

Talking and Listening



Talk Box

Your child learns about talking and listening by being with you and other people. She learns the words in your language, how to put words together, how to have conversations, and how to play with others. She also learns how to follow directions and understand questions. Your child learns about talking and listening right from the day she is born. This learning continues until she is an adult.

Check off all of the things your child is doing.



What to Expect

Under 12 months...

- By 3 months** your baby startles to sudden, loud noises.
- Your baby seems to know your voice.
- Your baby seems to comfort to your voice when she is upset and crying.
- Your baby coos, grunts, gurgles, cries, and makes sounds like "ahh".
- By 6 months** your baby turns toward a sound.
- Your baby is interested in sounds, voices, and music.
- Your baby smiles when you smile.
- Your baby's babbles sound like "mama" and "gaga".

Your 1 year old...

- Turns and looks in the direction of sounds.
- Responds to familiar sounds like a dog barking or when you call her name.
- Recognizes words for everyday objects like *cup, shoe, and car*.
- Copies actions and sounds that you make.
- Communicates by crying, laughing, looking, showing, reaching, grunting, and making sounds.
- Babbles a variety of sounds and says her first words.
- By 1½ years** understands and says at least 10 words.
- Points to people and body parts like *eyes or nose*.
- Points to pictures in a book.

- Starts to pretend – going to sleep, talking on the phone, and so on.

Your 2 year old...

- Uses 2 words together, like *more milk* and *Mommy eat*.
- Says at least 50 words.
- Starts to use *ing (eating)*, plurals (*boats*), and possessives (*baby's bottle*).
- Understands 2-part sentences, like *Get your ball and put it in the box*.
- By 2½ years** uses words that name objects (*ball, shoe*), describe (*big, hot*), and talk about actions (*kick, eat*).
- Points to more body parts and clothes and points to many pictures in a book.
- Uses common objects in pretend play. For example, he pretends to fill up a toy car with gas and drive away.
- Says more words every week.



For information about speech development, ask for the *Speech Sounds Checklist*.

Your 3 year old...

- Says 3 to 4 words together, like *I want more juice* and *Mommy is at work*.
- Uses more of the little words like *is, a, the*.
- Follows 3-part directions, like *Go to your room, get your socks, and bring them to me*.
- Understands and asks questions, like *Where is your coat?*, *Who's that?* and *What is soap for?*
- Describes activities, feelings and problems, and tells simple stories.

Your 4 year old...

- Uses sentences that are longer and more complete, such as "I want to go out and play on the swing."
- Uses more grammar, like pronouns (*I, you, me, she, he, we*), past tense (*walked*), and some question words (*what, who, where, why*). There are still some errors.

- Understands most concept words like *colours, shapes, locations, texture, time*.

Your 5 year old...

- Uses sentences that can be more than 5 to 6 words long.
- Asks more difficult questions, like *why* and *how*.
- Understands most questions and adult conversation.
- Uses the present, future, and past tenses, like *walks, walked, and will walk*.
- Retells a story by naming the characters and by talking about what happened.



When to get help

You should get help if...

- Your child is frustrated or difficult 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...

- Contact 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



Go to www.parentlinkalberta.ca for more Talk Box ideas.