

# Speech and Language Development I

## SOUND ACQUISITION

Generally, children should make the following sounds correctly by the ages indicated:

Age:

3 to 4 years m, b, n, t, p, d, k, g, w, h and vowels

5 to 6 years sh, ch, l, l blends

7 years v, j, th, s z, r, s blends, r blends

## VOCABULARY AND SENTENCES

Age:

12 to 18 months

first words

2 years

2-word sentences

3 years

3- to 4-word sentences

400- to 900-word vocabulary

5 years

5- to 6-word sentences

1500 to 2500 words

After age 5, the child rapidly advances. The child understands many more words than he/she can say. These are general guidelines. Children will vary.

## FLUENCY

Hesitations in speech are normal from ages three to six. Listen to your child, encourage and praise him/her. Don't correct him/her or appear anxious about his speech. Don't make him/her speak or recite before strangers or visitors. Let him/her do so if he wishes, but only then. Try to keep your own speech clear and unhurried. If you are very concerned, consult a speech and language pathologist for help.

## WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

1. **Talk** to your child about everything. Children need a lot of verbal stimulation from infancy on. Play games with sounds and words. Your children pick up most of their vocabulary from you.
2. **Listen** to your child and expand on his language. Use well-formed sentences that are a little longer than his. Use new vocabulary.  
Child: "Truck broke."  
Parent: "The truck is broken. It needs a new windshield."
3. **Read** to your child frequently. Talk about pictures and situations in books. Your child learns new vocabulary, concepts and the patterns of language from being read to. Read cereal boxes, signs, everything. Use the library and make reading a part of your daily home life.
4. **Play** games with your child. He can learn coordination, how to follow rules, how to communicate with others, and new concepts.
5. **Play** hospital, zoo store, barber shop, restaurant or airport with your child. Use puppets. These activities develop creativity and help your child learn about life situations.
6. **Classify**. Help your child make scrapbooks or sort things so he'll learn concepts of color, size, matching, comparisons, and so forth.
7. **Provide new experiences**. Take field trips make things, cook, do science experiments. Involve your child in daily activities. Talk about all of these.
8. **Use television** to its best advantage. Limit its use to good programs and spend more time in family interaction.
9. **Make language & speech fun** for your child. Reinforce his/her attempts and praise him/her.
10. **Concerning your child's speech and language attempts**, don't allow other family members to tease, make fun of, imitate, or label him.