

## WHEN CHILDREN LEARN SOUNDS

Most children learn speech sounds in the same order, but some are quicker than others. This is a rough guide as to what you can expect.

### FROM BIRTH TO 18 MONTHS:



Many words will sound very different from how we would say them, but so long as it's a word, the sounds don't really matter at this stage. Beginnings and ends of words will often be left off ("te" for "teddy", "du" for "duck", etc). Often only parents know what the child is saying!

P B T D N M

### UP TO ABOUT 2 ½ YEARS:



Some ends of words are still missing, but many are now being used. Often the last sound of the word is made the same as the first, so that "dog" may be "dod" or "gog".

P B T D N M W sometimes F

### UP TO ABOUT 3 YEARS:



Often children are still using "t" and "d" for "c" and "g", so that "car" becomes "tar" and "go" will be "doe". Some children still use a hard sound for a soft one, so "sea" is "dee"; "f" may be "b" so that "farm" is "barm" and "van" is "ban".

P B T D N M W usually F sometimes S

### UP TO ABOUT 3 ½ YEARS:



Now beginning to use "c" and "g" as well as "f" and "y". Where two sounds are together, one of them may be left off, so "spoon" is "poon", but "s" may be used in "house" or "sit down".

P B T D N M W C/K G F V S

### UP TO ABOUT 4 YEARS:



By now the "c" and "g" should be fine, as well as the "f". Some children will still miss off "s" in words like "spider" and "stamp". The "l", "r", "y", may be left off as in "pate" for "plate" or mixed up as in "yion" for "lion". Also "ch", "j", "sh", and "th" may be difficult.

P B T D N M W C/K G F V S Z sometimes L and R

### UP TO ABOUT 5 YEARS:



Most sounds will be correct by now, except for “r”, “l” and “th”. Children may still mix up or leave sounds out of longer words, so that “hospital” is “hopital” or “spaghetti” is “sgetti”.

P B T D N M W C/K G F V S Z L R Y usually Sh Ch and J

### UP TO ABOUT 6 YEARS:

Many children still have trouble with “th” and “r”.

Most sounds now correct.

### AFTER 6 YEARS

Most children have all their speech sounds correct by now.

All sounds now correct.