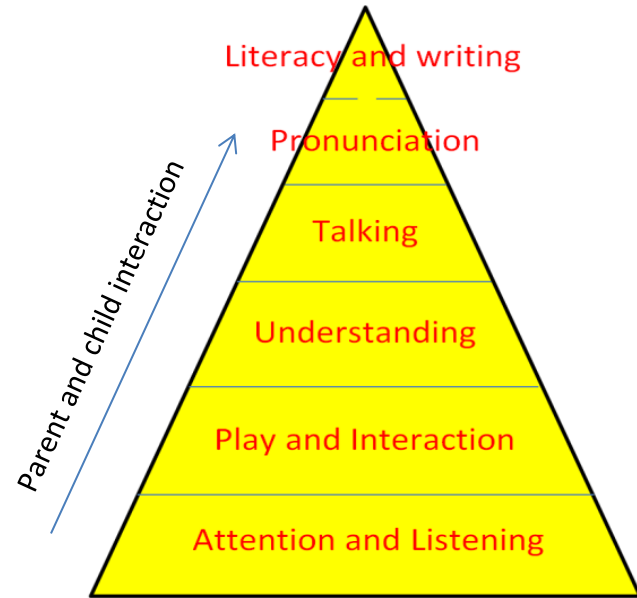


## Communication Development Pyramid



# How Children Learn to Talk: A guide for parents of children under 5

**Concerned about your child's talking?**

Contact Sam (Specialist Speech and Language Therapist at Chatty Chipmunks) to arrange a FREE no obligation 15 minute wellbeing chat to discuss your concerns and how we can help.

Phone: 07425 914487

Email: [sam@chattychipmunks.co.uk](mailto:sam@chattychipmunks.co.uk)

Web: [www.chattychipmunks.co.uk](http://www.chattychipmunks.co.uk)



## Typical communication milestones

### 12-18 months:

- Developing understanding of basic instructions and objects: able to point to pictures or objects. Responds to own name.
- First words appear around 12 months. Babble sounds like words.
- Early functional play, e.g. using a brush to brush hair
- Using approximately 10 meaningful words by 18 months

### 18-24 months:

- Points to body parts and understands 2-part instructions, e.g. “where’s the **blue ball**?”
- 2 step play, e.g. cuddling dolly and putting her to bed by age 2
- Understanding approximately 200-300 words by age 2
- Uses 50 words and 2 word sentences, e.g. “more juice” by age 2

### 2-2.5 years:

- Understanding of more complicated instructions by age 2.5 years
- More advanced pretend play develops with up to 3 steps, e.g. putting food in oven, turning oven knobs and feeding baby

### 2.5-3 years:

- Understanding increasingly complicated sentences
- Should be largely intelligible for familiar adults
- Vocabulary of 200 words and sentences of 3-4 words in length

### 3-4 years:

- Sentences of 4-6 words in length by age 3
- Able to recall some events in the past and tell simple stories
- Uses past, present and future tenses with ease
- Some grammatical errors, e.g. “caught” rather than “caught”

## How can we help?

If you are concerned about your child’s talking please contact us for a FREE 15 minute consultation. Research shows that early intervention results in the best outcomes.

If appropriate, we can offer your child an assessment with a trained speech and language therapist to establish the nature of any difficulties and deliver therapy or advise onward referrals as necessary.

In the meantime, there are activities and strategies that you can use at home:-

- ❖ Sing songs around key vocabulary, e.g. “peel banana, peel peel banana, we’re peeling the banana, oh yes we are!”
- ❖ Use gestures alongside your talking to support your child’s understanding. If you know Makaton this is an excellent way of supporting understanding while also modelling ways for your child to communicate before they can use the words.
- ❖ Try to spend 5-10 minutes every day playing on the floor and interacting with your child - “Special Time”. During this time use the following strategies:-
  - Follow your child’s lead. Copy what they want to do with the toys and match your child’s talking. E.g. if your child use 1-2 word sentences, you do the same.
  - Rather than asking questions, comment on your child’s play, e.g. instead of “what are you doing?” you say “you’re cuddling the dolly”, “cars bump”.