



baby. monitor

language development guide

a guide to how your baby's communication skills will develop during the first three years

this calendar belongs to:

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disclaimer

Supervision to regulate appropriate and reasonable actions for your child's age and skill level is recommended at all times. Every child develops at their own pace, so information describing milestones and expectations refer to an average age by which most monolingual, English speaking children will obtain the listed skill. The milestones will provide you with an overall idea of when you may expect your child to gain certain skills. If your child does not gain the skill, it does not mean your child has a disorder. If you have concerns, speak with your primary care physician or utilize one of the re-

sources listed at the end of this calendar to allow a professional to help and guide you. Keep in mind, this calendar focuses on development of language skills, but there are other important skill areas such as physical health, emotional, attention and cognitive skills. References, resources and information listed have been provided with every effort to locate copyright information and/or permission for use. The publisher and authors cannot be held responsible for injury, damages or mishaps within the use of or because of the activities suggested and described within this calendar.

components of communication

Speech, language and social skills are the tools we use to communicate with each other.

Speech is the spoken means of communication. Speech includes articulation (production of sounds utilizing precisely coordinated muscle actions of our tongues, lips, jaw and vocal tract to produce the recognizable sounds that make up one's native language), voice (the use of vocal folds to produce sound), and fluency (the rate and rhythm of speech.)

Language is a set of shared rules that allow people to exchange their ideas in a meaningful way. Language can be verbal, written, signed, gestured or expressed within the use of body movements/facial expressions. "Expressive Language" refers to how one uses

their spoken language to communicate their ideas. "Receptive Language" refers to how one understands the language spoken around them. Language skills include not only understanding what words mean (vocabulary), but also how to put words together correctly (grammar), and the social rules for using language in different situations.

Social Skills are the use of communication skills and understanding of other people to build relationships, solve problems and interact with others effectively and appropriately. This includes social rules that guide how language is used for different purposes or how to change language to match the needs of the listener or context. Social rules for language may vary across cultures.

introduction

Congratulations on your new baby and welcome to the world of parenthood! Becoming a parent is a joyful and exciting experience, but it can also be overwhelming and challenging. Similar to using a baby monitor to listen to your child, this guide will help you monitor and enhance your child's language development and take appropriate action if there are any concerns. The Baby Monitor Language Development Guide is designed in calendar form to help track your child's development by month while offering fun age-appropriate activities to support continued growth.

As your child reaches new milestones, you can write them on the calendar. This keeps your child's developmental information in one easy location while creating a memory keepsake. This calendar can also be used as a tool and a starting point to discuss your child's growth and development with your pediatrician. Keep in mind that all children grow and develop at their own rate, but at least this tool will let you review some typical and general expectations each month.

Each month you will find activities to do with your child. The ideas are specific to that month's development and upcoming milestones. Here we would like to give you general tips on speaking and interacting with your little one.

1. Put your body on their level when interacting with them. If your child is on the floor, get down on the floor with your child. If your child is sitting in a highchair, sit down so you are eye-to-eye. This gives your child a great view of your face and mouth while playing!

2. Talk with your child frequently! Starting at birth have conversations with your child; name items you are using or things you see around you.

3. Speak slowly and give your child time to respond. Speaking in a steady, paced rate gives your child more time to understand your words,

tone and facial expressions. Children often need longer pauses to understand that it is their turn to respond.

4. Respond to all attempts to communicate. From early babbles to three word sentences, acknowledge your child's sounds and respond. This encourages more talking and expanding of ideas!

5. Use simple language with correct grammar. Use words that your child can understand in simple sentences they can use. If your child says, "Daddy car!" You can say, "There is Daddy's car!" If your child says "wawa" for water, avoid saying "wawa". Instead praise his attempts and respond with the real word "water" to talk about water.

birth to 1 month

what's happening now

- Alerts, perks or startles to sounds
- Makes non-meaningful grunts and noises
- Uses cries to express discomfort and hunger
- Increases or decreases speed of sucking in response to sound

activities to do with your baby

- Your response to your baby's noise-making lays the foundation for language. Respond to noises frequently by commenting on sounds and actions baby makes. TALK, TALK, TALK to your baby.
- Singing and reading to your baby is soothing and allows baby to learn your voice (ideal while rocking, swaddling and comforting).
- Talk to your baby as you go through your daily routines: diaper changing, feeding and bathing.

be concerned if

- If your baby failed the New-born Hearing Screening, follow up with your pediatrician or consult the references attached
- Seems to have overly floppy or stiff muscles
- Cannot suck or drink for more than five minutes
- Never responds to loud unfamiliar noises

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1 to 2 months

what's happening now

- Begins to watch speaker's mouth
- Reacts to slowly disappearing object by following with eyes
- Makes eye contact with adults
- Seems to recognize parent voice and, if crying, quiets when hears parents' voices
- Coos and makes pleasure sounds

activities to do with your baby

- Simple 'games' can improve your baby's gaze and coos, such as tickling or 'This Little Piggy'. Lay baby on your lap so you're looking down and smiling at baby and mirroring facial expressions.
- Talk about what you are doing as you run errands, work and play. High-pitched singsong talk called "motherese" helps baby tune in to words and phrases.

