

Communication

MILESTONES



The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association states that “speech-language pathologists play a primary role in the evaluation and treatment of infants, children, and adults with swallowing and feeding disorders” (ASHA, 2002). SLPs are knowledgeable about normal and abnormal anatomy and physiology with respect to respiration, swallowing, and speech. Thus, it is appropriate for SLPs to play a role in feeding.

Feeding

Milestones

Birth – 4 months

- Sucks fingers when near mouth
- Places hands on bottle during feeding
- Recognizes a nipple or bottle
- Pats a bottle with one or both hands

5 – 6 months

- Holds a bottle independently with one or both hands
- Mouths and gums solid foods
- Opens mouth when a spoon is presented

6 – 9 months

- Feeds self crackers
- Drinks from a cup held by an adult – some loss of liquid
- Reaches for a spoon when presented/bangs a spoon
- Prefers for a parent to feed

9 – 12 months

- Holds a soft cookie in mouth (9 months) and bites through it (12 months)
- Imitates stirring with a spoon
- Eats lumpy, mashed food
- Chews using rotary jaw action (emerging)

12 – 18 months

- Grasps a spoon with a full hand
- Brings a full spoon to mouth, turning spoon over en route
- Begins to drink through a straw
- Holds a cup with two hands
- Drinks with four or five consecutive swallows

18 – 24 months

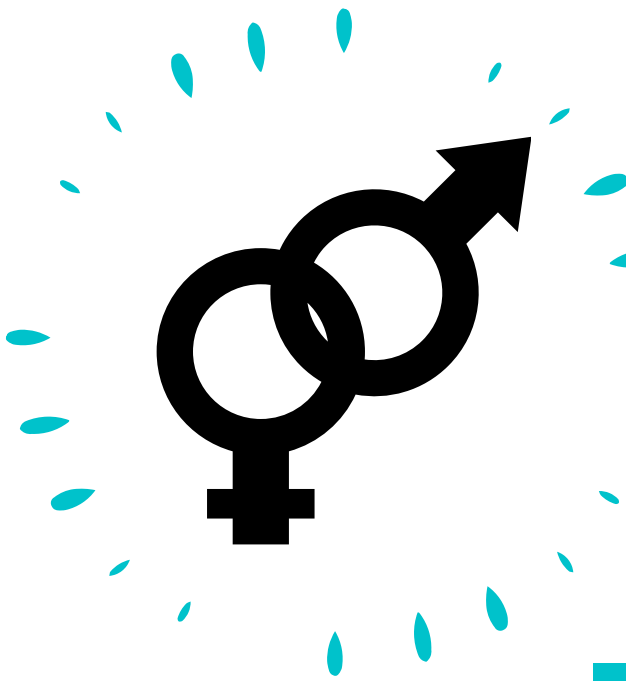
- Gives up the bottle
- Scoops food with a spoon and brings to mouth with spillage
- Drinks from a cup with limited spillage
- Swallows with lip closure
- Self-feeds frequently
- Chews a broad range of food
- Has precise up/down tongue movement

24 – 36 months

- Bites through a variety of food thicknesses
- Brings a spoon/fork to mouth, palm up, self-feeds with little spillage
- Holds a small, open cup in one hand with little spillage
- Chews with lips closed
- Chews using stable rotary jaw action

We'd like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (www.asha.org/policy); Arvedson (2006); and Nicolosi, Harryman, & Kresheck (2006).

Pronouns



There is no clear-cut progression for the acquisition of pronouns. However, most linguists agree that I and it are the first pronouns to emerge, followed by you. Research also indicates that children use most subjective and objective pronouns by three years of age and possessive pronouns by age five.

Milestones

12 – 26 months

I, it (subjective and objective)

27 – 30 months

my, me, mine, you

31 – 34 months

your, she, he, yours, we

35 – 40 months

they, us, hers, his, them, her

41 – 46 months

its, our, him, myself, yourself, ours, their, theirs

47+ months

herself, himself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves

We'd like to thank Owens (1996) from whom we obtained information for this section.

