

Speech and Language Development

SOUND ACQUISITION

Generally, children should make the following sounds correctly by the ages indicated:

Age:

3 to 4 years	m, b, n, t, p, d, k, g, w, h, and vowels
5 to 6 years	sh, ch, l, l blends
7 years	v, j, th, s, z, r, s blends, r blends

VOCABULARY AND SENTENCES

Age:

12 to 18 months	first words	
2 years	2-word sentences	
3 years	3 to 4 word sentences	400-900 word vocabulary
5 years	5 to 6 word sentences	1500-2500 word vocabulary

After 5, the child rapidly advances. The child understands many more words than he can say. These are general guidelines. Children will vary.

FLUENCY

Hesitations in speech are normal from age three to six. Listen to your child, encourage and praise him. Don't correct him or appear anxious about his speech. Don't make him speak or recite before strangers or visitors. Let him do so if he wishes, but only then. Try to keep your own speech clear and unhurried. If you are very concerned, consult a speech and language pathologist for help.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

1. *Talk* to your child about everything. Children need a lot of verbal stimulation from infancy on. Play games with sounds and words. Your children pick up most of their vocabulary from you.
2. *Listen* to your child and expand on his language. Use well-formed sentences that are a little longer than his. Use new vocabulary.
Child: "Truck broke."
Parent: "The truck is broken. It needs a new windshield."
3. *Read* to your child frequently. Talk about pictures and situations in books. Your child learns new vocabulary, concepts and the patterns of language from being read to. Read cereal boxes, signs, everything. Use the library and make reading a part of your daily home life.

4. *Play games* with your child. He can learn coordination, how to follow rules, how to communicate with others, and new concepts.
5. *Play hospital, zoo, store, barber shop, restaurant or airport* with your child. Use puppets. These activities develop creativity and help your child learn about life situations.
6. *Classify*. Help your child make scrapbooks or sort things so he'll learn concepts of color, size, matching, comparisons, and so forth.
7. *Provide new experiences*. Take field trips, make things, cook, do science experiments. Involve your child in daily activities. Talk about all of these.
8. *Use television* to its best advantage. Limit its use to good programs and spend more time in family interaction.
9. Make language and speech fun for your child. Reinforce his attempts and praise him.
10. Concerning you child's speech and language attempts, don't allow other family members to tease, make fun of, imitate, or label him.



DON'T FORGET...

1. Talk about things you do.
2. Talk about places you go.
3. Answer questions.
4. Listen to your child.
5. Read and talk about books.
6. Tell stories together.
7. Play games with your child.
8. Play word games together.
9. Pretend with your child.
10. Praise your child.