

SPEECH SOUND DEVELOPMENT

Speech sounds develop gradually - from birth to a child's seventh or eighth year. It is best to think about sound development in terms of age ranges rather than specific ages. As a parent, you should be better able to understand your child as he gets older and his ability to use a sound correctly improves. Remember, even if your child is able to make the sound in a word, he may not yet be able to use it in sentences or in conversation.

Typical Pattern of Speech Sound Development:



p, b, m, w, h
t, d, n

Early sounds: before 3 years of age



k, g, y, ng, f, s, z

Appear between 3 and 3 ½ years of age
(understood 50 to 60% of the time)



sh, j, ch, l

Appear after 4 years of age
(understood 80% of the time)



r, th, v

Appear after 5 years of age
(understood 90-100% of the time)

Early sound milestones

By 12 months, babies should:

- Babble using different syllables (baba; mada);
- Use vowels AND consonants to babble and make up words (5-6 different sounds);
- Use 3 to 5 single words.

Strategies to help your child:

- Speak clearly. Repeat sounds, words and sentences that your child says.
- Encourage him to watch your mouth by being face-to-face.
- Make silly sounds with your baby (i.e. choo-choo, animal sounds).
- Use nursery rhymes and songs.
- Ask her to show you when you don't understand.
- Repeat what he has said. This helps him know that you understood and are listening.

