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## Speech and Hearing

### ***Make the Talking Connection***

Communication is more than words. Your baby is trying to communicate when he:

- ✓ Cries, smiles, squeals
- ✓ Kicks excitedly
- ✓ Uses gestures like pointing
- ✓ Grabs or looks at things
- ✓ Tries to say words

Sometimes you just have to take your best guess at what your child is trying to communicate. Follow your child's interest and he'll learn faster.

### ***Connect with your child by . . . .***

- Showing that you're interested in what she is communicating
- Responding immediately
- Getting face-to-face with her
- Getting down to her level or lift her up to yours
- Share pleasurable routines over and over again (pat-a-cake)
- Make games out of everyday activities (peek a boo while folding laundry)
- Having fun with her

### ***How to Help Your Child Learn to Talk***

- ❖ Talk slowly, clearly and with expression
- ❖ Talk about what you and your child are doing during everyday activities, such as doing laundry
- ❖ Talk simply and at your child's level
- ❖ Comments "teach" and questions "test". So instead of asking "What's that?" try naming people, things and actions. For example, "That's a dog" or "The dog is eating".
- ❖ Copy what your child says and does, and then add a word. For example if he points to a dog, you point and say "dog". If he says "ah", you interpret it as dog and say "dog". If he says "dog" you say "big dog".
- ❖ Read to your child. It can help him learn new words and sentence forms, how to construct stories, rhymes and songs.

## Hearing and Speech Milestones

### What to do

**You know your child best! As soon as you suspect that your child might have a hearing, speech or language problem, you can:**

- ✓ **Call your local public health unit**
- ✓ **Talk to a speech and language pathologist**

### Early Detection is Key

The best possible future for children begins with the best possible start. The early years of a child's life are the most important for building strong language and social skills. The fact is babies or toddlers are never too young for a communication skills assessment. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) see children from infancy. The *right* time to seek help is when *you*, as a parent, are concerned.

### Early Childhood Speech and Language Services . . .

. . . for infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children and their families are provided by Speech and Language Pathologists through local public health units/centres. They can help with topics such as voice, stuttering, speech, understanding language, using language, feeding/swallowing, and social language.

Visit our web site  
[www.communitiesforkids.ca](http://www.communitiesforkids.ca)  
for more great information

### What to look for

No two children develop, grow or learn in the same way or do things at the same pace. Listed below are some ways children often act at certain ages.

Birth to 3 months

- ❖ Startles to loud sounds
- ❖ Is soothed by your voice

3 to 6 months

- ❖ Recognizes familiar voices
- ❖ Responds to noise by smiling or moving
- ❖ Enjoys toys that make a sound

6 to 9 months

- ❖ Looks when his or her name is called
- ❖ Makes babbling sounds
- ❖ Begins to understand common words like "bye-bye"

9 to 12 months

- ❖ Tries to "talk" by repeating sounds
- ❖ Recognizes the names of familiar objects (ball, book)
- ❖ Responds to requests ("Give it to daddy") and to questions ("More juice?")

12 to 18 months

- ❖ Follows simple directions ("Bring the book")
- ❖ Says two to three words by age one
- ❖ Says 20 to 50 words by 18 months

18 to 24 months

- ❖ Points to body parts
- ❖ Starts to combine two words ("go car")
- ❖ Enjoys being read to

By age 3

- ❖ Talks so others can understand
- ❖ Uses short sentences
- ❖ Understands directions without gestures ("Time to take a bath")

By age 4

- ❖ Tells a story about himself or herself
- ❖ Talks about ideas and feelings
- ❖ Pronounces words clearly

By age 5

- ❖ Follows long directions
- ❖ Predicts what might happen next in books
- ❖ Uses sentences of at least 5 or 6 words