be concerned if

- If failed newborn screening(s) - follow up NOW
- Does not respond to loud sounds
- Is quiet and does not make cooing or pleasure sounds
- Struggles to finish feeding in less than 45 minutes
- Does not cry when typically expected

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2 to 3 months

what's happening now

- Calms in response to parent or primary caregiver's voice
- Begins to smile socially in response to people or familiar voices
- May imitate some facial expressions
- Turns head towards direction of sound
- May begin some babble sounds: vowels a, e, i, o, u (Ex: "puh", "mah")
- May begin to laugh

activities to do with your baby

- Sleep may be becoming more of a routine, so this is a great time to begin nightly bedtime stories, songs and/or prayers.
- Imitate your baby's babble as a mini-conversation, and even demonstrate new babbles. Use babbles beginning with t and d (Ex: "tee tee, tah, do do...")
- Make faces with your baby by puckering, smacking your lips, or sticking out your tongue. Take time to smile and laugh with your baby.

be concerned if

- Does not smile at anyone
- Does not notice own hands
- Does not respond to loud noises
- Does not pay attention to or react to new faces
- Seems very upset by new faces or surroundings

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3 to 4 months

what's happening now

- Babbling begins to have a rise and fall rhythm to it - changing tone
- Produces p, b, and m sounds consistently in babble (Ex: "ma", "ba")
- Imitates facial expressions: smiles, smacks, blows, etc.
- Begins to laugh in response to other's actions or voice
- Shows excited movements in response to a familiar person or object (Ex: kicks and moves arms)

activities to do with your baby

- Peek-a-boo and finger plays make for fun interactions. Try reciting nursery rhymes such as "Pat-a-Cake", "Itsy Bitsy Spider", or "5 Little Monkeys".
- Practice turn taking by shaking or patting toys and then giving the toys to your child to shake or pat.
- When you are cooking, cleaning or doing daily chores, position baby to see what you're doing and talk to them about it! TALK, TALK, TALK and be sure to leave pauses for your child to babble and respond.

be concerned if

- Does not babble
- Does not bring object to mouth
- Never smiles when sees parent or caregiver
- Does not respond to familiar voices
- Does not calm in response to familiar person or object

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4 to 5 months

what's happening now

- Begins to respond differently to "happy" vs. "angry" voices
- Notices that toys (such as rattles) make sound and becomes excited by the sound
- Vocalizes or babbles to show happiness or displeasure
- Often explores toys or objects by using mouth

activities to do with your baby

- Hold two objects slightly out of reach of your baby, and see which one baby reaches for to play with.
- Partially hide a toy under a blanket to play "peek-a-boo" with objects.
- Make a babble or cooing sound, and wait for baby to make a sound back. If baby responds, change your sound and wait again. Go back and forth making different sounds such as "oooo", "aah", "naanaa", "mmm".

be concerned if

- Does not babble
- Does not bring object to mouth
- Does not turn head to locate sound
- Does not watch objects as they move
- Shows little to no affection for caregiver
- Rejects snuggles

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5 to 6 months

what's happening now

- Begins to imitate gestures such as patting toys or shaking head
- Initiates "talking" and seeks attention by babbling to caregiver
- Often responds or reacts to a "NO!" by becoming startled or stopping the current action
- Bangs objects during play
- Begins to more skillfully reach for objects during play

activities to do with your baby

- Read books with clear, bright and large pictures. Point to the pictures in the book and name them.
- Be a "sports commentator"- talk about everything you and your little one do! Ex: "Time for lunch. Get the bowl. Get your spoon. I've got applesauce. Let's eat!" The more you say, the more baby begins to learn about words, sounds, and conversation skills.

be concerned if

- Does not produce vowel sounds, such as "ah", "eh", or "oh", while babbling
- Does not vocalize when happy or upset
- Does not smile at people
- Does not imitate sounds or facial expressions

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6 to 7 months

what's happening now

- Smiles and laughs during play times
- Enjoys social games like peek-a-boo and smiling in the mirror
- Begins to recognize family members' names by looking for the person when they hear the name spoken
- Their babbling includes both long and short sounds such as "bahbah ti mamama"
- Begins imitating gestures such as waving, clapping or nodding
- May begin to recognize and respond to own name

activities to do with your baby

- Read the same books over and over. This helps your child develop interest in books and begin to connect pictures with words.
- Make silly faces with your child, and see if child makes them back.
- Use your your child's name and fun tidbits in a song. You can make one up or use a familiar tune. Ex: "Baby Joshua had a truck, E-I-E-I-O"

be concerned if

- Does not reach for objects that are near
- Does not respond to sounds
- It is difficult to comfort or console
- Has overly floppy or stiff muscles
- Does not laugh or squeal during play

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7 to 8 months

what's happening now

- Responds to the request "come here" by leaning in, reaching up or moving toward you
- Uses gestures and vocalizations to show dislike or refusal (ex: shaking head no)
- Searches for partially hidden objects during play, such as a toy placed under a blanket
- Looks for toys that have fallen
- Increasing emotional bond or affection to caregiver

activities to do with your baby

- Continue to be a "sports commentator"- talk about everything you do! Ex: "It's bath time. Turn on the water and fill up the tub. The water is warm." Talk about actions, descriptions, and functions.
- If child tries to communicate an idea, such as "no", give them a new or better way to say their idea. If child pushes away an item, show child how to shake head "no".
- When your child looks at or reaches for a toy, tell your child the name of the toy.