Pragmatics



Pragmatics is the study of speaker-listener intentions and interactions, and all elements in the environment surrounding the message. It is often referred to as social language skills.

Milestones

6 – 12 months

- Responds to “no”
- Responds to name and pats image of self in mirror
- Points to learn new vocabulary
- Tries to “talk” to a listener
- Coos and squeals for attention
- Laughs when playing with objects
- Tries to communicate by actions and gestures
- Smiles at self in mirror
- Plays pat-a-cake and peek-a-boo games
- Copies simple actions of others
- Shouts to attract attention

2 – 3 years

- Watches other children and briefly joins in their play
- Participates in associative play
- Requests permission for items or activities
- Begins to use language for fantasies, jokes and teasing
- Makes conversational repairs when the listener does not understand
- Engages in longer dialogues
- Begins to playhouse
- Participates in simple group activities
- Defends own possessions
- Carries on “conversation” with self and dolls
- Engages in simple, make-believe activities
- Begins to control behavior verbally rather than just physically
- Holds up fingers to tell the age
- Looks for missing toys
- Helps put things away

4 – 5 years

- Follows three-step directions without cues
- Uses direct requests with justification (e.g., “Stop that. You’re hurting me.”)
- Uses words to invite others to play
- Uses language to resolve disputes with peers
- Plays competitive exercise games
- Has good control of the elements of conversation
- Speaks of imaginary conditions, such as “What if ...” or “I hope ...”

5 – 6 years

- Begins to use word plays
- Uses threats and promises
- Asks meanings of words
- Likes to complete projects
- Makes purchases at stores
- Asks questions for information
- Chooses own friends
- Takes more care in communicating with unfamiliar people
- Engages in cooperative play, such as making group decisions, assigning roles, and playing fairly
- Announces topic shifts

We’d like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: AutismInfo (www.autisminfo.com/milestones.htm#B); Beyond Therapy (http://centralfltherapy.com/?page_id=140); Brooks & Engmann-Hartung (1987); the Child Development Institute (www.childdevelopmentinfo.com); Communication Works (www.cwtherapy.com/pragmatics2.html); KidTalk, Inc. (www.kidtalk.org/milestones.html); the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/voice/speechandlanguage.asp>); Nicolosi, Harryman, & Kresheck (2006); and Shulman (1991).

Literacy



SLPs' knowledge of normal and disordered language acquisition, and their clinical experience in developing individualized programs for children and adolescents, prepare them to assume a variety of roles related to the development of reading and writing. Appropriate roles and responsibilities for SLPs include, but are not limited to (a) preventing written language problems by fostering language acquisition and emergent literacy; (b) identifying children at risk for reading and writing problems; (c) assessing reading and writing; (d) providing intervention and documenting outcomes for reading and writing; and (e) assuming other roles, such as providing assistance to general education teachers, parents, and students; advocating for effective literacy practices; and advancing the knowledge base (ASHA, 2001). This chart lists reasonable expectations of literacy skills in children from infancy through seven years of age.

Milestones

Kindergarten

Recognizes letters and letter-sound matches
Understands that print is read left to right and top to bottom
Retells simple stories
Begins to write letters and some words heard often
Begins to write stories with some readable parts with assistance
Tries to spell words when writing

End of
Kindergarten

Understands that spoken words are made up of sounds
Recognizes some words by sight
Identifies and writes upper case and lower case letters
"Reads" a few picture books from memory
Prints own first and last name

Beginning of
First Grade

Identifies an increasing number of words by sight
Begins to decode new words independently
Uses a variety of reading strategies such as rereading, predicting what will happen, asking questions, or using visual cues or pictures
Reads and retells familiar stories
Reads aloud with ease
Decides independently to use reading and writing for different purposes
Sounds out and represents major sounds in words when trying to spell
Tries to use some punctuation and capitalization

End of
First Grade

Identifies letters, words, and sentences
Has a sight vocabulary of 100 words
Understands what is read
Creates rhyming words
Reads grade-level material fluently
Expresses self as through writing
Prints clearly
Spells frequently-used words correctly
Begins sentences with capital letters and attempts to use punctuation
Writes a variety of stories, journal entries, or notes

We'd like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (www.asha.org/policy, www.asha.org/public/speech/development/chart.htm and www.asha.org/about/publications/literacy/); the United States Department of Education (www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/reader/part9.html); and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Medicine (www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/files/earlychildhood-resources/OralandWrittenLanguageMilestones.pdf).

Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to manipulate the structure of an utterance independently from its meaning. It is an auditory task that requires an individual to manipulate the utterance at the word, syllable, or sound level. According to the National Center on Education and the Economy, "Children who readily develop phonemic awareness in kindergarten will probably learn to read easily"

(Goldsworthy, 2001). Phonological awareness skills develop from syllable, to onset-rime, to phoneme. These skills begin at age three and continue through the development of early reading skills at ages six and seven.

Skill	Definition	Sample Task
Syllable Segmentation	counts the number of syllables in a word	How many syllables do you hear in butterfly?
Syllable Blending	blends syllables into a word after they are given separately	What word do you hear when I say cow...boy?
Rhyming	identifies words that sound alike or rhyme	Which word rhymes with mat; star or hat?
Phoneme Isolation	identifies whether a given sound occurs at the beginning, middle, or end of a word	In the word sun, is the /s/ at the beginning, middle, or end of the word?
Initial Alliteration	identifies the beginning sound in a word	Which word begins with /t/; toad or boat?
Final Alliteration	identifies the last sound in a word	Which word ends with /b/; dog or tub?
Sound Blending	blends sounds into a word after they are given separately	What word do you hear when I say /b/... /a/.../t/?
Sound Deletion	deletes a given sound from a word and says the new word	Say cup without the /k/.
Sound Substitution	replaces a specified sound in a word and says the new word or syllable	Say top; now change /t/ to /h/.
Sound-Grapheme Matching	identifies grapheme(s) associated with individual sounds	What letters say /k/?

We'd like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: Gillon (2004) and Goldsworthy (2001). Flahive & Lanza (2004) was used as a source for this chapter as well.

Concepts



Knowledge of basic concepts is an essential component of language development. Basic concepts include terms that describe position, time, equality, quantity, and comparisons. These terms are commonly included in directions at home and especially in educational settings.

Milestones

1 – 2 years

Follows simple spatial directions, such as in and on
Understands another
Uses simple directional terms, such as up and down
Uses two or three prepositions, such as on, in, or under

2 – 3 years

Distinguishes between in and under, one and many
Understands number concepts of one and two
Understands size differences, such as big/little
Understands in, off, on, under, out of, together, away from
Begins to understand time concepts of soon, later, wait
Selects three that are the same from a set of four objects
Selects the object that is not the same from four objects with three of them identical
Begins to use adjectives for color and size

3 – 4 years

Follows quantity directions empty, a lot
Follows equality directions same, both
Understands next to, beside, between
Identifies colors
Matches one-to-one
Points to object that is different from others
Uses position concepts behind, in front, around

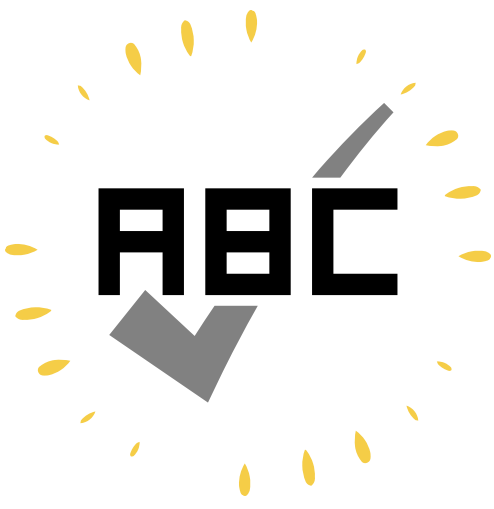
4 – 5 years

Understands comparative and superlative adjectives, such as big, bigger, biggest
Understands time concepts yesterday, today, tomorrow, first, then, next, days of the week, last week, next week
Understands different, nearest, through, thin, whole
Identifies positional concepts first, middle, last

