



I'm 4 years old... and just listen to me talk!

Early Years Speech, Language and Communication Development



Your child should be starting to:

- use lots of words and put longer sentences together using ‘and’ and ‘because’
- understand questions with two parts, and questions starting with ‘why’
- understand more complicated language such as ‘might’ and ‘maybe’
- be aware of language in relation to past, present and future; for example ‘yesterday’, ‘today’, ‘tomorrow’
- use grammar to mark past tense by putting ‘-ed’ on the end of words, but still makes some mistakes; for example “Mummy, I goed to the park”
- recall and enjoy telling stories and singing songs
- understand turn taking in conversation and use talk to work things out with other children and adults
- understand spoken instructions without stopping what they are doing to look at the speaker
- use most speech sounds correctly, with the exception of ‘th’, ‘r’, ‘j’, ‘ch’, ‘sh’ and blends such as ‘fl’; and
- sometimes ‘s’ is sounded as ‘th’.

*From the ICAN Stages of Speech
and Language Development*

No matter how old I am – one of the best ways to help my speech and language development is to have some quiet time with me so we can talk, sing songs or look at books.

It is always best to make sure that the TV and music are switched off when we play.

Helpful hints for 4-5 years

Sing songs and nursery rhymes with me – it helps me to be aware of all the different sounds in words.

Play games like *Simon Says* or *Musical Statues* with me – these help my listening skills.

Give me time to think before answering for me or finishing my sentences.

I really enjoy sharing books with you – especially ones with rhymes. When you have told me a story, ask me if I can tell it back to you.

Make comments and tell me about what we are doing, it shows me that you are interested in what I say.



Play board games with me – it really helps me to learn how to listen and take turns, which I will need to do to make good conversation.

Tell me about lots of different words that mean a similar thing, such as big, huge, enormous.

Please remember that all children develop speech and language at different times and different speeds, so it can be perfectly ok for your child not to be showing all the behaviours in this leaflet.

If you have any questions or any concerns about your child's speech, language or communication, please contact your Health Visitor.

This leaflet has been developed in partnership between Sure Start Children's Centres and the Children's Integrated Therapy and Equipment Service, with thanks to the Parents' Forum.

Getting more copies of this leaflet

You can get all our leaflets in large print, easy read format, in Braille, on audio tape or CD, or in other languages. Please phone 01323 747430. They are also available in PDF form, which you can download from our website at eastsussex.gov.uk

East Sussex County Council

County Hall

St Anne's Crescent

Lewes BN7 1UE

Phone: 0345 60 80 190

Fax: 01273 481261

Website: eastsussex.gov.uk/contactus

GK 11/12 0120 2011-12 681



East Sussex County Council permits the use of the document to be used free of charge on behalf of the CYPT. Any sale of this document, without the prior written consent of East Sussex County Council, is prohibited. Permission is required before any part of this document is redistributed. This notice must remain intact and included in all reproductions.

© East Sussex County Council 2014.

The moral rights of the author have been asserted