be concerned if

- Does not roll over in either direction
- Does not babble
- Does not try to gain attention through actions
- Ears are red or child is frequently pulling at own ears with fever (may be a sign of an ear infection)

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8 to 9 months

what's happening now

- Shouts or vocalizes to gain an adult's attention
- Touches a toy or an adult to restart an activity during play
- Maintains attention to a person talking
- Responds to "no" most of the time by stopping action
- Uses raised arms to signal "pick me up"
- Babbles in short and long strings of sound with varying pitch

activities to do with your baby

- Play the imitation game! When your baby babbles to you, babble or talk back to baby. Take turns going back and forth in a pretend conversation.
- Sing "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands" with your child. Change the verses to include other emotions (Ex: mad- stomp your feet, sad- say boohoo, tired- yawn and stretch)

be concerned if

- Does not enjoy social or back-and-forth play (peek-a-boo)
- Does not imitate sounds you make (Ex: Ooooh, bahbah, moo, uh-oh)
- Does not seem to recognize family members or familiar people
- Does not ever respond to own name

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9 to 10 months

what's happening now

- Stops an activity when name is called
- Actively looks at pictures in a book
- Babbles along with familiar songs
- Waves in response to "bye-bye"
- May be shy or show some fear of new people
- Plays with objects beyond just mouthing or banging them

activities to do with your baby

- Your baby is beginning to recognize him/herself. Support this by playing in the mirror, singing songs, making silly faces and making silly noises or speech-like sounds.
- Play "Name That Sound". Ex: "Oh, I hear the phone"; "Listen, a dog!"; "I hear Daddy!" This associates sounds heard with words to build an understanding of the child's surrounding world.
- Encourage your baby to "talk" on the phone. Hold the phone to baby's ear and say "Say hi to Grandma!"

be concerned if

- Does not babble or make any sounds
- Does not appear to enjoy being around other people or children
- Does not imitate gestures such as shaking head or waving
- Avoids eye contact during social play or other interactions. Often looks down or away from others
- Struggling with transitions into more solid foods

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10 to 11 months

what's happening now

- Looks at or moves toward family members, familiar people, pets, or familiar objects when they are named
- Gives or looks at an object when object is named (Ex: When you say "Give me the ball", baby looks at or gives the ball)
- Covers and uncovers own face during peek-a-boo
- May show some initial fear of separation from parents or care giver

activities to do with your baby

- Encourage social play by playing games such as pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo, tickle, and singing.
- Look through pictures of family members or familiar people, and name them.
- Respond to gestures your child uses as communication, such as waving, holding arms up, and pointing. Give the child a word to use with the gesture. Ex: If your child is holding their arms up, say, "Up! You want up!" as you pick child up.

be concerned if

- Does not search for hidden objects
- Does not look at or attend to a person speaking
- Shows symptoms of ear infection (signs include: red ears, pulling at ears, fever, increased fussiness, trouble sleeping, and/or a decreased appetite)

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11 to 12 months

what's happening now

- Imitates consonant and vowel sounds together (ex: "boo", "papa")
- Consistently waves "hi" & "bye"
- Looks at a person who is saying child's name
- Resists someone taking away a toy
- Can sometimes follow simple commands: stop, go, sit, stand-up, give me
- Extends an arm to show an object

activities to do with your baby

- Your child may use fun "sounds" before using true words. While playing, make fun sounds for them to imitate. For a truck, make a "brrrooom" sound, for a train, "choo-choo", for a fire truck, "woo-woo", and for a car, "beep-beep".
- When looking at animals, name them and practice making their sounds!
- Get on the floor to play with your child. When you are at the child's level the child can better hear you, see you, and learn from you!

be concerned if

- Does not appear to recognize familiar people or family members
- Does not pay attention to pictures in books
- Does not look at/for familiar people or objects when named
- Does not crawl
- Does not babble in short and long strings of sound with varying pitch

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12 to 13 months

what's happening now

- Vocalizes when another person calls child
- Uses exclamations such as "Oh, no!"
- Spontaneously says one or two words meaningfully such as "mama", "dada", "ball", or "dog"
- Imitates simple actions in play such as stirring with a spoon
- Begins pointing at objects of interest

activities to do with your baby

- Your child is learning to understand new words almost every day. You can help by: speaking slowly in short sentences (1 to 3 words only), holding objects or toys by your face when naming them, and talking often. (Ex: "I have ball")
- Play a word imitation game by pointing to Mom, Dad, and favorite items, naming them and encouraging your child to imitate you. Ex: "Mama! That's Mama. You say, Mama!" Praise child for any attempt. The words do not have to be perfect!

be concerned if

- Does not use gestures to communicate (ex: holding arms up, pointing, waving)
- Does not point to objects or pictures
- Loses skills that he/she once had
- Can not stand up when given support (ex: holding your hands)

