

What should my child be able to do?

Research has shown that children do not acquire language, oral motor, gross motor, or fine motor abilities at the exact same time. They do however acquire them within a range of time. The following pages of milestone information are an overview of what your child should be able to do. Feel free to contact us at Premier Speech Therapy or contact your pediatrician if you have any further questions. We would be more than happy to assist you.

Birth – 3 months

2 ½ - 3 years

4 – 6 months

3 – 4 years

7 – 12 months

4 – 5 years

12 – 18 months

5 years

18 – 24 months

6 years

2 – 2 ½ years

Birth – 3 months

- Startles to loud sounds
- Quiets or smiles when spoken to
- Seems to recognize your voice and quiets if crying
- Increases or decreases sucking behavior in response to sound
- Makes pleasure sounds (cooing, gooing)
- Cries differently for different needs
- Smiles when sees you
- Demonstrates many reflexes to protect their airway
- Responds to stimulation in and around the mouth
- Turns head toward the nipple when the caregiver strokes the cheeks (this signals that baby is ready to eat)
- Consumes breast milk or formula using a nipple
- Coordinates their breath with two to three sucks of liquid before swallowing and breathing

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child's skills.

4 – 6 months

- Moves eyes in direction to sounds
- Responds to changes in tone of your voice
- Notices toys that make sounds
- Pays attention to music
- Babbling sounds more speech-like with many different sounds, including p, b, and m
- Vocalizes excitement and displeasure
- Makes gurgling sounds when left alone and when playing with you
- Brings both hands up to clasp the bottle but needs assistance holding it
- Consumes rice cereal or pureed fruit and pureed vegetable baby foods
- Eats from a small infant / toddler spoon during feeding

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child's skills.

7 – 12 months

- Enjoys games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake
- Turns and looks in direction of sounds
- Listens when spoken to
- Recognizes words for common items like “cup”, “shoe”, or “juice”
- Begins to respond to requests (i.e. “Come here” or “Want more?”)
- Babbling has both long and short groups of sounds such as “tata upup bibibibi”
- Uses speech or noncrying sounds to get and keep attention
- Imitates different speech sounds
- Has one or two words (bye-bye, dada, mama) although they may not be clear
- Holds the bottle independently
- Cleans the spoon with their upper lip
- Eats pureed meats and a variety of pureed baby foods, closer toward 1 year begins to consume mashed table foods
- Demonstrates lip closure while swallowing liquids and soft solids
- Begins to self-feed by using their fingers to grab small foods, baby may attempt to eat small, soft dissolvable solids (soft crackers, Cheerios™, etc.)
- Begins to experiment drinking liquids from a sippy cup
- Closer to 1 year, drinks out of sippy cup and attempts to hold the handle independently and begins to drink through a straw

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child’s skills.

12 - 18 months

- Recognizes their name
- Says 2-3 words besides "mama" and "dada"
- Understands simple instructions
- Recognizes words as symbols for objects: Car-points to garage, cat-meows
- Points to a few body parts when asked
- Follows simple commands and understands simple questions ("Roll the ball," "Kiss the baby," "Where's your shoe?")
- Listens to simple stories, songs, and rhymes
- Points to pictures in a book when named
- Waves good-bye and plays pat-a-cake
- Gives a toy on request
- Likes to make the "sounds" of familiar animals and things
- Gives a toy on request
- Imitates familiar words and sounds more precisely
- Hears well and discriminates between many sounds
- Laughs a lot
- Shows a lot of affection – makes noises and pats parents affectionately
- Places a cube in a cup on command
- Uses some one- or two- word questions ("Where kitty?" "Go bye-bye?" "What's that?")
- Puts two words together ("more cookie," "no juice," "mommy book")
- Uses many different consonant sounds at the beginning of words
- Scribbles imitatively with a crayon
- Coordinates sucking, swallowing, and breathing patterns for longer sequences
- Begins to eat finely chopped table foods
- Bites through crunchy foods such as cookies and crackers
- Moves the food in their mouth from side to side as they chew

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child's skills.

