expressive

- Speech is 50-75% understandable
- Verbalizes toilet needs
- Uses 3-5 word phrases
- Uses some prepositions (in, on), articles (the, a, an), present progressive (running, walking, eating), regular plurals (cats, dogs), adjectives (colors, shapes, size) irregular past tense (ate, slept, ran)
- Engages in basic conversation
- Uses language imaginatively
- Uses 50-250+ words

Receptive

- Identifies pictures in a book
- Identifies several body parts
- Follows 2-step commands without gestures
- Receptive vocabulary of 500-900+ words
- Understands concept of “two”

Pragmatics/Cognition

- Advanced symbolic play - child uses objects to represent another (e.g. - banana to represent a phone)
- Pretend play (e.g. – putting on costume to be pretend to be a firefighter, princess, etc.)

Feeding

- Independent/self-feeding
- Increased use of fork
- Cup drinking, open cup and no spilling

3-4 years

Expressive

- Asks questions frequently
- Uses language to express emotion
- Produces 4-6+ word sentences
- Uses 800-1500+ words
- Speech is 80% intelligible
- Tells two events in chronological order
- Engages in a long conversation

Receptive

- Understands opposites (e.g. – stop vs. go)
- Follows 2-3 part commands
- Receptive vocabulary of 1200-2000+ words
- Aware of past and future events

Pragmatics/Cognition

Dramatic play involving two or more children - select a theme, assign roles, and use appropriate language to engage in their roles

4-5 years

Expressive

- Uses 900-2000+ words
- Asks for word definitions
- Talks about school, home, friends and can retell past events

Receptive

- Understands concept of numbers 1-3
- Understand spatial concepts (up, under, behind)
- Recognizes 1-3 colors
- Receptive vocabulary of 2800+ words
- Understands complex two-part questions (e.g. – What's your brother's name and what's your dog's name?)
- Listens to and understands short stories; can respond to related questions