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13 to 14 months

what's happening now

- Vocalizes, gestures or uses a word to change an activity or call attention to an object or need
- Imitates familiar words
- Points to two basic body parts on another person or on self (ex: head, belly, feet, mouth)
- Shakes head "no" to protest
- Performs for social attention—may blow a kiss or give high-five to make an adult smile

activities to do with your baby

- In the bath sing, "Head, shoulders, knees and toes" while washing up. Name or sing about the body parts as you wash them.
- Bath time is also a great time to practice imitating! You can practice imitating actions, sounds and words. Splash the water, clap, pop bubbles, make silly sounds and have fun imitating each other!

be concerned if

- Does not imitate sounds or words when they are said by an adult
- Does not have any single words (ex: "mama" or "dada")
- Does not have at least one true word (ex: "mama", "dada", "ball", "dog")
- Avoids interactions with adults or children by looking away or moving away
- Struggling to use an open cup, straw or item other than the bottle

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14 to 15 months

what's happening now

- Consistently varies pitch when babbling
- Uses some true words in babbling (ex: "Daba ta mama ma" or "papapa ball eeh")
- Begins to imitate other children's actions
- Responds to other children's vocalizations
- Feeds others in pretend or real food interactions
- Initiates turn taking activities such as rolling a ball

activities to do with your baby

- When reading, have child point to pictures (ex.: "Show me the cat. Where's the car?").
- Sing "Old McDonald", and practice making animal sounds.
- Respond to attempts at new words. Your child is now starting to use more true words and less babble. "Banana" may come out as "nana". After child's best attempt, say the real word again so your child can hear the true way to say the word one more time.

be concerned if

- Does not use words, sounds or gestures to get adult attention
- Does not babble or have at least one true word
- Does not appear to understand simple directions such as: "up", "give me", "stop", "uh-oh"
- Does not watch other children
- Does not enjoy social play

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15 to 16 months

what's happening now

- Says or imitates 5-10 words
- Begins to make a few animal sounds when asked
- Imitates patting or feeding a baby doll during play
- Pays attention to pictures and can point to common pictures when named (ex: "show me dog")

activities to do with your baby

- Sing songs that involve hand motions like "Wheels on the Bus" or 'Itsy-bitsy spider'. Help your child do the motions along with the song! Leave some pauses, and see if child can fill it in with either a hand motion or word.
- When at the grocery store, label items you see and buy, encouraging child to imitate you. Naming items your child sees and touches helps build vocabulary!

be concerned if

- Does not appear to know the function of common objects (ex: does not know that you eat with a spoon or brush hair with a brush)
- Does not pay attention to pictures in books
- Cannot point to any basic body parts when named (ex: head, feet, belly, eyes, mouth)

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16 to 17 months

what's happening now

- Asks one-word questions such as "Up?" "Go?" or "That?"
- Can point to two common actions in pictures (ex: sleeping, eating, running)
- Enjoys imitating adult's behavior in play—will try to "talk" on a phone, sweep, push a shopping cart, "drive"

activities to do with your baby

- Children love to be just like mommy and daddy! Encourage your child to imitate your "adult" actions in play by giving child a toy phone to talk on, toy tools to help daddy "fix things" or brush to brush a baby doll's hair.
- Practice back and forth play by rolling a ball together. Talk about what you are doing, and give them words and gestures to use during play (ex: "My turn", "Your turn", "roll ball", "ready, set, go!")

be concerned if

- Does not point or show things to other people
- Is not using single words meaningfully
- Does not imitate an adult or another child
- Child tends to prefer being alone and does not use toys for their intended purpose ((Ex.: Focusing on one small part of a toy; spinning or mouthing toys instead of using them functionally))

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17 to 18 months

what's happening now

- Uses common action words or directives such as: "up", "down", "go", "jump", "eat", "out", "in"
- Hums or tries to sing along to familiar songs
- Can find a familiar object in another room if asked to get it (ex: "go get the ball" or "go get shoes!")
- Identifies at least 5 body parts or clothing items by pointing when named

activities to do with your baby

- Put on child's favorite music and encourage child to sing and dance along. Dance and sing yourself to increase the fun!
- When getting dressed, talk about the clothes your child is wearing and body parts. "Time for pants. Pants go on legs! One leg, two legs!" Using a specific set of phrases consistently will help your child learn (ex: "Put on socks" "Take off socks"). Soon your child will say it himself.

be concerned if

- Continues to hold onto or bang toys together rather than play with them as intended (ex: bangs blocks instead of building or holds car instead of pushing it)
- Cannot walk independently
- Does not notice when caregiver leaves the room
- Cannot identify any objects or actions in pictures
- Is not using gestures or words to meet his/her needs

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18 to 19 months

what's happening now

- Begins to use consonant sounds t, d, n, m, p, b in words
- Beginning to put two words together such as "mommy go" or "all gone"
- Frequently uses at least 15 words meaningfully
- Understands at least 50 words
- Brings toys to an adult to initiate play or to ask for help

activities to do with your baby

- While going for a walk, talk about what is going on around you: the people, animals, actions, colors, and objects!
- Now that your little one is beginning to use more single words, delay your responses to gestures or grunting. Model the use of words for them. (ex: child goes: "eh, eh"[with arms up], and adult says: "Up! Up! Tell me "up!") Wait a moment as the child may imitate. Say it again as you pick him up. Pair the word with the action.