18 – 24 months

- Uses 10 – 20 words but says more words every month
- Understands “no”
- Recognizes pictures of familiar persons and objects
- Uses words to make wants known, such as “more,” “up”
- Points to a few body parts when asked
- Follows simple commands and understands simple questions (“Roll the ball,” “Kiss the baby,” “Where’s your shoe?”)
- Listens to simple stories, songs, and rhymes
- Points to pictures in a book when named
- Starts to combine 2 words, such as “all gone,” “Daddy bye-bye”
- Points and gestures to call attention to an event or to show wants
- Brings familiar object from another room when asked
- Turns pages of a book a few at a time
- Builds a tower with 3 – 4 cubes
- Knows and says the names of 5 things
- Hums and may sing simple tunes
- Mixes real words with jargon, on occasion
- Develops a play routine
- Practices words and word combinations
- Feeds themselves using a spoon but may still need assistance

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child’s skills.

2 – 2 ½ years

- Understands differences in meaning (“go-stop,” “in-on,” “big-little,” “up-down”)
- Follows two requests (“Get the book and put it on the table”)
- Has a word for almost everything
- Uses two- or three-word “sentences” to talk about and ask for things
- Answers simple questions and commands
- Listens for the meaning of words, not just sounds
- Identifies parts of their body
- Speech is understood by familiar listeners most of the time
- Often asks for or directs attention to objects by naming them
- Carries on “conversation” with self and dolls
- Asks “What’s this?,” “what’s that?” and “where’s my?”
- Sentence length is composed of 2-3 words
- Refers to self by name
- Names pictures
- Uses 2-word negative phrases such as “not go,” “not right,” “no want”
- Forms some plurals by adding “s”; book, books
- Has around 300 words in speaking vocabulary
- Builds an 8-block tower
- Asks for drink, toilet, food
- Listens to stories with pictures
- Stays with one activity 6-7 minutes
- Feeds themselves using a spoon but may still need assistance

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child’s skills.

2 ½ - 3 years

- Has a 450 word vocabulary
- Gives first name
- Uses past tense and plurals, and combines nouns and verbs
- Understands simple time concepts: "last night," "tomorrow"
- Refers to self as "me" rather than by name
- Tries to get adult attention: "watch me"
- Asks "What's this?", "what's that?" and "where's my?"
- Likes to hear the same story repeated
- Uses "not" or "no" in speech and may say "no" when they mean "yes"
- Uses 2-word negative phrases such as "not go," "not right," "no want"
- Forms some plurals by adding "s"; book, books
- Builds tower of 8 blocks
- Talks to other children as well as adults
- Begins to control behavior verbally rather than just physically
- Answers "where" questions
- Can name common pictures and things they come in contact with regularly
- Uses short sentences to announce what they have done or will do like, "Me do it," or "Me want to jump"
- Matches 3-4 colors
- Knows big and little
- Holds up fingers to tell age
- Carries on "conversation" with self and dolls
- Likes to hear same story repeated
- Solves problems by talking instead of hitting or crying
- Consumes a variety of liquids and solids through straws and open mouth cups
- Uses a spoon to scoop soft foods while feeding themselves
- Independently moves toward fine tuning all feeding skills

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child's skills.

3 – 4 years

- Hears you when you call from another room
- Hears television or radio at the same loudness level as other family members
- Understands simple “wh” (who, what, where, why) questions
- Talks about activities at school or at friends’ homes
- Speaks clearly enough that people outside the family usually understand their speech
- Usually talks easily without repeating syllables or words
- Can match primary colors, name one color
- Knows night and day
- Understands “yesterday,” “summer,” “lunchtime,” “tonight,” “little-big”
- Begins to obey prepositional phrases like “put the block under the chair”
- Uses words to relate observations, concepts, ideas and relationships
- Frequently practices by talking to self
- Knows their last name, sex, name of street they live on, and several nursery rhymes
- Can tell a story or relay an idea to someone
- Has a sentence length of 3-4+ words
- Has a vocabulary of nearly 1000 words
- Can consistently produce “m, n, ng, p, f, h, and w”
- May repeat sounds, words and phrases (perfectly normal at this age)
- Can draw circle and vertical line
- Can sing songs
- Can tell a story
- Expresses fatigue verbally
- Can stay with one activity 8-9 minutes
- Asks “what” questions frequently
- Progresses toward chewing and swallowing advanced textures (meats, fried foods, whole fruits, etc.) with close supervision by a caregiver
- Begins (with close supervision) to use a fork to stab food
- Drinks from an open mouth cup with no assistance

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child’s skills.

