



Hearing & Language Milestones

(Birth to 5 Years)

Checklist for **providers** to track communication development

What Should I Do as a Provider?

Promote milestones checklist

1. Ask families to track milestones between visits. Give families the Parent Checklist and explain how to use it. Review their observations at every well-child visit. Encourage families to share concerns with you right away.

Conduct development screening when you identify concerns

2. If you notice missed milestones, take action. If a caregiver raises concerns, take action. Use screening tools such as Ages and Stages and PEDS to identify the concern. Review the results with family. Document findings in the medical record. Do not wait to see if the child “catches up.”

Refer for further evaluation

3. Refer the child for a full evaluation when screening results or concerns indicate risk.
 - Early Childhood Intervention for children under age three
 - Statewide Outreach Center at the Texas School for the Deaf for specialized hearing support
 - A pediatric audiologist for a comprehensive hearing evaluation
 - A speech language specialist when speech or language concerns are present

Explain the referral process to the family. Document the referral and follow up on results.

Use this checklist appropriately

4. **Use this checklist to:**
 - Track your patient’s development over time
 - Share concerns with your patient’s caregivers
 - Prepare for appointments and discussions

Do not use this checklist to:

- Establish medical necessity
- Start or continue services
- Justification to discontinue services



Hearing Screening

Checklist for Providers

This checklist is a developmental monitoring tool and not a screening or diagnostic tool. Use this for every well-child preventive care visit. Delays in hearing and language can have long-term effects. Early evaluation leads to better outcomes.

✓ Birth to 3 Months

- Reacts to sounds
- Calms or smiles when you speak
- Recognizes your or a caregiver's voice
- Changes sucking when feeding in response to sound Coos ("oooo," "aahh," "mmmmm")
- Cries differently for different needs
- Looks toward voices or people talking

✓ 7 to 9 Months

- Looks at you when you say their name
- Pauses when you say "no"
- Babbles long strings of sounds, ("mamamama," or "bababa")
- Listens when spoken to
- Understands words like "cup," "shoe," or "juice"

✓ 13 to 18 Months

- Looks around when asked "where" questions (for example, "Where's your blanket?")
- Follows simple directions ("Give me the ball," "Hug the teddy bear," "Come here," or "Show me your nose")
- Enjoys simple stories, songs, and rhymes; points to pictures in a book when you name them.
- Shakes head for "no" and nods head for "yes"
- Understands words for common things, actions, and people
- Points to one or more body parts when asked
- Uses gestures when excited (claps, gives high-five, or sticks out tongue)
- Combines long strings of sounds, syllables, and real words with speech-like rhythm

✓ 2 to 3 Years

- Knows few parts of the body and points to them when asked
- Has a word for almost everything and uses two to three word sentences
- Talks in a way that familiar adults understand
- Uses sounds like "k," "g," "f," "t," "d," and "n" (these may be emerging sounds)
- Name objects to ask for them or draw attention

✓ 4 to 5 Years

- Pays attention to a short story and answers simple questions about it
- Hears and understands most of what is said at home and in school
- Uses longer, detailed sentences
- Tells stories that stay on topic
- Communicates easily with adults and other children
- Says most sounds correctly (except a few, such as l, s, r, v, z, ch, sh, and th)
- Uses rhyming words
- Names some letters and numbers
- Uses correct grammar most of the time

✓ 4 to 6 Months

- Giggles and laughs
- Responds to changes in the tone of your voice
- Pays attention to music
- Babbles using sounds that begin with "p," "b," and "m"
- Makes sound when excited or upset
- Makes gurgling sounds when alone or with you
- Reacts to toys that make noise

✓ 10 to 12 Months

- Tries to copy sounds you make
- Responds to simple words and phrases ("Go bye-bye" and "Look at mommy")
- Says one or two words ("mama," "dada," "hi," "bye")
- Follows simple requests ("Come here")
- Follows gestures like waving, pointing, blowing kisses, or playing peek-a-boo

✓ 19 to 24 Months

- Uses and understands at least 50 different words for food, toys, animals, and body parts
- Says two or more words together ("more water," "go out")
- Follows two-step directions
- Uses words like "me," "mine," and "you"
- Uses words to ask for help
- Uses simple possessives ("daddy's sock")

✓ 3 to 4 Years

- Hears you when you call from another room
- Hears TV or radio at the same volume as other people
- Answers simple "who," "what," "where," and "why" questions
- Talks about activities at day care, preschool, or friends' homes
- Uses sentences with four or more words
- Speaks easily without repeating syllables or words

For questions or more information

Contact Texas Early Hearing Detection and Intervention for guidance, referral pathway, or additional resources.



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