5 – 6 years

Understands opposite concepts, such as big/little, over/under
Understands left/right
Understands number concepts up to 20
Answers "How are things the same/different?"
Uses adjectives for describing
Uses comparative adjectives, such as loud, louder
Uses yesterday and tomorrow
Uses adverb concepts backward and forward
Uses prepositions through, nearest, corner, middle
Names ordinal numbers, such as first, second, third

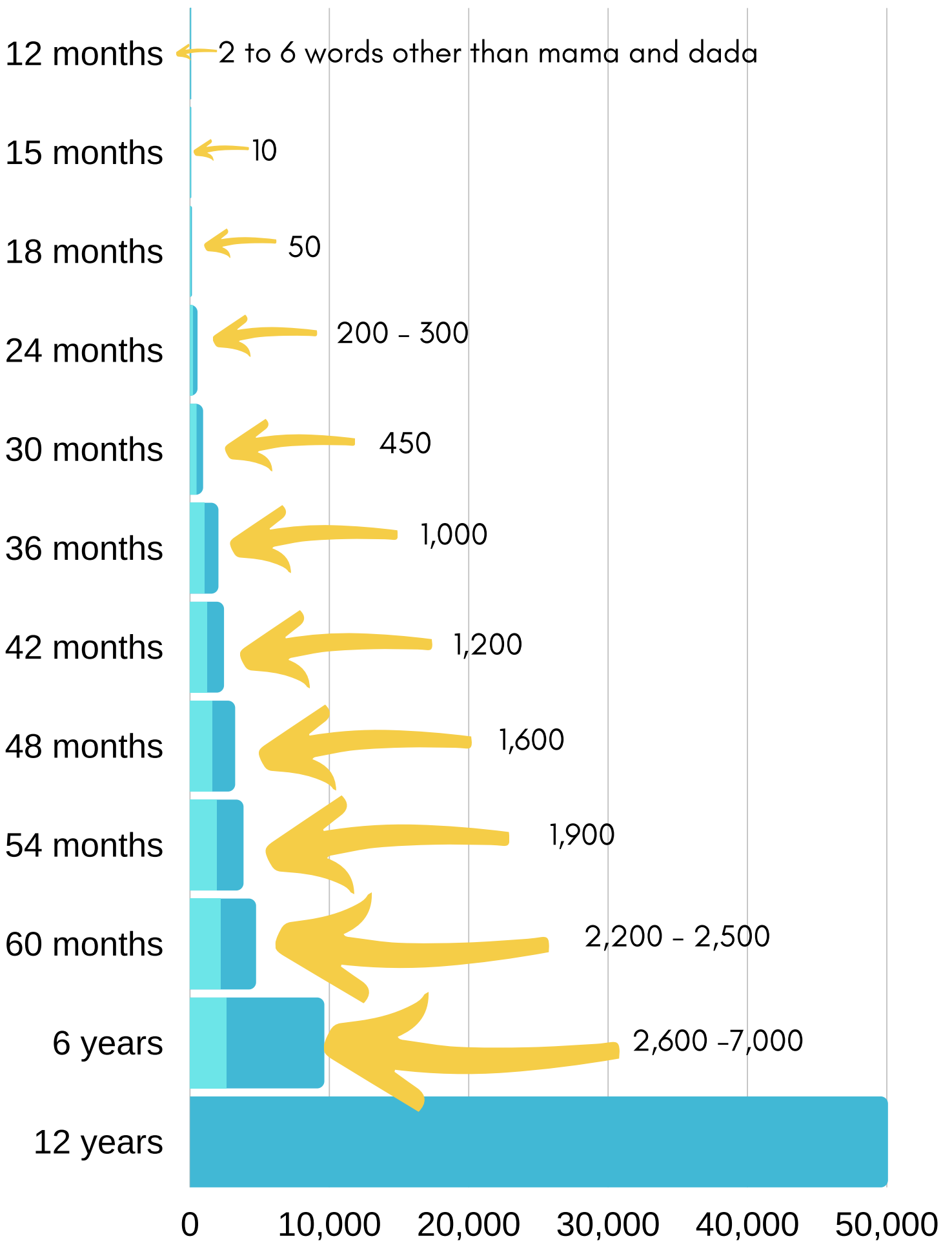
Vocabulary



A child's expressive vocabulary grows rapidly from the time of his first word at approximately 12 months, through first grade. Vocabulary increases throughout an individual's lifetime due to education, reading, and life experiences.

