

If you would like any information or advice about your child's talking, please contact
Bright Start Speech and Language Therapy:



0203 316 1897

Useful websites:
www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk
www.talkingpoint.org.uk

All children learn to talk at slightly different speeds.
The information in this leaflet is only a guide.

This leaflet was produced by Whittington Health
Speech and Language Therapy Early Years Service

Learning to Talk A Parent's Guide 0 to 12 months



Learning to Communicate The First Year

Children start communicating from birth. Below is a guide to what babies may be doing during the first year of life.

Birth to 3 Months

Babies start to use cries and sounds to try and tell you what they want. It's not long before you may hear differences between your baby's cries of pain, hunger and tiredness.

3 to 6 Months

Babies start to watch people's faces when they speak to them. Babies may start to make vowel-like sounds and by the time they are 6 months, they may be babbling, e.g. "ba-ba-ba".

6 to 9 Months

Your baby may babble in long strings of repeated sounds, e.g. "ba-da-goo". Babies may be responding to the word "no" and beginning to understand a few common words, e.g. "bye bye" and their name.

9 to 12 Months

Babies begin to imitate sounds, such as coughing and may say a first word, usually "Mama", "Dada" or "Bye". They may respond to simple questions such as "where's your cup?", by looking at the object.

How Can You Help?

It takes two to learn to talk ... and what you do makes the difference.

Talk to your baby

Use single words or short sentences, e.g. "splash!", "wash baby" during everyday activities such as mealtimes, bath time and shopping. This helps your baby to link a word to an object or action.



Have conversations

Listen and then respond to your baby, for example copy your baby's sounds or say what you think your baby is thinking. Babies like to know you are listening to them and this will help them to take turns in talking when they are older.

Sometimes babies need quiet times to listen to their own voices - these are times when you can just watch and listen.

Spend time face to face

It's important that babies can see you when you are talking to them. Communication happens naturally when we are close together and looking at each other.