

Speech & Language Red Flags

Provided to you by:
The Family Resource Center at Community Gatepath

Age	Typical Development	Talk to professional if:
0-6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eye gaze/smile ○ Laughs, squeals, coos ○ Early turn-taking with caregiver ○ Responds to, recognized caregiver's voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Doesn't seem to listen to voice ○ Not smiling, cooing
6-12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plays with sounds ○ Reacts to different types of voices ○ Understand social daily routines ○ Points, gestures ○ Changes facial and body expressions when happy or upset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not making different sounds ○ Doesn't react to speech patterns

<p>12-18 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Uses 5 to 20 words or approximations ○ Points to familiar named objects/persons ○ Increased inflectional patterns-Sounding more like real speech ○ Imitates sounds ○ Follows simple directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not using more than 5 words ○ Doesn't find named objects ○ Doesn't vary his speech patterns
<p>18-24 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Begins to combine words ○ Imitates new words ○ More types of words-actions, descriptors ○ Follows more complex directions ○ Answers simple questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expressive vocabulary is less than 50 words; not using two words together ○ Unable to follow any directions

<p>24-30 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expands two-word combinations ○ Increased use of modifiers (“I hit baby”, “Me want more milk”) ○ Completes nursery rhymes ○ Relates past experiences ○ Answers questions regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not acquiring and using new words ○ Same number of words as of 6 months ago ○ Cannot be understood by even familiar listeners
<p>30 + months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expresses complete simple sentences ○ Has conversational skills ○ Talks about past, present, and future ○ Tells stories ○ Answers abstract questions ○ Begins to “Play” with language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Same as above ○ Parents are concerned ○ Others are concerned

When Might It Be Autism?

- Uninterested in conversations
- No pointing to show interests or wants
- Notices some sounds and ignores others
- Someone's concerned that he's deaf
- Ignores most toys, or plays with just one or two
- Can focus on one thing surprisingly long
- Concern with diminished pain response
- Slow to learn because doesn't want to do something until he can do it "right"
- Babbles in his own language but not baby talk
- Very interested in or aversive to particular textures
- Stares at fingers or turns them oddly

Motor Red Flags

Age	Typical Development	Talk to Professional if:
4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lifts head 90 degrees on tummy ○ Mouths hands or toy ○ Holds and shakes a rattle ○ Nippling or breastfeeding with good coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If stiff or difficult to diaper or clean ○ If eyes don't follow movement or focus toward sound ○ If gagging or choking with swallowing ○ If oral feeding for more than 30 minutes.
8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reaches for toy while sitting ○ Gets to hands and knees position ○ Combines two toys together, bangs or matches ○ Finger feeds cracker or cereal ○ Bites and chews on toy or cracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If not sitting independently ○ If not moving toward desired object-via rolling, reaching, pulling up ○ If not bringing hands to mouth ○ If mealtimes are unpleasant
12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climbs onto chair or sofa ○ Cruises (crawls fast, walks) ○ Releases toy with precision, stacks two cubes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If not pulling to stand ○ If not purposeful in play with toys ○ If bottle is only source of nutrition

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scribbles ○ Holds cup to drink ○ Eats some table foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If rejection or refusal of food at mealtime is expected
18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Runs ○ Walks upstairs, one hand held ○ Removes shoes and socks ○ Helps with dressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If not walking independently ○ If not using a spoon or cup with success ○ If bottle is primary source of nutrition
24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rides tricycle ○ Walks downstairs, one hand held ○ Catches large ball with arms and body ○ Turns pages one at a time ○ Drinks from cup using one hand ○ Undresses completely, helps dress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If falling frequently ○ If fearful of movement, uneven surfaces, same age peers/younger ○ If drooling is a nuisance ○ If caregiver(s) or other involved professionals are concerned

Reasons for Concern “Motor Delay”

It is a good general rule to pay much less attention to a single abnormal or doubtful sign than to a combination of signs (Illingworth 1966). It is not always possible to know which babies will need treatment. When in doubt, heed a combination of potential problem signs through a follow-up program.

Signs to watch for from birth to 3 months of age

1. Limited random movements
2. Easy and frequent startle responses
3. Poor head control
4. Increased stiffness that may not feel like true spasticity
5. Reliance on head and neck hyperextension during movement
6. Feeding problems
7. Respiratory problems
8. Irritability

Signs to watch for from 4 to 8 months of age

1. Hypotonia
2. Mass patterns of movement
3. Limited variety of movement patterns
4. Asymmetry
5. Limited spinal extension/limited control in prone
6. Limited visual control
7. Limited reach and grasp/fisted hands

Signs to watch for from 9 to 12 months of age

1. Limited variety of movement
2. Poor trunk control
3. Poor protective responses
4. Poor balance responses
5. Poor manual skills
6. Hypotonicity