

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES



By Age 3:

- Understands basic “who,” “what,” “where,” and “why” questions
- Speaks in longer sentences (5+ words) and shares simple stories, often about past experiences (e.g. visiting grandparents or attending childcare)
- Is mostly understood by people outside their family
- Shows affection for favourite friends and engages in multi-step pretend play (like cooking)
- Begins to understand that print has meaning (e.g. in signs, lists, menus)
- Starts to notice and enjoy rhyming words

By Age 4:

- Follows instructions with three or more steps (e.g. “First get the toothbrush, then put tooth paste on, then brush your teeth”)
- Uses more grown-up grammar and tells structured stories with a beginning, middle, and end
- Tries to solve problems by talking with adults and peers
- Shows more complex imaginative play (such as pretending a bowl is a hat)
- Is understood by unfamiliar people almost all the time
- Can make simple rhymes (like “rat-mat”)
- Begins to connect letters with their sounds (e.g. “A says ‘ah’”)



By Age 5:

- Follows group directions like “Everyone wearing blue can line up”
- Understands “if...then” instructions: “If you eat, then you can play”
- Tries to make friends happy to seek their approval and begin to show independence in social situations (eg. interacting with other children without introduction) will also start to describe events in more detail
- Uses clear speech with very few mistakes in sounds and can name all the letters of the alphabet and their sounds confidently
- Identifies the starting sound in words, like “Dog starts with the ‘duh’ sound”

