

How do I know if my child is reaching the milestones?

Here is a checklist that you can follow to determine if your child's communication skills are developing on schedule. If anything is marked 'no' you are welcome to contact us about it or ask your child's Health Visitor.

Six to twelve months. My baby:

	Yes	No
Understands "no"	—	—
Babbles e.g. babababa	—	—
Tries to communicate by actions or gesture e.g. pointing	—	—
Tries to repeat your sounds	—	—

Speech and language therapy department
Vaughan Building, Ruckhall Lane
Belmont, Hereford HR2 9RP
Tel: 01432 363975
www.wyevalley.nhs.uk
(Services, community services)

If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call 01432 363975

Talking with your baby (6 to 12 months)



Babbling stage (six to twelve months)

From six months your baby will be making a much greater variety of sounds, such as 'goo', 'der', 'adah', 'gaba'.

By nine months they will begin to use strings of babble with the intonation pattern of speech. This is called jargon and often sounds very like ordinary speech. Jargon contains most of the sounds they will need to talk later on.

Also by nine months they will understand 'no' and 'bye-bye' and by one year will be understanding the names of everyday objects such as 'cup', 'dinner', 'ball'. They will also begin to respond to short instructions such as 'Wave bye-bye.... Clap your hands.... Give it to Daddy'.

How to encourage your baby

Words are symbols that represent objects and ideas. Before your baby understands and uses words, s/he has to have some understanding of other symbols such as toys and pictures. Play is therefore essential for learning to talk.

Introduce your child to playing with dolls and teddies - feeding them, washing them, brushing their hair, putting them to bed etc. Talk about what you're doing and your baby will soon join in. Later on they will play like this on their own and "talk" to teddy.

Talk to your baby about things as they happen e.g. say what you are doing as you go about your daily routine, emphasising the words of familiar objects, especially when they can see the objects and associate the words to them, e.g. "I'm putting **juice** in your **cup**".

Watch your baby and take notice of the things that they are looking or pointing at. You can then talk about that. This is important because it helps them to understand that each object has a name and that you are interested in them and value their communication.

Remember when doing all of these things, to use short, simple and 'tuneful' sentences and to leave pauses to allow your baby time to respond.

Games to play

- 1) Sing nursery rhymes where an action accompanies certain words e.g. 'Humpty Dumpty', 'The wheels on the bus'.
- 2) Play with farm animals and make the appropriate noises, encouraging your baby to copy you. You could also do this when looking at books.
- 3) Record your babies babbling and play it back to them.
- 4) Play together in front of the mirror, watching and copying each other, pulling faces, poking your tongue out, licking your lips.
- 5) Play telephones - talk and babble down a play telephone.
- 6) Look at books together. Even young babies enjoy the shared experience of sitting with you and looking at bright pictures of everyday things such as animals and toys.....the simpler the better. There are different kinds of books that you can try e.g. pop up, cloth and fabric, touch and feel and lift the flap books.