

Developmental Milestones

- **0-3 months**

- Observes objects and faces when they move
- Smiles when spoken to, especially by parents
- Focuses on faces
- Makes sounds such as cooing or various noises (mostly vowels)
- Cries to communicate
- Responds to sounds, turns head towards the sound source
- Recognizes sounds and voices
- Listens to speech around them
- Startled or cries when hearing unfamiliar loud noises
- Calms down when hearing a familiar voice

- **3-6 months**

- Cries differently for different needs
- Recognizes the mother's voice
- Smiles when spoken to
- Moves eyes towards sound sources
- Tries to turn towards the speaker
- Identifies toys that make sounds
- Shows interest in music
- Enjoys games like peek-a-boo
- Explores toys by putting them in the mouth
- Shakes toys in hands
- Babbling using sounds like /p/, /b/, /m/ (e.g., papa, baba, tata, etc. - 6 months)
- Frequently repeats the same sounds

- **6-9 months**

- Watches and looks around to identify the source of sounds
- Turns head towards the sound source
- Appears to recognize words like "mama, papa, bye, ball," etc.
- Responds to their name
- Imitates environmental sounds
- Uses many different sounds in syllables

- **9-12 months**

- Seeks parent interaction while playing
- Bangs objects together (e.g., two toys held in hands)
- Uses gestures to communicate (e.g., pointing to what they want, grabbing it, going close)
- Responds to their name, family names, and recognizes familiar objects
- Understands gestures like "hello" and imitates them
- Begins to respond to simple instructions (e.g., "come")
- Responds to "no"
- Pays attention when spoken to
- Imitates clapping and other movements (e.g., hello, no)
- Imitates sounds heard
- Produces various sounds as if conversing
- Produces first words (12 months)

- **1-2 years**

- Plays parallel (e.g., plays next to other children without interacting)
- Engages in symbolic play (e.g., covers the doll)
- Repeats actions that have an outcome (e.g., pressing a button and playing music)
- Attempts to repeat what they hear
- Points to objects when named
- Recognizes parts of their body and can show them

- Recognizes themselves in a mirror or photo
- Imitates actions they see (e.g., taking a bath, sweeping the floor)
- Explores their environment
- Looks for hidden objects
- Understands simple two-step instructions and questions (e.g., "take the doll and put it on the chair" or "where is the shoe?")
- Says their name
- Produces 20-50 words (18 months)
- Produces 100-200 words (24 months-2 years)
- Begins to combine two words for phrases (e.g., "want milk")
- Asks questions by combining two words
- **2-3 years**
 - Plays with other children
 - Seeks attention from adults
 - Engages in constructive play (e.g., building a tower)
 - Engages in pretend play
 - Responds when called from another room
 - Follows a conversation
 - Notices various environmental sounds (e.g., siren, phone, TV)
 - Recognizes familiar objects and images, showing them
 - Understands complex sentences
 - Understands concepts like "stop, small, big"
 - Understands concepts like "up-down, in-out, few-many"
 - Verbalizes during play
 - Begins to count numbers
 - Uses 300-400 words
 - Produces three-word phrases/sentences
 - Begins to use grammar more correctly (e.g., using plural forms - "birds fly," "many apples")
 - Asks questions like "what, where, why?"

- Uses pronouns and prepositions, simple sentences and phrases
- Imitates words and engages in songs with actions
- **3-4 years**
 - Cooperates with peers
 - Develops independence and social skills
 - Has longer attention span
 - Follows simple rules
 - Understands gender (girl-boy)
 - Understands opposite concepts (big-small)
 - Counts 5-10 objects
 - Groups objects
 - Understands adjectives like "heavy, empty"
 - Makes judgments and conclusions
 - Recalls events correctly
 - Answers simple questions like "who, what, where"
 - Uses 500-600 words
 - Forms complete sentences
 - Uses articles in sentences (e.g., "I want the apple, the baby eats")
 - Can narrate a recent event or part of a story (e.g., something that happened at school)
 - Can name basic colors
 - Participates in conversations
 - Speech is understandable by others

- **4-5 years**
 - Understands concepts of time
 - Listens and understands most conversations at home
 - Responds immediately when called
 - Listens to even low-intensity sounds (e.g., whispers)
 - Uses adult speech patterns
 - Uses most speech sounds correctly (except possibly some sounds like s, z, x, ps, ts, r)
- **5-6 years**
 - Expresses themselves clearly
 - Uses sentences of five or more words
 - Tells stories with complete sentences
 - Uses future tense
 - Knows personal information (name, where they live, etc.)
 - Vocabulary increases daily/learns new words regularly
 - Counts 10 or more objects
 - Can copy shapes, letters, or numbers
 - Recognizes their name when written
 - Can write their name
 - Articulates all speech sounds correctly

If your child is not following the above developmental milestones and you notice that she/he may not have mastered the skills expected based on her/his chronological age or you notice a delay in them, then it is important to contact a speech-language pathologist to conduct an evaluation. The speech-language pathologist is the one who will identify any difficulties or weaknesses in your child, will advise you, guide you and draw up an intervention plan to address these difficulties.