



Communication: Developmental Milestones

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Communication milestones are a specific developmental stage in a child's ability to understand and produce language.

Birth- 3 Months:

- Looks at your face
- Reacts to loud sounds
- Makes sounds other than crying



3-4 Months:

- Smiles to get caregiver's attention
- Looks, moves, or makes sounds to get or keep caregiver's attention
- Turns head towards the sound of caregiver's voice

Milestones are significant markers in individual development, they allow us to monitor growth and identify potential areas of concern for intervention.

5-6 Months:

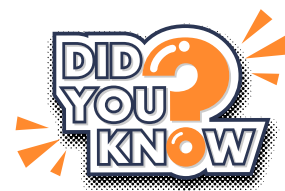
- Takes turns making sounds with caregiver
- *Makes different sounds like “mamama” and “bababa”*

7-9 Months:

- Shows several facial expressions like happy, sad, angry, and surprised
- Smiles or laughs when you play peek-a-boo
- Lifts arms to be picked up



Interactive games like peek-a-boo or simple role-playing, help children practice turn-taking and understand conversation skills.

**10-12 Months:**

- Waves bye-bye
- Points to ask for something or to get help

**16-18 Months:**

- Points to show something of interest
- Follows direction of gaze, head turn, and/or pointing gesture of another person

31-36 Months:

- Talks with you in conversation using at least two back-and-forth exchanges
- Follows two-step directions
- Asks “who”, “what”, “where”, or “why” questions



Excessive screen time, especially passive watching without interaction, can negatively affect communication development.

**36-60 Months:**

- Says sentences with 4 or more words
- Follows 3 step directions
- Asks for meaning of words

Have concerns about a child meeting these milestones?

- Your primary care physician can refer you to an early intervention or early childhood program
- Caregivers can make referrals (State programs that will have their own sites) <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>
- Or search Department of Health and Human Services for your State. Enter zip code to search programs near you

Check back for updates!

**Illinois Early Hearing
Detection & Intervention
Program**