be concerned if

- Not using at least 10 words meaningfully
- Cannot point to 3-4 body parts when named
- Does not attempt to imitate words said by an adult
- Continues to drool frequently; is often seen with an open mouth

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19 to 20 months

what's happening now

- Starts to use two-word questions such as "Go out?", "Eat cookie?"
- Makes environmental sounds often such as animal sounds, cars, vehicles and actions (ex: crashing sound)
- Understands "no", "stop", "don't"
- Develops new pretend play ideas such as flying an airplane or cleaning

activities to do with your baby

- This is a time to work on environmental sounds, matching the sound to the object. Choose toys such as cars or animals, and show your child how to make their sounds while you play (ex: "Here comes the truck, bbbrrrrrrrrrr, beep-beep")
- Play a "Stop and Go" game with actions like run, dance, march, or jump. You say the action, and let child begin. Then shout "Stop", and wait a moment. Then shout "Go", and do it again.
- Practice pretending without objects. Hold your arms out and pretend to be a plane, or crawl and bark to be a dog.

be concerned if

- Does not use a variety of vowel sounds in speech (ex: frequently uses a single vowel like 'uh' in most words)
- Does not imitate words or actions when heard or seen
- Loses vocabulary words or play skills once had
- Does not seem to react differently around strangers vs. familiar people, or appears unaware that a person is a stranger

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20 to 21 months

what's happening now

- Begins to sing phrases from familiar songs such as "down the spout" during "Itsy-bitsy spider"
- Uses own name to talk about themselves (ex: "Paul, cookie!")
- Points to pictures of nouns, actions (ex: run, jump), and describes words (big, dirty) in a book when asked
- Begins to dance during pretend play

activities to do with your baby

- Sing with your child; you start the song, and let child finish or join in on key phrases (ex: "The wheels on the bus go ____").
- Make a scrapbook using a variety of pictures of your child. Talk about what your child is doing, using child's name frequently. "Paul is swimming." "Paul's bear". Include pictures of favorite items such as clothes, toys, family members, friends, school or places you visit often.

be concerned if

- Shows little or no response to simple routine directions (ex: "sit", "come here", "stop")
- Noticeable ongoing hoarse or sore voice sound
- Uses a limited number of sounds in words—attempts at words should contain at least 4 of the following consonant sounds: m, b, p, n, t, d, h, w

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21 to 22 months

what's happening now

- Often changes tone of voice and volume to change the meaning of the phrase (ex: "MY cookie!" vs. "my cookie?")
- Uses words to call attention to things that may be far away such as an airplane in the sky, a fire truck down the street or a billboard
- Often follows one-step directions ("jump", "clap", "get shoes")

activities to do with your baby

- When going on a walk, point out things you hear or see that are far away, ask your child to look for things, too. "I see truck!" "Can you find a car?"
- During pretend play, use a happy, mad, sad, loud, quiet and questioning voices. Changing your voice helps your child learn about the meanings of tone and emotions.
- Act out events from a simple storybook or song like "Going on a Bear Hunt" or "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed."

be concerned if

- Does not enjoy playing near other children, may appear to be fearful or avoids other children
- Shows very few play ideas and frequently becomes upset when play actions are changed or interrupted
- Has difficulties with eating a variety of foods and trouble gaining weight

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22 to 23 months

what's happening now

- Strangers are able to understand their speech around 25% to 50% of the time
- Will request common food by name (want banana, want pizza)
- Begins to use "mine" to refer to own possessions
- Gives or gets items when requested (toys, clothes, food)
- Will try to play instruments during play

activities to do with your baby

- Choose a word or topic of the week, such as a color, shape, descriptor or action and talk about it all week long. If red is your theme, point out red toys, use red crayons, wear red clothes and eat red foods.
- Engage in pretend play. Have your child rock the baby doll, feed the baby doll, and put the baby doll to bed.

be concerned if

- Appears frustrated when trying to speak and is not understood
- Frequently has ear infections
- Continues to drool frequently and excessively
- Does not learn new words on a regular basis
- Does not make comments or requests on own
- Only speaks by imitation or when told to say something

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23 to 24 months

what's happening now

- Understandable/clear use of at least four of these consonant sounds in words: m, b, p, n, t, d, h, w
- Will begin to have a vocabulary explosion gaining 150-300 words by 24 months of age
- Begins to understand some pronouns like "he", "she", "her" (Ex: "Give the ball to her")
- Will frequently do hand motions with songs or hand games on their own

activities to do with your baby

- Help increase two-word phrases by expanding on what child says. If your child says, "ball", say, "roll ball" if your child says, "cookie" tell child, "Eat cookie. I eat cookie."
- Have your child deliver simple messages for you. "Daddy, dinner time!" "Wake up!" or "Mommy, phone!"
- Guide decisions and requests by giving simple choices. "Do you want pizza or a hot dog?" "Bath or shower?" or "Red shirt or blue shirt?"

be concerned if

- Does not ever enjoy or rejects simple games with parents or caregivers (tickling, chase, peek-a-boo)
- Uses a limited number of words (less than 50)
- Only uses phrases learned from TV or books that have no meaning or purpose (Ex: "To Infinity and Beyond" or "Miska Moska"). Appears to talk just to entertain self rather than communicate with others.

