Speech & Language Milestones

Age	Expressive Milestones	Receptive Milestones	When to Refer
1 Year	0-6 months: coos/babbles, uses different sounds, laughs 7-12 months: first true words 12 months: vocabulary of 3-5 words	0-6 months: awareness of sounds 12 months: recognizes own name, uses gestures (waving, reaching, etc.)	• Not responding to name • Not making eye contact • Not using any true words
2 Years	18 months: vocabulary of 10-20 words, requests verbally 24 months: Uses 2-3 word sentences, vocabulary of 300 words, uses consonants at the beginnings of words	18 months: Recognizes familiar people, pictures, and objects 24 months: understands questions, follows simple commands	• Not putting 2 words together • Not using new words each week • Doesn't follow simple commands • Doesn't point to body parts • Not understood at least 50% of the time
3 Years	1000 word vocabulary, 3-4 word sentences, names at least one color, at least 75% intelligible	36 months: follows 2 step commands, plays interactively with other children	• Limited vocabulary • Doesn't interact with other children • Doesn't follow 2-step directions • Not understood at least 75% of the time
4 Years	Uses 4-5 word sentences, asks/answers simple "who", "what", "when", "where", and "why" questions, is understood by people outside of family, at least 85% intelligible	Follows 2-3 step commands, sits attentively for a story	• Doesn't ask/answer questions • Doesn't recall events from a story • Not understood at least 85% of the time
5 Years	Uses 5-6 word sentences, can define objects by function, uses verb tenses, uses most sounds correctly	understands opposites, hears and understands most of what others say, uses adult-like grammar	• Doesn't name some letters/numbers • Doesn't use detailed sentences • Doesn't communicate well with adults/children • Not understood at least 95% of the time

Sources: ASHA (2013), NICD (2013)

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