



# COMMUNICATION MILESTONES

Birth - 6 months

## birth - 3 months

### Summary Skills:

- \* Brief visual contact during feeding and quiet play moments, cry diminishes with adult eye contact
- \* Smiles in response to adult face or voice
- \* Attends to voices of others
- \* Vocalizes to express happiness/joy
- \* Vocalizes two different sounds, including sounds made in the back of the throat /k/ and /g/

### Red Flags

- ▶ No vocalizing sounds
- ▶ No eye contact during feeding or play
- ▶ No smiles or attempt to imitate facial expressions

### Communication & Play

Playing at this level should include a lot of slowly paced, purposeful interaction. Use bath time, diaper changes and feeding as opportunities to engage and interact. Sing softly. Smile. Make simple facial expressions like pursed lips for kisses. Pause often. Wait for their “turn” which could be visual connection, full body movements/wiggles or their own voicing to continue to play. Do this from all positions including during tummy time, laying on back, belly and sides. Show them that they are initiating the communication and that communication gives them power and control over their environment.

### Skills Checklist

- Brief visual contact during feeding & play
- Able to regulate after being startled
- Starting to imitate facial expressions
- Starting to imitate and respond to smiles to familiar caregivers
- Pauses to listen for adult voice
- Takes their “turn” with eye gaze or full body movements
- Enjoys caregivers voice & singing
- Turns head toward direction of sounds
- Vocalizes at least two different sounds including back sounds /k/ and /g/
- Attends to speakers mouth and eyes
- Can discriminate between harsh and soothing voices

### Coming Soon

- ▶ Recognizes name
- ▶ Anticipates feeding
- ▶ More differentiation of sounds
- ▶ Turn taking with voice
- ▶ Laughing

## 3-6 months

### Summary Skills:

- \* Laughs
- \* Babbles with reduplicated syllable
- \* Initiates voice with a listener
- \* Anticipates feeding with excitement
- \* Recognizes own name
- \* Stops when told “no” some of the time
- \* Imitates facial expressions
- \* Bangs objects and will imitate caregiver

### Red Flags

- ▶ Does not imitate facial expressions
- ▶ Limited or no vocalizations
- ▶ Does not visually engage during interactions
- ▶ Does not initiate communication
- ▶ Cries not differentiated

### Communication & Play

Playing at this level should include more affect, facial expressions and gestures from the adult. Babies enjoy smiling in a mirror, reaching and banging objects and having their caregiver take “their turn” doing the same. They are learning to be a communicator and initiate with others. Cause and effect toys can be fun to give them opportunities to be independent and solve “little problems”.

### Skills Checklist

- Laughs
- Babbles using same syllable
- Babbles when alone
- Starts to differentiate cries of hunger, protest and attention
- Mouths objects and their own hands
- Recognizes own name (closer to 6 months)
- Stops actions when hearing voices
- Vocal turn taking begins
- Starting to demonstrate vocalizing for initiation of play and interaction
- Maintains visual connection during play
- More attention eyes and mouth of speaker when listening

### Coming Soon

- ▶ Separation anxiety
- ▶ Gestures for protest and attention
- ▶ Less mouthing of toys
- ▶ Differentiating more sounds

**Family Tree Therapies**