

Don't Play Wait and See

Milestones for Speech and Language Development • 3 to 5 years

By age 3 does your child...

YES NO

- Understand "who", "what", "where" and "why" questions
- Create long sentences, using 5 to 8 words
- Talk about past events (i.e. trip to grandparents' house, day at childcare)
- Tell simple stories
- Show affection for favourite playmates
- Engage in multi-step pretend play (i.e. cooking a meal, repairing a car)
- Is understood by most people outside of the family, most of the time
- Is aware of the function of print (i.e. in menus, lists, signs)
- Have a beginning interest in, and awareness of rhyming

Warning Signs:

- stuttering which lasts longer than three months (struggle and tension while speaking)
- rarely makes eye contact
- difficulty playing with others



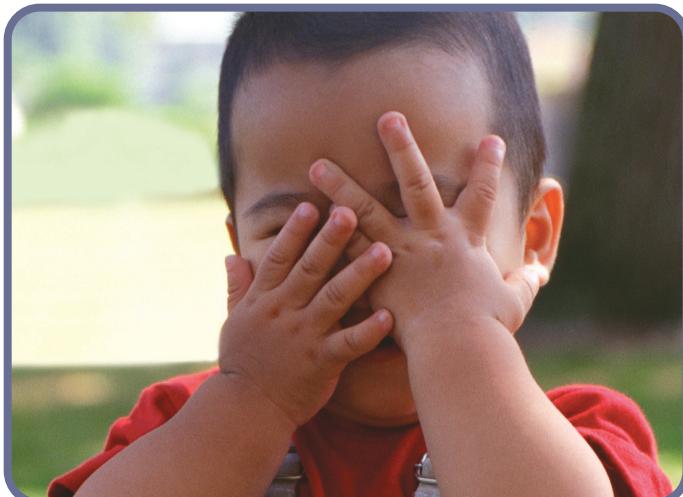
By age 4 does your child...

YES NO

- Follow directions involving three or more steps (i.e. "First get some paper, then draw a picture, and then give it to mom")
- Use adult-type grammar
- Tell stories with a clear beginning, middle and end
- Talk to try to solve problems with adults and other children
- Demonstrate increasingly complex imaginative play
- Is understood by strangers almost all of the time
- Is able to generate simple rhymes (i.e. "cat-bat")
- Match some letters with their sounds (i.e. "letter T says 'tuh'")

Warning Signs:

- other people have a hard time understanding what your child says
- gets frustrated when others cannot understand his speech



By 5 years does your child...

YES NO

- Follow group directions
(i.e. "all the boys get a toy")
- Understand directions involving "if...then"
(i.e. "If you're wearing runners, then line up for gym")
- Describe past, present and future events
in detail
- Seek to please his/her friends
- Show increasing independence in friendships
(i.e. may visit neighbour by him/herself)
- Use almost all of the sounds of their language
with few to no errors
- Know all the letters of the alphabet
- Identify the sounds at the beginning of some words
(i.e. "pop starts with the 'puh' sound")

Warning Signs:

- does not use complete sentences
- has trouble following directions



Communication Counts
Your District Preschool Speech & Language Program

If your child does not meet these milestones,
call your local health unit for more information:

Northumberland County, Haliburton County,
and City of Kawartha Lakes
1•866•888•4577

Peterborough County and City
(705) 743•1000

www.kidtalk.on.ca

Adapted from material from Alberta Health