



YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT (HEARING, SPEECH AND LANGUAGE)

Extracted from the Northern Ireland Personal Child Health Record (PCHR, or 'red book'). The full version of 'Your Baby's Development' is available within the PCHR.

Birth to 8 weeks

- Is startled by sudden loud noises, e.g. a hand clap or a door slamming.
- Blinks or opens eyes widely, stops sucking or starts to cry at loud noises.
- Pauses, appears to listen and may turn towards sudden ongoing sounds when they begin, e.g. a vacuum cleaner.

9-16 weeks

- Quietens or smiles to familiar voices even when unable to see speaker. Turns eyes or head towards voice. Shows excitement at sounds, e.g. voices, footsteps.
- Makes soft sounds when awake. Gurgles and coos.

5-9 months

- Makes laughter-like and sing-song sounds. e.g. 'a-a', 'muh', 'goo', 'der', 'aroo', 'adagh'.
- Turns immediately to familiar voices across the room or to very quiet noises on each side (if not too occupied with other things).
- Listens closely to familiar everyday sounds and looks for very quiet sounds made out of sight. Makes sounds to show friendliness or annoyance.

- Babbles, e.g. 'da da da', 'ma ma ma', 'ba ba ba'. Shows pleasure in babbling loudly and tunefully in response to others. Starts to copy other sounds like coughing or smacking lips.

9-12 months

- Shows some response to own name.
- Babbles loudly, often making sounds with rhythm that sound like a simple conversation.
- Responds to words like 'no' and 'bye bye' even when the speakers gestures cannot be seen.
- Waves 'bye bye' and claps hands.
- Around 12 months, may use 1 or 2 words.

1-2 years

- Around 15 months, makes lots of speech like sounds. Uses 2-6 words correctly that you understand, e.g. 'teddy' when seeing or wanting a teddy bear.
- Around 18 months, when playing, makes speech-like sounds with rhythm that sound like a simple conversation. Uses 6-20 words that you understand. Follows simple instructions, e.g. 'show me your shoes'.
- Finds and points to pictures in books by using words 'look' and 'see'. Turns pages one at a time.
- Around 24 months, uses 50 or more words correctly that you understand. Puts 2 or more words together to make simple sentences, e.g. 'more milk'. Joins in nursery rhymes and songs. Talks to self during play – speech may be unclear to others.

2-3 years

- Around 30 months, uses 200 or more words that you understand. Uses pronouns, e.g. 'I', 'me' and 'you'. Uses sentences but many will lack adult structure. Talks to self during play. Asks questions. Says a few nursery rhymes.

- Around 36 months, uses a large number of words – speech is clear to familiar listeners.

3-5 years

- Speech is clear to unfamiliar listeners. Around 4-5 years, talks in sentences, where words and grammar are mostly in the correct order.

References:

B. McCormick, Children's Hearing Assessment Centre, Nottingham, UK – 'Can Your Baby Hear You?' (1982)

Mary D. Sheridan – 'Birth to Five Years' (1997)

Other translations of this leaflet are available to view/download at:

www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications-newborn-hearing

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