

Age Related Development

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Comprehension and expression from birth

Age	Comprehension	Expression
<p>0-12 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smiles; shows pleasure • uses different cries for different messages, such as hunger or discomfort • pre-words (the same sound pattern used to get the same object) • turn taking in ritualised games • comes for cuddles • watches faces • puts objects together in play • copies actions of others • looks for hidden objects • babbles • imitates speech sounds/tunes • realises vocalisations get a response • understands first words 	
<p>12-18 months</p> <p>Stage of object naming and object permanence: looking for an object they see hidden and knowing something still exists when out of sight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • picks out object on request: "Where's your cup?" • responds to short commands: "Wave bye-bye" • knows basic body parts • can complete a request with an object: "Give me the cup" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-20 words used – mostly object names • one word may cover many meanings • use of words may be too broad or narrow • words may occur within strings of jargon • common exclamations: "Oh dear!"

Age	Comprehension	Expression
<p>18-24 months</p> <p>Stage of object representation: understanding that miniatures and pictures relate to real things</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands about 300 words • follows simple two word direction • knows simple question words: 'what?' 'where?' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words are used reliably, although may not sound 'adult' • two word utterances • negatives and questions indicated by intonation • some verbs used
<p>24-36 months</p> <p>Stage of concept development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early concepts: 'in' 'out' 'on' 'under' 'big' 'little' • follows simple stories • takes turns in conversations • matches colours • selects objects by function: "Which do you eat?" • follows two word instructions: "Put the <u>cup</u> on the <u>plate</u>" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three+ word utterances • grammar begins to develop: -ing, possessive 's • begins to tell stories and recent experiences • interacts with other children
<p>3-5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 5, follows all normal conversation • selects at least four colours by name • understands range of prepositions: 'behind' 'between' • understands full range of question words; 'who' 'how' 'why' • understands full range of pronouns • recognises past and future tense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vocabulary used approaches 5000 words • links utterances with 'and' and 'because' • grammar maturing, though still some mistakes • language used as a tool for thinking, learning and imagining

Development of speech sounds

Age	Sounds Used	Sound Patterns
0-12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wide range of sounds • some non-English sounds • more English sounding after eight months • lip sounds may predominate: b, p, d, m 	Experimentation with sounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘raspberries’ • shrieks • wide range of intonation patterns • animal noises
12-18 months	Adding in: p, b, t, d, h, w <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only a few sounds used • words are short • sounds often repeated: ‘mama’ ‘dodo’ (dog) ‘bye bye’ 	Ends of words may be missed (this should stop by 3 years): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do (dog) • ca (cat) Syllables may be missed (this may continue until 4 years): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tato (potato) Clusters of sounds are simplified (this may continue until 4 – 4½ years): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poon (spoon) • ting (string)
18-24 months	Adding in: m, n, ng	Sounds may affect each other (consonant harmony): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gog (dog) Sounds are changed to make them easier to say: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • s, f, sh, ch > d, t, b: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tea → (sea) bit → (fish) turt → (church) • k, g > t, d <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tat → (cat) doe → (go)

Age	Sounds Used	Sound Patterns
24-36 months	Adding in: k, g, f, s, h, w, y, l	Several of these patterns may continue up to 36 months and operate at the same time, so whole groups of sounds are involved. Words may sound very different from the adult version, but the child's sound patterns will be predictable.
3-5 years	Adding in: sn, sp, mp, nt 3½ yrs ch, j, sh, z, v 4½ yrs tr, cl, gr 5½ yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many of the simplified words start to mature • more difficult sounds are mastered • two sound combinations are used
5-7 years	Adding in: th, r	The last sounds to emerge. Most words are adult-sounding. Even long words can be pronounced.

Development of attention skills

Stage	Level of development	Characteristics	What it might look like
1 0-12 mts	Can pay fleeting attention, though highly distractible	Attention is held by dominant stimulus in the environment	Turns to sound of door banging, or to mum talking.
2 12-24 mts	Rigid attention to his/her own choice of activity	Inflexible attention to a concrete task of his/her own choice. Cannot tolerate adult attempts to modify task.	Does not look up when name is called. Will look if touched as called.
3 2-3 yrs	Single channel attention. Can attend to adult's choice of activity if under adult control.	Can shift attention from an instruction, then back to the task as long as an adult helps transfer attention.	Will look up from puzzle if chin is touched, and then back to puzzle when pointed at.
4 3-4 yrs	Single channelled attention: under child's control.	Child needs to give full attention, visual and auditory, to instructions, but doesn't need adult help to do this.	Can listen and then do something, but only one thing at a time.
5 4-5 yrs	Integrated attention – for short spells.	Two-channelled attention. Child can take verbal direction without needing to interrupt the task and look up. Ready for class teaching.	Can listen to instructions whilst looking down at a book.
6 6 yrs	Integrated attention	Can maintain integrated attention for a longer period of time, as necessary to concentrate adequately in the classroom.	Will stay at an activity without reminders.

Interactions between speech, language and social development

Allowance should be made for six months' variation in all of these areas. The stages are fluid and development may not be equal across the areas.

A lack of development in any aspect of language that lasts six months should be a guide for referral to a speech and language therapist.

