

Let's Connect!

Early Communication and Signs for Babies

Program Overview:

➤ Week 1: Connecting with You! Basic Tips and Intro to Signs

- Week 2: Connecting through Signs
- Week 3: Connecting through Music
- Week 4: Connecting through Books

Presented by Sarah Bogdanovitch, M.Sc.A, a pediatric speech-language pathologist working in Early Intervention to support communication development in children aged Birth-3

Basic Tips :

Connection is Communication

Face-to-Face

- Being **face-to-face** helps create opportunities for communication
- Eye contact
- Sharing attention

Wait your turn

- Babies do learn by hearing lots of words and gestures, but they learn even more from **taking a turn**
- **Waiting** is a powerful tool that can help your baby learn to be a part of the conversation.
- Respond to sounds and gestures your baby makes - imitating is great!

Why sign?

Intro to gestures and signs

We use gestures everyday!

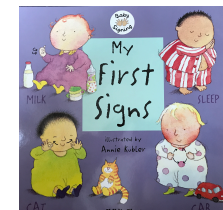
- Gestures support **understanding** and **expressing**
- Gestures are an important milestone in communication development – typically emerging around 7 months
- What gestures do you use already?

At home:

When can I practice communication strategies?

- Bath time
- Bed time
- Diaper changing
- Any time!

Contact Cassie Shortle at TCCLP to pick up your copy of this great resource and try out some signs!



Speech and Language Spotlight on: Infants



COMMUNICATION
ACROSS THE LIFESPAN
Better Hearing & Speech Month

Although most children speak their first word around their 1st birthday, speech and language development actually begins right from birth. That first year is full of milestones and skill building—a time of rapid brain and communication development.

Birth to 12-Month Milestones: Babies are showing off budding speech and language skills from the very beginning. Milestones include:

- Making cooing sounds (**birth–3 months**)
- Making speech-like babbling sounds, such as *pa, ba, and mi* (**4–6 months**)
- Responding to changes in tone of voice (**4–6 months**)
- Babbling long strings of sounds, such as *mimi upup babababa* (**7–12 months**)
- Imitating different speech sounds (**7–12 months**)
- Understanding words for common items/people, like *truck, juice, and daddy* (**7–12 months**)
- Starting to respond to simple words/phrases, like “No,” “Come here,” and “Want more?” (**7–12 months**)
- Saying 1 or 2 words, like *hi, dog, dada, mama, or uh-oh*. This happens around their first birthday, but sounds may not be clear.

Note about communication development: Children develop at their own pace. These are the average ages when most children have developed these skills.

A Child's First Teacher: Communication is a skill learned by watching, listening, and interacting with parents/caregivers. Parents/caregivers teach their children to talk through simple, everyday activities. Some communication tips for parents/caregivers are:

- Mirror baby's laughter and facial expressions.
- Respond to babies' sounds and gestures.
- Talk, talk, and talk some more. Narrate daily activities (“You are eating peas. Peas are good.”)
- Read to children every day.
- Talk to children in the language they are most comfortable using.

Quantity and Quality Count! The more a parent talks, the bigger a child's vocabulary will be. Parents should use all types of words—big and small.

Warning Signs: Even at this early stage, it's a good idea to pay attention to whether a child is meeting milestones. Red flags include not babbling (**4–7 months**) and making only a few sounds or gestures (**7–12 months**). Many speech and/or language disorders can be reversed, or even prevented, if caught early.



Have concerns?

Speech-language pathologists evaluate and treat children for speech and language disorders. Learn more at www.asha.org/public.



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

Speech and Language Spotlight on: Toddlers



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Better Hearing & Speech Month

Tantrums are not the only explosions occurring during the toddler years. Speech and language skills are advancing at breakneck pace. A child generally says just a few words at 12 months, but by 18 months, they may be speaking 20 or more. By 24 months, they may say 50 or more words and should be putting two words together.

A Hint of Doubt: This is a time when parents may have their first concerns about their child's ability to communicate effectively. Perhaps a child is 18 months old and hasn't spoken more than one or two words. Or doesn't seem to know her name. Or seems far behind other kids her age. Parents should trust their instincts.

Speech and Language Disorders in Toddlers: Toddlers may experience problems with their speech, language, or both.

- **Speech is the ability to produce speech sounds using the mouth, lips, and tongue.** A child may say sounds the wrong way, repeat sounds and words, or be otherwise difficult to understand. Although mistakes are common as a child learns to speak, familiar people should understand a child's speech by the time the child reaches age 3—and most people should understand a child's speech by the time he or she reaches age 4.
- **Language is the ability to use and put words together—and to understand others' words.** A child may have trouble understanding questions, following directions, or naming objects.

"Late Bloomer"—or Language Disorder?

All children go through the same stages as their speech and language develops. However, it is hard to know exactly when each child will get to each stage. There is a range for typical development. For children ages 18–30 months who aren't talking much, here are some factors to consider:

- **Hearing.** Has the child's hearing been screened? Checking for hearing loss is important because it can affect speech and language development.
- **Understanding language.** Does a child follow simple directions or point to an object when asked? If a child seems to understand well, they are more likely to catch up on language skills.
- **Using gestures.** Does the child wave "hi" or "bye" and put their arms up to be picked up? If children use meaningful gestures to communicate, they are more likely to catch up.
- **Learning new words.** A child may be slower to talk, but they should still try to use new words each month. If a child is not using new words very often, that is a red flag.

No Guesswork Necessary. An evaluation by a speech-language pathologist can determine whether there is an issue that requires treatment or if a child will likely catch up on their own. **Early speech and language treatment sets a child up for future school and social success.** Parents can find these professionals through their local early intervention program or school system. A searchable database of private speech-language pathologists is available at www.asha.org/profind.



Speech-language pathologists can help!

Learn more at www.asha.org/public



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