2 to 3 Years: What to Expect

Speech and language milestones for this age, plus the signs that are worth a call to a speech-language pathologist.



AGE
2-3 years

INTELLIGIBILITY
ASHA's wording for this band: speech is becoming clearer but may not be understandable to unfamiliar listeners

What to expect

- Uses word combinations often, though may still repeat some words or phrases
- Tries to get your attention - "look at me!"
- Says their name when asked
- Uses some plural words, like birds or toys
- Uses -ing verbs like eating or running, and adds -ed to talk about past actions
- Gives reasons for things and events - needing a coat because it is cold
- Asks "why" and "how"
- Answers questions like "what do you do when you are sleepy?"
- Correctly produces p, b, m, h, w, d and n in words
- Correctly produces most vowels in words

ASHA's wording for this band: speech is becoming clearer but may not be understandable to unfamiliar listeners.

Worth a Conversation

- ! Not combining words into short phrases
- ! Family cannot understand most of what the child says
- ! Does not follow two-step directions
- ! Does not ask questions

You never need a referral to ask a speech-language pathologist for an evaluation, and you never need to wait and see. If you are wondering whether to call, that is reason enough.