

# Speech and Language Milestones

## 3 to 4 Years



### From 3 to 4 years, your child:

- understands many words and most of what you say to him/her
- understands words that express ideas - like the time of day ("morning", "tonight"), the position of things ("in front", "down"), and questions that start with "how" and "what if"
- understands directions that have 2 or 3 actions ("look on the table and find a story book that you would like to read")
- speaks so that most people can understand almost all of what he/she says
- uses sentences that have 4 to 6 words
- asks different questions such as "how", "why" and "when"
- can have long conversations with you
- uses language to joke, tease and pretend
- plays with other children

### How you can help your child's speech and language grow:

- let your child help you do things such as cooking and gardening - talk about what you are doing
- keep your child's conversations going by paying attention and showing that you are interested
- add new ideas to your conversations (example - talk about how things are the same and how they are different)
- use words that your child has trouble with in your own speech
- encourage your child to tell stories using books and pictures
- start reading longer stories to your child
- let your child play with other children
- remember that it is normal for your child to repeat words and sounds at this age

Adapted with permission from material developed by First Words Preschool Speech and Language Program of Ottawa-Carleton led by Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services.

### Parents, trust your instincts and call us if you ....

- have questions or concerns about the way your child's speech and language skills are developing
- want to refer your child for a speech and language assessment
- want more information on other topics related to speech and language development



**DON'T WAIT  
EARLY HELP MAKES  
A DIFFERENCE!**

Call 519-272-8216 or 1-866-333-7716  
and ask for **smallTALK**

Visit our web site at [www.smalltalkinfo.ca](http://www.smalltalkinfo.ca)

Services provided by smallTALK are funded  
by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.