

# How Can I Help My Baby to Listen and Talk?

Listening skills grow and change along with your baby's other behaviours. The chart below tells how babies use their hearing as they grow.

## 1-3 months

- jumps or startles when there is a sudden loud sound
- seems aware of sounds (telephone ringing, music)
- voice is soothing and comforting to your baby

## 3-6 months

- turns eyes and head to look for sounds or baby's name
- enjoys music and noise-making toys
- begins to coo and gurgle (e.g., ooh, ba-ba)

## 6-10 months

- responds to familiar voices and sounds
- makes many different babbling sounds
- understands common words such as "no" and "more"

## 10-15 months

- understands when you say simple things
- uses many sounds and imitates simple words
- may use a few single words meaningfully

## 15-18 months

- can tell where sounds are coming from
- points to body parts
- uses 3 or 4 words in addition to ma-ma and da-da

## 24 months

- use 20-50 words
- may combine 2 words such as "mommy go" or "want juice"
- follows simple directions such as "put the cup on the table"

## What Can I Do?

- Talk to your baby in a pleasant and natural voice.
- Hold your young baby close to you and talk or sing quietly.
- Try to imitate the sounds your baby makes.
- Provide toys like rattles, squeakers, and bells.
- Play games with your baby like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.
- Read books and talk about objects and toys. Ask your baby to point to the pictures.
- Call attention to sounds around your baby. For example, "Listen! The cat is meowing. / Can you hear the kitty meowing?"
- Make simple speech sounds (e.g., dada, bye-bye) and animal sounds, and encourage your baby to copy you.
- Name objects such as toys, food and body parts, and encourage your baby to copy you.
- Sing simple songs, say short rhymes, and play musical games with your baby.



## When Should I Have My Baby's Hearing Tested?

Hearing, talking and understanding speech are closely related. If you think your baby has a hearing problem, talk to your doctor and have your baby's hearing tested by an audiologist as soon as possible. A baby is never too young to have a hearing test. Your child will experience greater success, if an existing hearing loss is found early.

### For more information:

For more information on how to encourage your infant's speech and language please view the following information sheets:

- Newborn Hearing Screening (*COMING SOON*)
- Preschool Speech Language Development – Birth to 5 Years (*COMING SOON*)
- Developing Reading and Writing Skills (*COMING SOON*)

### Additional Resources:

Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC) Milestone Chart: Speech, Language and Hearing Milestones

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### Getting Help

If you suspect a problem, consult a Registered Audiologist (R.Aud).

To find an audiologist:

- Contact HEALTH LINK - Health Advice 24/7 at 8-1-1
- Visit: [www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca](http://www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca)
- Find an audiologist on the Alberta Association of Audiologists website, by visiting: <https://www.aaofa.ca/Find-An-Audiologist>

