

Summary of Key Age and Stage Language Development Milestones **One to Five Years**

AGE	WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE CHILD	WHAT TO DO TO SUPPORT LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
12 months	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make eye contact; use joint attention to share objects / activities • Recognise familiar people/objects • Respond to name • Recognise greetings/gestures <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to babble • Use gestures – point, wave • May start to use a few single words • Copies sounds/actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to what the child is interested in (observe, wait, listen) • Talk in simple sentences about the things you can see, do, hear... • Play simple games like peek-a-boo • Copy the child's sounds/actions • Sing songs and rhymes • Look at books together • Offer simple play – blocks; pots and a spoon; farm animals; doll or teddy to feed, wash and put to bed.
18 months	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand around 50 words • Understand simple instructions • Point to familiar objects/pictures <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say 6 – 20 words • Copy lots of words/sounds • Use objects in pretend play, e.g. feed teddy 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat words back clearly • Add words, e.g. child says ball, you could say throw the ball, it's a big ball, oh oh where's the ball gone? • Use lots of gesture (pointing, showing, nod/shake head) • Play with the child – follow their lead. Respond with interest. • Discuss screen time with families – interactions with people are most important for a child of this age
2 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow simple 2-step instruction, e.g. please give me the ball and the car • Respond to what and where questions • Understands in and on <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say more than 50 words • Put two words together, e.g. bye teddy, no ball • Use tone of voice to ask a question • Say no to indicate they don't want something • Use the words 'my' and 'mine' • Use most vowel sounds correctly and some consonants – m, n, w, h, p, d, t, d • Speech is clearer but often family members understand child better than others 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ideas like big/little; fast/slow; hot/cold in play • Involve child in everyday tasks to model language and build understanding, e.g. sorting washing, setting the table, going to the supermarket • Model pretend play – feeding doll or teddy, driving a car to fill up with petrol, a pretend picnic • Reading stories/looking at books offers new language/ideas and helps with listening and attention • Playdough can be a simple fun activity to make and use • Encourage outdoor play • Have fun and show the parents how to continue this when you are not there.

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3 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow more complex 2 step instructions Understand where, what and who? Sort items into categories Recognise basic colours <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use 3 – 5 words in a sentence Use a variety of words – names, actions, location, description Ask questions Begin to have a conversation but may not take turns/stay on topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities to label and explore emotions to build the child’s emotional vocabulary Read stories that involve emotions and talk about how the person is feeling and why. Match facial expressions with emotions. Play games that involve sorting objects into categories Provide opportunities for drawing and writing, especially for children who are less interested. Make it fun.
4 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand most “wh” questions Understand some numbers Understand concepts like size, shape, colour <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use words like ‘but’, and, ‘because’ to make longer sentences (4 – 7 words) Describe recent events Ask lots of questions Use pronouns – I, me, you, he, she Speech should be clear 90% of the time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for pretend play – simple props like a hat, a scarf, pretend money etc can stimulate imagination and language Use longer sentences and more complex ideas with children whose language development is progressing well. Repeat and model sounds and words that are not yet correct. Provide some direct modeling – e.g. when I talk about myself I say the word “I” if the child is receptive to this approach.
5 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a 3 step instruction Understand time related words like before/after Develop a sense of humour Begin to recognise sounds, letters, numbers <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use well formed complete sentences Take part in longer conversations Tell a simple story – with beginning, middle & end Speech mostly clear. Sounds like s, l, th, r, still developing for some children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to follow the child’s interests Have conversations – children this age love to talk Participate in more complex imaginary play where roles are assigned and the action is narrated by the child Extend interest in stories and books. Get the child to tell the story. Play with sounds and words – rhyming and words that begin or end with the same sound Provide opportunities for “writing” Tell simple jokes. Get the child to tell you a joke if they know some.