







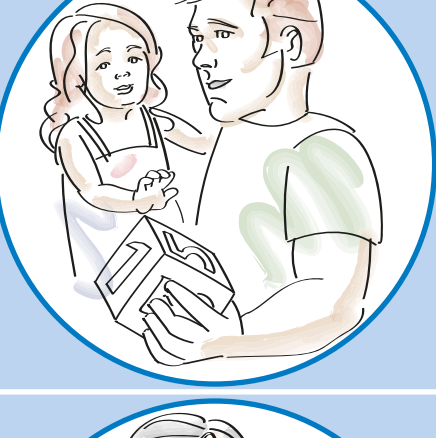
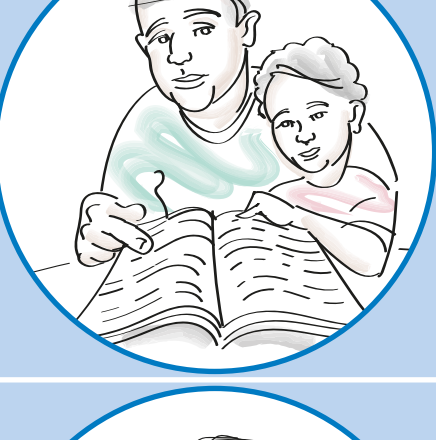
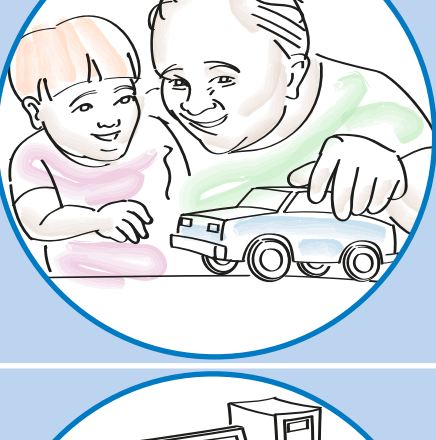
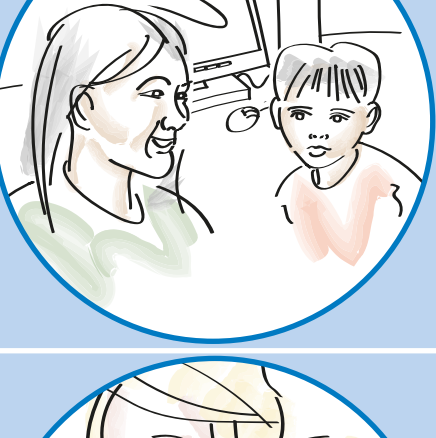

“Talking is what we need to do and I will learn it all from you”



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Stages of Speech and Language Development