4 – 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
- Makes voice sounds clear like other children's
- Uses sentences that give lots of details (i.e. "I like to read my books")
- Tells stories that stick to the topic
- Communicates easily with other children and adults
- Uses the following sounds correctly: m, n, ng, p, f, h, w, y, k, b, d, g, r
- Says most sounds correctly (except perhaps certain one such as l, s, r, v, z, ch, sh, th)
- Uses the same grammar as the rest of the family
- Points to colors red, blue, yellow, and green
- Identifies crosses, triangles, circles, and squares
- Follows commands even though objects are not present
- Understands "early in the morning," "next month," "next year," "noontime"
- Can speak of imaginary conditions such as "suppose that" or "I hope"
- Asks **many** questions although more interested in how answers fit their own thoughts rather than just the explanation
- Has a sentence length of 4-5 words
- Asks "who?" and "why?"
- Begins to use complex sentences
- Uses contractions such as "it's a" or "there's a"
- Uses past tense correctly
- Copies a line and a circle
- Has a vocabulary of nearly 1500 words
- Stays with one activity 11-12 minutes
- Progresses toward chewing and swallowing advanced textures (meats, fried foods, whole fruits, etc.) with close supervision by a caregiver
- Begins (with close supervision) to use a fork to stab food
- Drinks from an open mouth cup with no assistance

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child's skills.

5 years

- Defines objects by their use (You eat with a fork) and can tell what objects are made of
- Knows spatial relations like "on top," "behind," "far," and "near"
- Knows their address
- Identifies a penny, nickel, and dime
- Has a sentence length of 5-6 words
- Has a vocabulary of around 2000 words
- Uses all speech sounds correctly with the possible exceptions of t, v, l, th, j, z, and zh (as in "measure")
- Knows common opposites like "big/little" and "hard/soft"
- Understands "same" and "different"
- Counts ten objects
- Carries a plot in a story
- Uses future, present, and past tense
- Stays with one activity for 12-13 minutes
- Questions for information
- Distinguishes left hand and right hand in themselves but not in others
- Uses all types of sentences, some of which will be complex, for example, "I can go in the house after I take off my muddy shoes"
- Chews and swallows advanced textures (meats, fried foods, whole fruits, etc.)
- Uses a fork to stab food
- Drinks from an open mouth cup independently

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child's skills.

6 years

- Has correct articulation of speech sounds
- Uses adult-like grammar in sentences and conversations
- Understands the meanings of most sentences
- Names days of the week in order and counts to 30
- Predicts the next sequence of events and tells a 4 to 5 part story
- Tells month and day of birthday, name and address, left and right
- Knows most opposites and the meaning of through, away, toward, and from
- Knows the meaning of today, yesterday, and tomorrow
- Asks lots of why, what, and how questions

*It is very important to consult your doctor or pediatrician if you feel that your child is not meeting these milestones at an age-appropriate level. Your doctor or pediatrician may refer you to a Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Physical Therapist who will evaluate and develop a plan to strengthen your child's skills.

What do I do first?

#1 Contact Us:

Not sure if your child needs an evaluation? Give us a call and we will be more than happy to help you out. If it is determined that a speech and language evaluation* is warranted, we will schedule an appointment. At that time, we will ask for your insurance benefits that will be reviewed by our billing manager.

If you already have a completed speech language evaluation, please give us a call to schedule an initial appointment. It would be helpful if you could bring any past evaluations and therapy plans to your first appointment to help us develop an appropriate plan of care.

- phone: 603-548-2188
- email: speech.teach@comcast.net
- FAX: 603-232-1120

(*A speech and language evaluation is one or more assessments used to determine the presence of speech language disorders as well as their severity.)

#2 Evaluation / Initial meeting:

A case history will be taken as well as a patient/parent interview, and a formal speech-language evaluation will occur on your first visit. Evaluations usually take about an hour. Upon completion, one of our skilled speech and language clinicians will determine if therapy is recommended for you or your child. A copy of your evaluation will be available to you upon request.

#3 Therapy

Therapy sessions are usually scheduled for 45 minute sessions (depending age and diagnosis of client), for the same time

weekly. Therapy is ongoing as long as the client is making progress toward all targeted goals. We try to make therapy fun! We play lots of games to help make our hard work much more enjoyable.