







Speech & Language Development From Birth to 24 Months

	Listening & Understanding	Babbling & Talking	Social & Emotional Skills
Birth - 3 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizes parents' voices - Startled by loud sounds - Turns toward familiar sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes soft vocal sounds (coos, gurgles) - Cries when hungry or uncomfortable - Makes vowel sounds by 3-4 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gazes at faces - Makes extended eye contact - May copy facial expressions - Often calmed by familiar voice
3 - 6 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watches face when someone talks - May show excitement at sound of approaching voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces simple syllables (e.g., 'ba' or 'da') - Squeals, growls, makes raspberries sound - Vocalizes to get attention & when talked to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cries differently for different needs - Recognizes & responds to different emotions in others - Laughs during play
6 - 12 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizes name (stops and looks) - Understands frequently used words, phrases (e.g., 'all gone', 'give', 'stop') - Understands simple instructions supported by context and gestures - Notices different sounds (telephone, doorbell, clock) - Attends to music and singing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - True babbling emerges with repeated syllables (e.g., 'bu-bu-bu', 'da-da-da') - Uses speech sounds to communicate - Stops babbling when hears familiar voice - Around 12 months, begins to say single words (often 'momma', 'dada', sibling's name or pet's name) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Takes turns in conversation - May try to imitate adult speech - Enjoys action rhymes and singing - Uses gestures to communicate (points, waves, offers object)
12 - 15 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understands more words than says - Understands familiar words at the end of a sentence (e.g., 'Get the ball') - Understands simple instructions (e.g., 'kiss Mommy', 'give to Daddy') - Enjoys sound-making toys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Says around 10 words (may not be clear), but still babbles - Makes sounds while point or reaching for desired object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May show anxiety toward unfamiliar adults - Likes watching adults (or older children for short periods of time)
15 - 18 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rapid increase in number of words understood - Understands familiar words in middle of sentence ('See the doggie run?') - Listens, responds to instructions (e.g., 'put on your shoes', 'throw the ball') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Says 20 or more words (may not be clear) - Imitates gestures and words - Often uses babbling and words during play - Varies pitch and loudness when 'talking' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simple pretend play emerges - Plays alone, but likes to be near familiar adult
18 - 24 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understands 200-500 words - Understands sentences based on word order ('Big Bird is tickling Cookie Monster' vs. 'Cookie Monster is tickling Big Bird') - Child's name helps focus on requests, commands (e.g., 'John, sit down') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Says up to 50 words - Spoken vocabulary increases rapidly - Begins to say 2 or 3 words together (e.g., 'Mommy sit', 'two big doggies') - Frequently asks names for objects and people (towards 24 months) - Uses sounds 'p', 'b', 'm' & 'w' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gets frustrated if not understood - Follows adult gestures, body language, facial expressions - Play based on own interests - Pretend play develops (e.g., feeds doll, drives car)