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Age	Listening and attention	Understanding	Speech sounds and talk	Social skills
 Up to 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Turns toward familiar sounds.</li><li>Startled by loud noises.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recognises parents voice.</li><li>Often calmed by familiar, friendly voice.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Frequently cries especially when unhappy or uncomfortable.</li><li>Makes vocal sounds e.g. cooing, gurgling.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gazes at faces and copies facial movements e.g. sticking out tongue.</li><li>Makes eye contact for fairly long periods.</li></ul>
 3 – 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Watches face when someone talks.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows excitement at sound of approaching voices.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Makes vocal noises to get attention.</li><li>Makes sounds back when talked to.</li><li>Laughs during play.</li><li>Babbles to self.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Senses different emotions in parent's voice and may respond differently, for example smile, quieten or laugh.</li><li>Cries in different ways to express different needs.</li></ul>
 6 – 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Locates source of voice with accuracy.</li><li>Focuses on different sounds, e.g. telephone, doorbell.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understands frequently used words such as 'all gone' 'no' and 'bye bye'.</li><li>Stops and looks when hears own name.</li><li>Understands simple instructions when supported by gestures and context.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Uses speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults; says sounds like 'ba-ba', 'na-na' and 'ga-ga'.</li><li>Stops babbling when hears familiar adult voice.</li><li>Uses gestures such as waving and pointing to help communicate.</li><li>Around 12 months begins to use single words e.g. 'mummm', 'dada'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enjoys action rhymes and songs.</li><li>Tries to copy adult speech and lip movements.</li><li>Takes 'turns' in conversations (using babble).</li></ul>
 12 – 15 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attends to music and singing.</li><li>Enjoys sound-making toys/objects.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understands single words in context, e.g. cup, milk, Daddy.</li><li>Understands more words than they can say.</li><li>Understands simple instructions e.g. 'Kiss Mummy', 'give to Daddy', 'stop'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Says around 10 single words, although these may not be clear.</li><li>Reaches or points to something they want whilst making speech sounds.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Likes being with familiar adults.</li><li>Likes watching adults for short periods of time.</li></ul>
 15 – 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Listens and responds to simple information/ instructions e.g. 'Ben, put on shoes', 'Mohammed, give to Daddy'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understands a wide range of single words and some two-word phrases e.g. 'Give me', 'shoe on'.</li><li>Recognises and points to objects and pictures in books if asked.</li><li>Gives named familiar objects to adult, e.g. coat, car, apple, book.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Still babbles but uses at least 20 single words correctly, although may not be clear.</li><li>Copies gestures and words from adults.</li><li>Constant babbling and single words used during play.</li><li>Uses intonation, pitch and changing volume when 'talking'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Simple pretend play.</li><li>Plays alone, although likes to be near to familiar adult.</li><li>Although increasingly independent, happiest when near familiar adult.</li></ul>
 18 months to 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Focuses on an activity of their own choice but finds it difficult to be directed by an adult.</li><li>Use of child's name beginning to help them to attend to what an adult says e.g. 'Sarah, eat sandwiches', 'Ali, put coat on'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understanding of single words develops rapidly during this stage, anything between 200 and 500 words are known.</li><li>Understands more simple instructions e.g. 'Get Mummy's shoes', 'Get your bricks', 'Tell Dad tea is ready'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Uses up to 50 words.</li><li>Begins to put two or three words together.</li><li>Frequently asks questions e.g. the names of people and objects.</li><li>Uses speech sounds p, b, t, d, m, w.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pretend play developing with toys, such as feeding a doll or driving a car.</li><li>Becomes frustrated when unable to make self understood, this may result in tantrums.</li><li>Follows adult body language including pointing, gesture and facial expressions.</li></ul>
 2 – 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Beginning to listen to talk with interest, but easily distracted.</li><li>Listens to talk addressed to him/herself, but finds it difficult if prompts are not provided e.g. 'Stop and listen'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developing an understanding of simple concepts including in/on/under/big/little.</li><li>Understands phrases like 'Put teddy in the box'.</li><li>Understands simple 'who' and 'what' questions but not why.</li><li>Understands a simple story when supported by pictures.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Uses 300 words including descriptive language, time, space and function.</li><li>Links four to five words together.</li><li>May stutter or stammer when thinking what to say.</li><li>Able to use pronouns (me, him, she), plurals and prepositions (in, on, under).</li><li>May have difficulties saying l, r, y, f, th, s, sh, ch, j.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Holds a conversation but jumps from topic to topic.</li><li>Interested in others' play and will join in.</li><li>Expresses emotions towards adults and peers using words, not just actions.</li></ul>
 3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enjoys listening to stories.</li><li>Still finds it difficult to attend to more than one thing at a time, so can't easily listen to a speaker whilst still carrying on an activity, has to switch attention between speaker and task.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understands questions or instructions with two parts e.g. 'Get your jumper and stand by the door'.</li><li>Understands 'why' questions.</li><li>Aware of time in relation to past, present and future, e.g. 'Today is sunny, yesterday was rainy, I wonder what the weather will be like tomorrow?'.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Uses sentences of four to six words.</li><li>Uses future and past tense.</li><li>May continue to have problems with irregular words e.g. 'runned' for 'ran' and 'swimmed' for 'swam'.</li><li>Able to remember and enjoys telling long stories or singing songs.</li><li>May have difficulties saying r, j, th, ch and sh.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understands turn-taking as well as sharing with adults and peers.</li><li>Initiates conversations.</li><li>Enjoys play with peers.</li><li>Able to argue with adults or peers if they disagree – uses words, not just actions.</li></ul>
 4 – 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attention is now more flexible, the child can understand spoken instructions related to a task without stopping the activity to look at the speaker.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Able to follow simple story without pictures.</li><li>Understands instructions containing sequencing words e.g. 'first, after, last'.</li><li>Understands adjectives e.g. 'soft, hard, smooth'.</li><li>Aware of more complex humour, laughs at jokes that are told.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Uses well formed sentences, but there may still be some grammatical errors.</li><li>Easily understood by adults and peers, with only a few immaturities in speech sounds for example th, r and some consonant combinations.</li><li>Frequently asks the meaning of unfamiliar words and may use them randomly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chooses own friends.</li><li>Generally co-operative with playmates.</li><li>Able to plan construction and make believe play activities.</li><li>Takes turns in longer conversations.</li><li>Uses language to gain information, negotiate, discuss feelings/ideas and give opinions.</li></ul>