



helps children communicate

# First words

Talk to your child using the language you would naturally use at home. If your child is not doing what is shown for their age, look for help: talk to your health visitor, GP or contact your local speech and language therapist directly. For advice and further information, visit: [www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk)



**6 months**

- Baby watches your face when you talk to them close up
- They are playing with sounds. You hear noises like, “Bababa”
- Starting to understand words that you use a lot, such as “Bye bye” and “Milk”

**1 year**

- Baby will be using simple words anytime now
- The new words they use will not sound like adult words yet
- They can do what you ask them when you use simple sentences, “Give it to mummy.”

**18 months**

- Toddlers will now start to join words together, “Teddy gone”
- They can find things that you ask for – pictures in books or toys in the room
- When your toddler talks to you, help them by reflecting back what you understand. Them: “Cat.” You: “Yes, the cat’s sleeping”

**2 years**

- Children now understand longer sentences, “Your shoes are upstairs”
- Starting to use lots of single words (up to 200), building short 2 to 4 word sentences
- They are using and understanding new words every day

**3 years**

- Sentences used get longer and more complicated, “I’m going to Nana’s and I’m gonna get a toy car”
- Children still find some word sounds difficult ie. r, w, l, y, f, th, s, sh, ch, j
- Children may stumble over their words and sentences. This is expected at this age

**4 years**

- People who haven’t met your child before will be able to understand their words
- Children are asking lots of questions, especially “Why?” questions
- They can talk about things they have done and will do

**5 years**

- Children can now easily turn their attention to you, even if they are playing
- They will understand longer and more complicated sentences, “Find the orange and black pens”
- Most adult word sounds are now used

**Top Tip**  
Talk to Baby when doing things together – changing nappies, feeding or taking them out

**Top Tip**  
Help Baby to listen by turning off the TV when you talk and play with them

**Top Tip**  
If your toddler is not using any words or if they don’t seem to understand you, **look for help**

**Top Tip**  
Help to develop word sounds by repeating your child’s words back. Them: “Dod.” You: “Yes, it’s a dog”

**Top Tip**  
Give your child plenty of time to speak. Don’t draw their attention to any difficulties they seem to have

**Top Tip**  
Comment on what your child is doing rather than asking them lots of questions

**Top Tip**  
Look for help if people cannot understand your child, or if your child understands or uses only simple words and sentences