Age in months	Understanding	Expression	Sound System	Social Development and Play	Examples
6	Responds to familiar adults by turning head	Varied babble patterns	Wide range of sounds, mainly b, p, d, m	Holds objects, smiles, shows pleasure	baba dada
9	Recognises a word or phrase by looking :"Time for dinner" Will react to a phrase with an action "Wave bye bye"	Pre-words - same sound pattern is always used for an object or event	Combining different sounds in strings "bada" "daba"	Copies faces, copies 'raspberries' and intonation patterns Takes turns in ritualised games, looks for hidden objects	"eye ah" = cot, sleep, I'm tired, I want to go to sleep
12-18	Will select real objects by name if familiar - cup, ball, cat	Single word used to express a whole idea	Few, often repeated, sounds used: dodo = dog	<i>Stage 2 attention</i> Realises that vocalisations get response	"da" (cat) "di" (sleep) "wo da?" (what's that?)
18-24	Will select dolls' house-sized toys by name - can recognise a toy or model person or animal as a symbol for the real thing	Sentences with two elements, where words are used in a certain order to convey relationship and meaning	New sounds used: m, n, ng Words still simplified - ends/ syllables missed, clusters reduced: poon = spoon	<i>Stage 2 attention continues</i> Relates real object to self - brushes hair Begins to play with real objects -drinks pretend tea	"ma goh" (man gone) "dada duh" (daddy running) "wa bibi" (want biscuit) "we dada?" (where's daddy?) "ki boar" ([you] kick ball)

Age in years	Understanding	Expression	Sound System	Social Development and Play	Examples
2 - 3	<p>Can relate two objects together: "Put the <u>doll</u> on the <u>chair</u>"</p> <p>Can select some objects by function: "Which do we sit on?" This involves inner language - an internal idea used to answer a question</p> <p>Beginning to understand attributes "Which one barks?"</p>	<p>Sentences with three elements where sentences are expanded with extra words + some grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • negatives: 'no' 'not' 'can't' • pronouns: 'me' 'you' 'he' • descriptive words: colours, size and 'more' 'dirty' 	<p>Further new sounds are added: k, g, f, s, h, w, y, l</p> <p>Many sound simplification patterns operate, and speech may be difficult to understand</p> <p>Simple sounds may replace more complicated ones: soo = shoe dup = jump dein = train</p>	<p>Throws tantrums and is less easily distracted</p> <p>Emotionally dependent on adults</p> <p>More sustained role play: putting doll to bed, washing clothes, driving cars, but with frequent reference to friendly adult</p> <p>Watches others play, may join for a few minutes but little notion of sharing toys or adult's attention</p>	<p>Sentence types include: <i>Statements</i> "di on dair" (sit on chair)</p> <p><i>Negatives</i> "no ball go"</p> <p><i>Questions</i> "where my mummy?" "why it be jumping?" "where my daddy gone?"</p> <p><i>Commands</i> "let me go"</p> <p><i>Adjectives</i> "bi we boar" (big red ball)</p> <p><i>Is</i> "ca be er" (the cat's hurt)</p> <p><i>Pronouns</i> "me do it" "e lot e du" (he lost his shoe) "e cying" (he's crying)</p>

Age in years	Understanding	Expression	Sound System	Social Development and Play	Examples
3 - 4	<p>Starting to comprehend sentences involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colour • size: 'longest' 'shortest' 'biggest' 'smallest' • number: "take two out" • negatives • prepositions • up to four pieces of information: "Put the <u>big red cup</u> in the <u>box</u>" 	<p>Four element sentences, with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • word ending (-ing) • plurals • past (-ed) • past participle (-en) • third person singular (he wants<u>u</u> tea) • possessives (John's) • negatives (n't) • is (he's happy) • auxiliary (he's coming) • comparative s (bigger) • superlatives (biggest) • -ly (quickly) <p>Sentences may now be strung together to give complex sentences with two verbs Use of and, but, so, because Language is mostly adult, but listen out for some errors</p>	<p>Clusters of sounds start: sn, sp, mp, nt (3½ years)</p> <p>tr, cl, gr, (4½ years)</p>	<p>Affectionate and confiding</p> <p>Likes to help with adult domestic activities, make believe play, including invented people and objects</p> <p>Enjoys floor play alone or with siblings</p> <p>Joins in make believe play with other children</p> <p>Understands sharing</p>	<p>Errors to be expected at this stage:</p> <p><i>Pronouns</i> "her doing it"</p> <p><i>Determiners</i> this/that: "this one is hers" (should be 'that one')</p> <p><i>Irregular nouns</i> "mouses"</p> <p><i>Adjective order</i> "a red new chair"</p> <p><i>Modals</i> "he bettern't do it"</p> <p><i>Verb tenses</i> "catched"</p> <p><i>Concord</i> "the man are" "they is"</p> <p><i>Word order</i> "neither I did"</p>

Age in years	Understanding	Expression	Sound System	Social Development and Play	Examples
4 – 5	<p>Understanding lengthy commands involving prepositions: 'behind' 'beside'</p> <p>Size and colour used in the same sentence</p> <p>Should rely less on the situation to help understanding</p> <p>Beginning to understand more abstract complex commands, things beyond the here and now and cause and effect "Bobby pushes the baby over. Who's naughty?"</p>	<p>Language is largely fluent and grammatically correct</p> <p>Sentences are lengthened and made more complex: "I should have been able to"</p> <p>Development continues in the way that language is used and in vocabulary development</p>	<p>New sounds: ch, j, sh, z, v</p> <p>Clusters: sk</p> <p>Blends: pl, kw, tw</p> <p>Three sound clusters correct by 6 years: spl, str, skw</p> <p>th and r may not be used until 7 years old</p> <p>Child can self-correct errors in multi-syllabic words</p>	<p>Independent and can be strongly self-willed</p> <p>Shows sense of humour in talk and activities</p> <p>Likes dramatic make believe play and dressing up</p> <p>Needs companionship with other children with whom is alternately co-operative/ aggressive</p> <p>Beginning to appreciate consequences of actions</p> <p>Shows concern</p> <p>Appreciates past and future</p>	<p>Discourse: the way sentences are strung together to give structured conversation, achieved through sentence connectivity: 'actually' 'however'</p> <p>Takes listener's knowledge into account to keep on the topic and remain appropriate and relevant</p>