bite·sized beginnings
SPEECH THERAPY

AGES 12-36 MONTHS

SMALL MOMENTS, MORE CONNECTION / WHERE TO START

My toddler isn't talking yet.

Simple ways to connect before words come easily.

For parents of toddlers ages **12-36 months** who are not yet using spoken words or use only a few. Wondering what to do today, and whether to get help? Start here. These ideas support connection; they are not a test or a promise of first words.

01 Notice communication before words.

A reach, a point, a sound, or bringing you a toy can carry a message. Respond to what you think your child means, even when there are no words.

Try: They reach for a car. "Car! Here you go." Give them the car.

02 Join in. Keep your words simple.

Follow something your child enjoys. Copy an action and add a brief word or phrase. Your child does not need to say it back.

Try: Roll a car together: "Go!" or "Car goes!"

03 Fewer questions. More comments.

Trade some questions for comments about what your child notices. Pause to leave room for any response, without requiring speech or eye contact.

Try: Instead of "What is that?" say "A dog! Woof!" Then pause.

Do I need to wait and see?

If you are concerned, ask an SLP and your child's pediatrician about an evaluation and a hearing check. You can use these ideas while seeking support. If your child loses words or other skills, contact their pediatrician promptly.

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SMALL MOMENTS, MORE CONNECTION / TRY IT TODAY

What can I do at home?

One familiar routine. A few words. No spoken answer needed.



During play

Join your child's activity and name the action. A gesture, sound, or shared action can be their turn.

Try: They knock down blocks. You say: "Boom! Down!"



With a book

Follow a picture they notice. Point, make a sound, or comment instead of asking them to name it.

Try: They touch the dog. You say: "Dog! Woof, woof!"



While getting dressed

Add short phrases to what is happening. Speak in the language or languages you use comfortably at home.

Try: As socks go on: "Sock on!" Then: "Other foot!"

Wondering what is expected at this age?

These ASHA parent resources can help. Click a title to open.

Communication Milestones: Age Ranges

Look at the range around your child's age. Not a diagnostic checklist.

Supporting Your Child Who Has a Communication Disorder

You do not have to figure it out alone.

Scan to ask Stephanie about next steps.
bitesizedkids.com/contact

General education; not a substitute for individualized care. Sources: ASHA resources above; ASHA: Late Language Emergence; CDC; Hanen. Reviewed October 25, 2026.