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24 to 25 months

what's happening now

- Recognizes family members' names and looks for them (Ex: "Where's Chad?")
- Repeats or imitates words heard in adult conversation
- Has names or labels for all favorite toys, foods, pets or other objects
- Identifies major body parts and clothes by pointing at them when you name them

activities to do with your baby

- Make a picture book with family and friends' pictures. Ask, "Who's this?", and talk about who they are, what they look like, what they like to do and where they live.
- Play "copycat". You say a phrase and have child repeat it back to you! Even try tricky 'tongue twisters' or tough words (Ex: "See Sue swing" or "helicopter")
- When reading books, ask questions about what you see in the pictures: body parts, clothes, colors and shapes.

be concerned if

- Vowels (a, e, i, o, u) sound distorted, unclear or inconsistent in speech
- Uses limited consonants when speaking
- Uses less than 75 words
- Does not consistently turn when child's name is called, "Stop, John!" or "Sally, no!"

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25 to 26 months

what's happening now

- Carries out simple/routine two-step directions (Ex: "Go to your room and get a diaper.")
- Uses sounds in play to animate objects (Ex: "vroom" for a car, "moo" for a cow)
- Uses noun + verb phrases such as "Daddy, go!" and verb + noun phrases such as "Throw ball!"

activities to do with your baby

- Play 'Simon Says'. Tell child one or two actions to do after each command is given (Ex: "Simon says: stomp your feet and touch your nose" or "Simon says: dance")
- Pretend play is important! Get on the floor, and pretend to be animals, cars or a object in motion (Ex: pretend to swim, drive, or fly). Talk about what you are doing and where you are going.
- Read stories, and take time to ask about objects in the story, like: "What do you do with a shovel, an apple, etc.?"

be concerned if

- Still speaking with single sounds or syllables for a majority of words (Ex: "Wa" used to ask for water)
- Continues to frequently drool
- Stops using words he/she used to be able to say
- Appears to not understand simple words or concepts
- Does not play with toys in a way most children do (Ex: child is spinning blocks vs. stacking them)

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26 to 27 months

what's happening now

- Performs/imitates adult actions during playtime (Ex: cleans baby doll's face, puts hand on hip)
- Points to four different actions when they are named using a picture (Ex: can identify who is sleeping in the picture, who is running in the picture, etc.)
- Uses action words (Ex: Sleeping, Go bye-bye)
- Asks questions by changing tone like "My bear?" and simple "Wh-" questions such as "Where ball?"

activities to do with your baby

- Play 'Follow the Leader'. You start an action, and your child will follow along. This is a great time to ask, "What are we doing?" to talk about actions. (Ex: stomp, march, jump, dance and more!)
- Talk to your child about your daily routines so your child learns the words and sequences. For example, "This is a can opener. I will open the beans and then pour them into the pot."
- While reading, add more to the story by telling your child details about what you can see in the picture.

be concerned if

- Consistently drops consonants or sounds at the end of words (Ex: "Dah" for "Dog")
- Not learning new word(s) each week/month
- Avoids children and prefers to play alone
- Does not make eye contact or look at others when speaking or being spoken to

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27 to 28 months

what's happening now

- Uses toys appropriately and with imagination
- Understands simple descriptions like size (big/little) and quality (wet/dry or hot/cold)
- Frequently uses two to three word phrases
- Uses pronouns such as "I", "my", "me", "it"

activities to do with your baby

- Make an "opposites poster". Tear out pictures from old magazines or catalogs and match up images that represent opposites. Use the poster to talk about up/down, hot/cold, big/little, and more.
- When driving or walking outside, play 'I Spy' and say, "I see...", "What do you see?"
- Read and have child tell you something about each page. (Ex: Who is that? Where is he? What is he doing?)
- Sing simple songs and nursery rhymes

be concerned if

- Not using simple two word phrases
- Does not point to objects to draw the adult's attention to an item
- Cannot perform simple actions when told (Ex: "clap", "jump")
- Any loss of once established vocabulary and/or loss of understanding concepts

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28 to 29 months

what's happening now

- Will play beside another child, watch child's actions and may imitate or 'show off' to child
- Responds to simple questions such as "Where's the puppy?"
- Understands location concepts like in/out, on/off, up/down
- Says their own name, holds up fingers to show age and/or will say gender

activities to do with your baby

- Play 'Hide and Go Seek' with stuffed animals or toys. One person hides the object and then prompt child asking "Is it...?" (Ex: under, on, in, behind)
- Read stories and ask "Where?" questions about them such as "The princess is sleeping. Where do you sleep?"
- Make a picture book or poster all about your child. It will help your child learn his/her name, age and things that are important.

be concerned if

- There is limited vocabulary development (less than 100 words)
- Unfamiliar people (not close friends/family) cannot understand child's speech OR speech is often not understood by familiar people
- Poor eye contact when speaking and/or avoids eye contact
- Cries, acts-out or throws tantrums when trying to speak or when not understood

