

WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

By 3 years of age

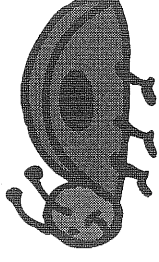
- Does not use simple, complete 4-5 word sentences
- Does not relay simple personal events using sentences
- Does not follow unfamiliar and multi-step instructions
- Does not answer simple questions appropriately
- Continues to repeat the first sound of words (e.g. b-b-ball)
- Does not pretend to read books
- Does not ask WHY?

By 4 years of age

- Does not relay events
- Does not maintain conversation using complex sentences
- Does not use prepositions (e.g. in/on/under/next to/between) and pronouns (e.g. he/she/his/her)

If you have used the above activities for a period of 3 months and your child has still not achieved the above-mentioned milestones, a formal speech-language assessment with a Speech-Language Pathologist is recommended.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT 3- to 4-Year Old Child



Typical speech and language development at 3 - 3½ years of age includes the following:

- Uses 4-5 word sentences consistently
- Uses pronouns I, you, me correctly
- Uses some plurals (e.g. cats) and past tense forms (e.g. jumped)
- Knows at least 3 location words (prepositions), usually in, on, under
- Knows main body parts and should be able to indicate these and name them
- Understands simple questions related to his/her environment and activities
- Should be able to give his/her sex, name, age
- About 90% of what he/she says should be intelligible

Typical speech and language development at 3½ - 4 years of age includes the following:

- Uses 5-7 or more words in a sentence
- Knows names of familiar animals and objects
- Names common objects in picture books/magazines
- Knows 1 or more colours
- Understands concepts such as longer/large when a contrast is given
- Often indulges in make-believe
- Uses extensive verbalisation when carrying out activities
- Can usually repeat words of four syllables
- Answers simple questions (e.g. What do you do when you are hungry?)
- Uses verbs that end in -ing (e.g. walking)
- Uses adjectives (describing words)
- Vowels and the consonants p, b, m, w, t, n and k are well-established. More difficult sounds such as l, r, s, sh, ch, y, v, z, and th may still be distorted
- People outside the family can understand your child's speech



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Activities to help stimulate your 3 – 3½ year old's speech and language development:

- **REPEAT NEW WORDS** over and over.
- **CLAP WORDS INTO SYLLABLES.** For example, butterfly=bu-tter-fly=3 claps.
- **HELP YOUR CHILD LISTEN AND FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS** by playing games. For example: "Simon says touch Daddy's nose"; "Simon says pick up the ball".
- **TAKE YOUR CHILD ON TRIPS** and talk about what you see before, during and after the trip.
- **LET YOUR CHILD TELL YOU THE ANSWERS TO SIMPLE QUESTIONS.**
- **LET YOUR CHILD DELIVER SIMPLE MESSAGES FOR YOU.** For example: "Mommy needs you, Daddy".
- **DESCRIBE WHAT YOU ARE DOING, THINKING AND PLANNING.**
- **CARRY ON DAILY CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR CHILD,** preferably when the two of you have some quiet time together.
- **ASK QUESTIONS** in order to let your child think and talk.
- **SHOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR CHILD SAYS** by answering, smiling and nodding your head.
- **READ BOOKS EVERYDAY.**
- **INTRODUCE EVERYDAY ACTIONS** using familiar objects/toys. For example, allow your child to play with the objects and give a one-step command. For example, "Brush the doll's teeth", "Wash the doll's face", "Give the doll something to drink". When your child is able to follow the one-step command easily, use a bigger variety of everyday objects. Give two-step commands. For example, "Wash the teddy's face and brush the doll's face", "Wash the doll's hair and the teddy's back".
- **INTRODUCE LOCATION WORDS (PREPOSITIONS).** For example, while you are playing with your child or engaging in everyday routines such as making a sandwich, tell your child where to put the various objects. For example "Put the bread **on** the table"; "Put the box **under** the bed". When your child is able to do this correctly, ask him/her where the object is. For example, "Where is the box?"

INTRODUCE CONCEPTS SUCH AS SIZE AND COLOUR using familiar objects. For example, say to your child: "Here is the **big** ball"; "Here is the **small** ball". Once your child can group the objects correctly, ask him/her to give you a specific object. For example, "Give me the **big** ball."

Activities to help stimulate your 3 ½ - 4 year old's speech and language development:

- **CHOOSE OBJECTS THAT YOU USE IN EVERYDAY ROUTINES. TALK ABOUT HOW THE OBJECTS ARE THE SAME OR DIFFERENT.** Demonstrate and tell your child how to use the objects.
- **HELP YOUR CHILD TO TELL STORIES USING BOOKS AND PICTURES.** For example, tell your child a short, simple story and ask him/her to retell the story while using the picture. If your child has difficulty retelling the story, help him/her, as story-telling should be an enjoyable experience.
- **READ LONGER STORIES TO YOUR CHILD.**
- **TALK ABOUT PLACES YOU HAVE BEEN TO OR WILL BE GOING TO.**
- **HELP YOUR CHILD PRODUCE LONGER, MORE COMPLEX AND COMPOUND SENTENCES** by introducing the use of **CONJUNCTIONS** (joining words) such as *and*.
- **USE WORDS OR SOUNDS THAT YOUR CHILD HAS DIFFICULTY WITH.** Ask your child to look at your mouth as you say the word/sound clearly.

