



# Learning to Talk Ages and Stages



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Ages and Stages 6 months

Your baby watches your face when you talk to them.

They play with sounds, you'll hear noises like 'bababa'.

They are starting to understand when you say things as you do them, like 'bye-bye' or 'up'.

They love games, like when you hide your face and then say 'boo!'



### TOP TIP

Talk to your baby when doing things together, changing nappies, feeding or going out.

## Ages and Stages 1 Year

Your baby will 'chat' to you and start to use some words anytime now.

Their new words might not sound like adult words, but you'll know what they mean.

They can do simple things if you ask them and gesture, like 'give it to Mummy'.

They love being with you, watching what you do, and taking turns making noises to each other.



### TOP TIP

Help your baby to listen by turning off the TV and screens when you talk and play with them.

## Ages and Stages 18 Months

Your toddler will be starting to use more and more words, around 20 of them. Although they may not sound quite right, you know what they mean.

They can find things you ask for, like pictures in a book or toys in the room.

They'll be using lots of babble and words and they may 'talk' when they are playing.

They are starting to pretend as they play with things, like holding a brick to their ear and pretending it's a phone or drinking out of a toy cup.



### TOP TIP

Help your toddler learn new words by talking about what you can see. Use the right names for things around them and talk about what they are doing.

## Ages and Stages 2 Years

Children understand longer sentences, like 'your shoes are upstairs'.

They are starting to use lots of single words, 50 or more.

They are starting to put some words together to make sentences, like 'teddy gone' or 'Daddy's ball'.

They can play alongside other children.

They might be starting to share, but it's quite hard for them.



### TOP TIP

Help your child learn new words and sentences by adding a word to what you have heard them say. If they say 'cat' you can say 'yes, the cat's sleeping'.

## Ages and Stages 3 Years

Children are using longer sentences like, 'I saw Nana' or 'I'm gonna get a toy car'.

Children may stumble over their words and repeat themselves.

They are beginning to understand question words like 'who?', 'what?' and 'where?'.

They enjoy playing games with other children and know all about taking turns.



### TOP TIP

Give your child time to talk with you. If you are busy, say so and go back to them when you have more time to listen and join in with them.

## Ages and Stages 4 Years

What your child says can be understood even by people who don't know them well, but they might still find some sounds hard to make, like 'l', 'y', 'sh' and 'ch'.

Children ask lots of questions, especially 'why...?'.

They are beginning to understand colour, number and time words, like 'show me three fingers', 'we are going tomorrow'.

They can use their words to tell you about how they are feeling and about their ideas.



### TOP TIP

Talk with your child about what they are doing rather than asking them lots of questions. Questions can make a child feel pressured to talk.

## Ages and Stages 5 Years

Children can stop what they are doing and listen to you when you say their name.

They understand long sentences with more information, like 'find me the orange and black pens'.

They get most of the sounds in words right, although longer words like 'computer' may still be a bit hard.

They can use language in lots of different ways, like to talk about their feelings, to persuade others or to disagree.



### TOP TIP

Look at story books together and talk about the pictures. Sharing books with your child helps them to learn new words.



To find out more about how to help your child's talking, go to [www.gov.wales/talkwithme](http://www.gov.wales/talkwithme)  
If you have any worries about your child's talking, please contact your child's Health Visitor.  
For more information about I CAN, please visit [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)