

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Language Development and Communication (Birth to First Grade)

Definition

Language and Development is about children learning to understand and communicate through language:

- Listening
- Understanding
- Speaking and communicating
- Early literacy

Rationale

- Language development, including listening to others, has a great impact on brain development;
- Children learn language and communication skills by expressing their ideas and feelings, listening, and understanding others;
- In order to learn how to read and write, when children are in elementary school, they need to learn basic concepts about literacy, including purpose and form (grocery lists, letters, books).

What should I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

- Talk to your early learning program provider;
- Talk to your doctor. If you and your doctor are still concerned;
- Call Wisconsin First Step 1-800-642-7837 (24 hour service, a parent specialist is available M-F, between 8AM and 4PM);
- Services for children with disabilities are provided through Birth to 3 or Early Childhood Special Education for children age three to five.

How Can I Help My Child Learn at Home and in the Community?

Infant

- Talk and sing to your baby throughout the day;
- Play “turn-taking” games like peek-a-boo.

Toddler

- Make requests that are clear and specific (“Get your coat” rather than “Get it”);
- Model appropriate interactions with family members, friends, and family pets;
- Use the names of the objects and people your toddler plays with.

Preschooler

- Children learn to ask questions by hearing others ask questions. Ask your child “what, where, when, and why” questions;
- Model good listening skills by always listening and being interested in the child’s communication;
- Give your child opportunities to practice writing by letting him play with envelopes, scrap paper, and pencils.

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

When you talk with your child, repeat what they say and add to it to make a full sentence (speaking and communicating). You are teaching your child listening skills (listening and understanding) and that your child is important to you (self concept).



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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What Does My Child Know? What Can My Child Do?

The Milestone Moments published by the Center for Disease Control provides detailed information of what to expect at each milestone in your child's development. The information below includes a sampling of the skills included in the Milestone Moments.

Infant

- Coos, makes gurgling sounds;
- Turns head toward sounds;
- Babbles with expression and copies sounds he hears;
- Cries in different ways to show hunger, pain, or being tired;
- Strings vowels together when babbling (“ah,” “eh,” “oh”) and likes taking turns with parent while making sounds;
- Responds to own name;
- Understands “no”;
- Uses fingers to point at things;
- Responds to simple spoken requests;
- Uses simple gestures, like shaking head “no” or waving “bye-bye”.

Toddler

- Says several single words;
- Points to show someone what he wants;
- Knows names of familiar people and body parts;
- Says sentences with 2 to 4 words;
- Follows simple instructions;
- Points to things in a book.

Preschooler

- Follows instructions with two or three steps;
- Says first name, age, and sex;
- Talks well enough for strangers to understand most of the time;
- Carries on a conversation using two to three sentences;
- Sings a song or says a poem from memory such as the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” or the “Wheels on the Bus”;
- Tells stories;
- Can say first and last name;
- Speaks very clearly;
- Tells a simple story using full sentences;
- Uses future tense; for example, “Grandma will be here”;
- Says name and address.

Additional Resource

Get Ready to Read!

Get Ready to Read! is designed to support educators, parents, and young children in the development of early literacy skills in the years before kindergarten. Intended for use with all children, the resources and information provided on this site promote skill building, communication between adults and ways to address concerns.

<http://getreadytoread.org/>

Sources: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, Third Edition, Developmental Continuum, February 2011
Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