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29 to 30 months

what's happening now

- Uses two-word phrases with negatives (Ex.: "No eat", "Not mine", "Don't go")
- Learning many new words each week, and vocabulary is 'exploding'
- Listens to and enjoys longer stories/books
- Begins to use words to solve problems instead of physical actions such as pushing, hitting, etc.

activities to do with your baby

- Make a 'NO Bag'. Fill a bag with household item containers that are used up to practice the word "no". Use things like empty toilet paper rolls, tissue boxes, empty cereal boxes, egg cartons, etc. Then practice saying "No eggs," and talk about where you could get more and what you do with the items.
- Help your child tear out pictures from old magazines. Then have child tell you about the pictures. Ask lots of questions and give lots of details.

be concerned if

- Little response to directions, instructions and/or requests
- Does not imitate adult actions in play or has limited pretending skills when playing
- Is not combining nouns and verbs (Ex: "Mommy drive", "I play")
- Shows frustration when not understood

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30 to 31 months

what's happening now

- Refers to self by pronouns consistently (Ex: "I", "me" and "my")
- Identifies four objects by their use when shown a picture (Ex: "Which one do you eat with?")
- Responds to greetings consistently
- During playtime, has the toys participate in pretend conversations/dialogue

activities to do with your baby

- Make a 'Mystery Bag'. Fill a bag with all different household items. When you pull out an item, ask your child "What do you do with this (name of item)?" Talk about the function of objects such as a spoon, tape, shoes, toothpaste, and more.
- Make puppets from old socks or lunch bags, and practice having conversations by having your puppet and your child's puppet talk.

be concerned if

- No notable vocabulary growth and/or loss of once used vocabulary
- Does not refer to self by name (Ex: "I" or "me")
- Shows little affection or does not relate/engage with familiar playmates or family
- Increasing frustration when trying to state ideas

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31 to 32 months

what's happening now

- Talks and verbalizes more in play around other children
- Answers yes/no questions correctly (Ex: "Are you a boy?")
- Uses plurals (Ex: "boxes", "hats")
- Beginning to understand quantity concepts (Ex: "one book" and "all the plates")

activities to do with your baby

- Use reading time to work on making plurals of words as well as counting. Ask "How many ____ do you see?" Work together to count from one to five items, and talk about the objects using plurals (Ex: "One frog, two frogs...")
- During snack or meals ask your child if they want one, some, few, all or a specific number (one to five) of the food item. This will help them learn the idea of quantities.

be concerned if

- No involvement in pretend play (Ex: dolls, imaginary farm, cooking, etc.)
- Will not speak or play with other children
- Limited vocabulary (less than 200 words)
- Does not change tone to ask questions
- Does not use simple what/where kinds of questions

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32 to 33 months

what's happening now

- When playing, stays involved in activity for longer periods of time (six to seven minutes) and is more imaginative
- Understands simple time concepts (Ex: "tomorrow", "last night")
- Uses prepositions about location (Ex: "on", "in", "under")
- Uses words to meet needs and make requests (Ex: "I go potty?" or "I want milk!")

activities to do with your baby

- Use bedtime to talk about what your child did today and what will be expected tomorrow. You can also talk about what book you read last night, and then talk about what book to read tonight. By frequently and strongly emphasizing words like "today", "tomorrow", etc., your child will begin to understand simple time concepts.
- Play 'Hide-and-Seek' with toys or objects. This is a great way to work together to see if the hidden objects are in, on, under, behind, or on top.

be concerned if

- Poor eye contact and/or avoids making eye contact when speaking
- Does not use words to take-turns, instead relies on physical actions like grabbing, hitting, pushing
- Does not use words to make requests, instead relies on gestures or pointing
- Not forming new sentence structures (Ex: verb + noun ("Throw ball"), noun + verb ("Mom dance"), or adjective + noun ("Wet shoe")

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33 to 34 months

what's happening now

- More aware of self as separate from others, starts to develop own personality and likes/dislikes
- Follows two-step unrelated directions (Ex: "Comb your hair, then get your backpack.")
- Counts out loud (Ex: "One, two, three...")
- Makes new phrase combinations such as noun + verb + location or noun + verb + adjective

activities to do with your baby

- Play a 'Simon-Says' type game using two-step directions each time. You tell your child what to do, for example: "Touch your nose and then clap your hands".
- Spot books are great for working on noun + verb + location. For example, "Spot hides in the basket," or "Spot jumps on the ball."
- Count out loud as you do everyday activities. For example, "One shoe, two shoes" or "Brush your hair one, two, three, four times."

be concerned if

- Shows limited interest in toys, playtime or friends
- Cannot identify simple body parts, clothes or parts of an object when they are named
- Not gaining new word(s) each week
- Cannot participate in finger-plays or songs (Ex: Itsy Bitsy Spider) and/or recite small portions of songs

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34 to 35 months

what's happening now

- Shows increasing excitement about the company of other children/playmates
- Uses consonants sounds k, g, f in words and is increasingly understood by most adults
- Understands concepts of smaller body parts (Ex: ankle, eyelash)
- Talks about physical states (Ex: tired, hungry, sad, etc.)

