

the early years toolkit

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Steps to Talking

Developmental Guidelines

At 18 - 24 months children can usually:

- ✓ Use 20 plus words and join two or more words together e.g. "more juice", "mummy up". Not all words are clear.
- ✓ Understand more words than they can say.
- ✓ Point to single items on request e.g. "Show me your nose?", "Where's daddy?".
- ✓ Begin to understand simple commands e.g. "Shut the door", "Get your shoes", "Brush teddy's hair" but may still need adult support e.g. pointing and modelling.
- ✓ Join in with action songs.
- ✓ Sit and listen to a story with interest.

At two - three years old children can usually:

- ✓ Use and understand 200 plus words including "in", "on", "under", "don't", "can't".
- ✓ Understand concepts such as: big | little, hot | cold, wet | dry.
- ✓ Begin to ask lots of questions.
- ✓ Uses 3-5 word sentences such as "Daddy sit down", "I don't like it", "I want (*the) big cake", "What's that boy doing?" (*may not use this yet).
- ✓ Can identify objects by their use e.g "Which one do we sleep in?".
- ✓ Speech may still be unclear to strangers but is usually understood by familiar adults by 3 years.
- ✓ Begin to play imaginatively with other children and understands sharing.

At three - fours years old children can usually:

- ✓ Use complete sentences with some grammatical errors e.g "falled over", "mouses".
- ✓ Talk about past events and experiences although timeframes are usually not accurate (i.e confuses 'last year' with 'yesterday').
- ✓ Constantly asks lots of questions, especially 'why?' questions.
- ✓ Speech is mostly clear with a few immaturities still present.
- ✓ Understands basic humour and is beginning to tell funny stories and 'jokes'.
- ✓ Play pretend games with other children (e.g doctors and nurses) with more depth and detail.
- ✓ Use language to take turns, share, have discussions and argue with other children and adults.