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Speech and Language Milestones

3-4 Years

Comprehension (Child's Understanding of Spoken Language)

- Hears you when you call from another room
- Understands temporal concepts (e.g., later, yesterday, tomorrow)
- Answers simple who, what and where questions
- Follows three-step simple related commands (e.g., Get the car, push the car, and give it to me")
- Understands and follows rules most of the time
- Understands categories and items belonging in different categories
- Identifies colors and shapes
- Recognizes language absurdities (e.g., Is that a tiger flying in the sky?)

Production (Child's Verbal Language Skills)

- Talks about what happened during the day (e.g., activities at daycare, preschool, friends' homes)
- Uses sentences with four or more words with some grammatical errors (e.g., "I go-ed to school")
- Says rhyming words (e.g., hat/cat)
- Uses pronouns consistently (e.g., I, you, me, we)
- Most people understand what your child says
- Asks when and how questions
- Develops a sense of humor

Red Flags

- Frequently repeats sounds, syllables, or words when speaking (i.e., stuttering)
- Does not use the first sound of words (e.g., says "at" instead of "bat", omitting the "b" sound)
- Has difficulty enunciating early developing speech sounds p, b, m, w, t, d, n, h, k and g.
- Does not ask questions
- Does not show interest in telling stories or participating in conversations
- Does not use simple sentences

****If your child does not meet most of these milestones by 4 years old, consider scheduling a speech-language evaluation.*