activities to do with your baby

- When reading books with pictures of people, have your child point out smaller body parts such as wrist, eyebrow, chin, neck or forehead.
- When your child asks for items that relate to physical states or feelings, talk about how they feel and ask questions about the feelings. For example: "You want cheese. Oh, you feel hungry!" "You want milk because you feel..." (tired, thirsty, etc.)

take concern if

- Does not respond to or play with other children
- No use of "I", "You" or "Me"
- Does not listen to stories or books for more than one minute
- Does not use words to get their daily needs met (Ex: eat, drink, potty)

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35 to 36 months

what's happening now

- Takes turns in simple games with adults or peers (Ex: kicking ball back and forth, playing catch, etc.)
- Talks in sentences and connects sentences to same topic (Ex: "I go to the park," "I slide," "I go swing")
- Identifies parts of an object (Ex: "The car has a door, a wheel, a light")
- Uses new word(s) daily

activities to do with your baby

- This is a great age to play simple games that have turn taking or working together such as kicking a ball back and forth, playing tag, hide and seek, racing, following the leader, treasure hunts, and building forts.
- When reading books, ask your child questions about what he/she would do if your child was the character. For example "Ty is sliding at the park. What do you do at the park?"

be concerned if

- Speaks in single words or only uses short/very few phrases
- Only responds to key words in sentences and often needs ideas simplified
- Does not respond to social routines such as "hi", "bye", or responding when asked simple questions like their name/age

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36 to 37 months

what's happening now

- Uses doll or stuffed animal as playmate
- Pretends that one object is actually many objects (Ex: a bowl could be a hat, a drum, a pool, etc.)
- Answers yes/no questions about others (Ex: "Does Ellie have a brother?", "Did you meet Michael's mom?")
- Relates recent events through words and connecting sentences

activities to do with your baby

- This is the age to support play dates with peers. Parents can create a theme to help with playing together or playing with similar toys near each other. Great themes at this age are dinosaurs in the sandbox or tea parties for stuffed animals.
- Use brochures from stores, restaurants or amusement parks to talk about where places are located, how to get there, when to go, what to do there, etc.

be concerned if

- Strangers cannot understand child's speaking attempts
- Does not seem interested in others or is not having conversations
- Does not respond to phrases about familiar routines (Ex: "Snack time!")
- Vocabulary less than 200 words

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additional resources

Local Resources:

- Carruth Center, Inc: offers developmental assessments and services for children who have language and learning differences (www.carruthcenter.org), 713.935.9088
- DelPelchin Children's Center: offers family resources including parenting courses (www.depelchin.org)
- Child Find: process designed to identify, locate and evaluate individuals (birth through 21 years of age) with disabilities who may need special education services. Region 4 Special Education Solutions provides districts, campuses, and families with technical assistance related to Child Find specialeducation@esc4.net, Region 4 (www.esc4.net), 713-744-6868
- Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County (MHMRA): provides services for children 3 to 17 years of age with significant impairments (www.mhmraharris.org), 713-970-7000, or toll free 866-970-4770
- The Center for Hearing and Speech: a resource for families with children who have hearing loss (www.centerhearingandspeech.org), 713-523-3633
- Special School Coalition of Houston (www.sschouston.org)
- Early Child Intervention (ECI): a Texas wide program for children birth to three years of age with disabilities and developmental delays. (www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis), 1-800-628-5115

Online Resources & National Specialists:

- ASHA: American Speech Language and Hearing Association (www.asha.org)
- AAP: American Academy of Pediatricians (www.healthychildren.org)
- CDC: Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov)
- NICD: National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (www.nidcd.nih.gov)

resources and references

for materials within the calendar

Online Milestones/Red Flags Resources:

- National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NICHD)
- American Association of Pediatricians (AAP)
- Columbia University Medical Center, Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital
- LD Online
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA)
- The Hanen Centre - Speech and Language Development for Children (www.hanen.org)

Written and Published Materials:

- "Developmental Milestones" a series of Parent Handouts by Pro Ed, Inc.
- "How Does Your Child Hear and Talk" by ASHA
- Rosseti Infant Toddler Language Scale published by Lingui Systems
- The Early Intervention Kit by Lingui Systems (milestone charts utilized)
- Receptive Expressive Emerging Language 3rd Edition published by Pro Ed, Inc.
- The First Years: A Parent and Caregiver's Guide to Helping Children Learn Forward by Rob Reiner, DK Publishing, 2001
- Extending the Dance in Infant and Toddler Caregiving: Enhancing Attachment and Relationships by Helen H. Raikes and Carolyn Pope Edwards; Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2009

useful websites/online learning tools

- www.jimgill.com CDs with lots of fun silly songs that so many children love
- www.drjean.org CDs and activities often used by therapists
- www.abcteach.com Pre-K lesson plans and ideas
- www.teachmetotalk.com Parent blogs and information
- www.colorincolorado.org Free resources for parents including at home activities
- www.aslpro.com Video dictionary of signs
- www.parishschool.org Free digital copies of this Baby Monitor Language Guide



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