Age

Approximate Words in Expressive Vocabulary



We'd like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: the Child Development Institute (www.childdevelopmentinfo.com); Nicolosi, Harryman, & Kresheck (2006); and Owens (1996).

Questions



In language development, a child must be able to ask and answer questions in order to navigate a conversation and to seek and relay information. When assessing a child's ability to ask and answer questions, it is important to separate her content knowledge from her ability to ask or answer questions.

Answering Questions

Milestones

1 – 2 years

Looks in the appropriate place when asked a simple question, such as "Where is Daddy?"

Chooses an object with intentionality when asked about a choice of two, such as "Do you want milk or juice?"

2 – 3 years

Answers "where" questions, such as "Where's the ball?" by pointing to the pictured item in a book

Answers "What's this?" questions about familiar objects or pictures such as cookie or baby

Answers "yes/no" questions, possibly with a head nod or shake

3 – 4 years

Answers more complex questions logically, such as "who," "why," "where," and "how"

Answers "If...what?" questions, such as "If it starts raining, what would you do?"

Answers questions about functions of objects, such as "What are spoons for?," "Why do we have shoes?"

4 years

Answers "when" questions

Answers "how many" questions (in which the answer does not exceed four)

Asking Questions

1 – 2 years

Starts to use question forms, beginning with "What's that?"
Uses rising intonation

2 – 3 years

Asks simple ego-centric questions, such as "Where cookie?"

Asks "Where...?," "What...?," "What...doing?" questions

3 – 4 years

Asks one-word "why" questions
Uses "what," "where," "when," "how," and "whose" when asking questions

Asks "is" questions
Inverts auxiliary and subject in wh-questions, such as "Where is dad going?"

4 years

Asks the following types of questions using correct grammatical structure:

Early Infinitive: "Do you want to...?"

Future: "Are we going to ...?"

Modal can/may: "Can you...?"

We'd like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: Autism Info (www.autisminfo.com/milestones.htm#C); Beyond Therapy (http://centralfltherapy.com/?page_id=123) and http://centralfltherapy.com/?page_id=130); the Child Development Institute (www.childdevelopmentinfo.com); Nicolosi, Harryman, & Kresheck (2006); and Touhy, Brown, & Mercer-Moseley (2001).

Listening



Listening to something is not the same as hearing it. Listening skills involve a child's ability to attend to and process what he hears. These skills are integral components of a child's speech and language, social, and academic development.

Milestones

Birth – 3 months

- Discriminates speech from non-speech sounds
- Startles to loud sounds
- Quiets or excites in response to novel sounds
- Recognizes a primary caregiver's voice
- Smiles or quiets when spoken to
- Decreases or increases sucking behavior in response to sounds

3 – 6 months

- Moves eyes in direction of sounds
- Discriminates friendly and angry voices
- Reacts to changes in tone of voice
- Attends to music and toys that make sounds
- Listens to a speaker and watches a speaker's face when spoken to

6 – 12 months

- Responds to sound when a source is not visible
- Responds physically to music
- Stops an activity when name is called
- Recognizes words for common items
- Listens with increased interest to new words
- Begins to respond to simple requests, such as "Sit here"

1 – 2 years

- Follows one-step directions with cues
- Understands simple questions, such as "Where's Daddy?"
- Points to named pictures in a book
- Follows directions to find two familiar objects
- Listens to simple stories

Toddler

5 – 6 years

- Repeats sentences up to nine words in length
- Follows three-step directions
- Responds correctly to more types of sentences but may still be confused at times by more complex sentences