

Combiners: 18-24 months

Social Interaction

- Plays alone and with adults for a short time.
- Doesn't like adults giving suggestions during play.
- Enjoys pretend play e.g. brushes doll's hair, pretends to feed teddy.
- Enjoys looking at pictures in books with adults.

HOW CAN I HELP?:

Follow the child's lead in play.

WHAT NEXT?:

Make story time fun by using silly voices and sounds. Respond to and let the child lead when making up a new story

Talking/Expressive Language

- Says about 50 words-200 words (naming words and action words).
- Tries to copy words they hear.
- By 2 years: Starts to say 2 word phrases e.g. "more juice", "Amy jump".

HOW CAN I HELP?:

Expand on child's language by adding a word e.g. if they say "ball", you say "it's a red ball!"

WHAT NEXT?:

Slow down during songs and stories so that the child can join in.

Play and Social Development

- Matches objects to pictures
- Engages in simple pretend play e.g. they brush teddy's hair
- Plays alongside other children (parallel play)

HOW CAN I HELP?:

Let children help with everyday routines like placing clothes in drawers or putting away toys. You can take turns doing this. Playing turn taking games will help with later sharing.

WHAT NEXT?:

Sing simple songs about emotions such as 'If You're Happy and You Know It'.

Listening and Understanding

- Concentrates on an activity of own choosing for a few minutes.
- Understands over 200 single words.
- Understands simple instructions without the support of visual cues e.g. "get your cup" or simple questions e.g. "where's your blanket?"
- Understands 2 key words in a sentence e.g. "get your hat and coat".
- Concentrates on one thing at a time and finds it difficult to switch. This is called single channelled attention.

HOW CAN I HELP?:

Use gestures as a visual cue.

Break down the instruction into small parts and give one at a time.

Say the child's name before giving an instruction.

WHAT NEXT?:

Give the child time to respond, and look at them while you wait

Speech Sounds

- Misses out sounds and substitutes sounds e.g. "tar" for car or "doo" for juice.
- Says consonant sounds from previous sections (m, p, b, t, d, w) and now also learning s f k g
- Many words are unclear, may miss off endings.

HOW CAN I HELP?:

If the child says something that's not quite right, just repeat it back to them correctly e.g. they say "doo", you say "yes, it's juice!"

WHAT NEXT?:

When you are playing together, use lots of sounds during play e.g. make vehicle noises. Don't ask them to copy - many children will start to do this themselves after a while.

Typically developing children have a **VOCABULARY BURST** between 18-21 months (+/- 3 months). During this burst, children can acquire up to 5 new words a day - around **35 new words a week!** Children therefore need to hear lots of good quality language



Want some more ideas and activities to support your child's communication? Take a look at our resources on Halton's Communication Hub