

Speech Sounds!



The words people say are made up of different speech sounds. Each language has its own set of speech sounds. Your child learns to use the sounds in your language by hearing you talk. At first, your baby practises making easier sounds by babbling. As she gets older and says more words, she learns how to use more sounds in your language. By the time your child is 8 years old, her speech usually sounds like the speech of an adult. Below is a checklist for the development of English sounds.

Check off all of the things your child is doing.

What to Expect

Under 12 months...

- By 3 months** your baby coos, goos, grunts, gurgles, and makes different noises like "ahh".
- From 4 to 7 months** your baby makes babbling sounds like "ahah", "baba", "mama", and "gaga".

Your 1 year old...

- Babbles using different sounds like "bababa" or "putudume".
- Copies different sounds you say.
- May say first words.
- By 1½ years** uses the sounds that are easiest to make like *m, p, b, d, w,* and *h*.
- Babbles sounds together like real sentences, such as "bapotimawabe".

- Is understood by parents only about 25% of the time.

Your 2 year old...

- Uses sounds like *m, p, b, w, t, d, n,* and *h*. Most vowel sounds are said correctly like *ah, ee, i, oh, oo,* and so on.
- May only use these sounds at the beginning of words.
- Is understood by parents between 50 to 75% of the time.
- By 2½ years** uses some sounds at the beginning and end of words.
- May repeat easier sounds like "bubu" for *bubbles* or leave off harder sounds like "ba" for *ball, bat,* or *bus*.
- May say many different words that sound the same.

Your 3 year old...

- Uses sounds like *m, p, b, w, t, d, n, h, k, g, f, s,* vowels, *y* as in *yes,* and *ing* as in *sing*.
- Is understood by parents between 75 to 100% of the time.
- By 3½ years** uses sounds at the beginning of words (*bus* instead of *us*) and at the end of words (*boat* instead of *boa*).
- Uses vowel sounds correctly almost all of the time.



For information about language, ask for the *Talking and Listening* checklist.

Your 4 year old...

- Uses sounds like *m, p, b, w, t, d, n, h, k, g, f, y, l, s, z*, vowels, and *ing*.
- Is understood by parents 100% of the time.

Your 5 year old...

- Says most sounds correctly except for maybe *r, v, ch*, and *th*.
- Uses *l blends* and *s blends*, such as *blue* and *stop*.
- May say *s, z, sh, ch*, or *j* with the tongue sticking out (a lisp).
- Is easily understood by siblings, friends, parents, and strangers.

Your 6 year old...

- Says most sounds correctly except for maybe *r* and *th*.
- Is easily understood by everyone.

Your 7 year old...

- Says all sounds correctly except for maybe *th*.
- Is easily understood by everyone.

Your 8 year old...

- Says all sounds correctly and is easily understood by everyone.

When to get help

You should get help if...

- Your child is not saying the sounds that are listed for his age.
- Your child is frustrated or hard to understand.
- You did not check off all of the things listed for your child's age.

Where to get help

Are you concerned about your child's speech and language development? Speech-language pathologists can help. To find one in your area...

- Call your local health unit
- Call Health Link Alberta at:
 - Calgary Area 403-943-LINK (5465)
 - Edmonton Area 780-408-LINK (5465)
 - Toll Free 1-866-408-LINK (5465)
- Go to www.healthlinkalberta.ca

