

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of speaker-listener intentions and interactions, and all elements in the environment surrounding the message. It is often referred to as *social language skills*.

Age	Milestones
Birth – 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Startles to loud sounds • Responds to voice and sound • Turns head toward sound source • Watches speaker's face when spoken to • Discriminates between strangers and familiar people • Stops crying when spoken to • Varies responses to different family members • Smiles when spoken to • Has a social smile • Uses babbling for gaining attention and expressing demand • Establishes eye contact
6 – 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to "no" • Responds to name and pats image of self in mirror • Points to learn new vocabulary • Tries to "talk" to listener • Coos and squeals for attention • Laughs when playing with objects • Tries to communicate by actions and gestures • Smiles at self in mirror • Plays pat-a-cake and peek-a-boo games • Copies simple actions of others • Shouts to attract attention
1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows simple directions, especially with a gestural cue • Waves bye-bye • Indicates wet pants • Repeats actions that made someone laugh • Engages in parallel play • Pairs gestures with words to make wants known (e.g., "more" and "up") • Imitates adult behaviors in play • Refers to self by name • Exhibits verbal turn-taking • Protests by vocalizing "no" • Engages in simple pretend play, such as talking on a telephone • Says "bye" and other social words, such as "hi," "thank you," and "please" • Talks to self during play • Practices intonation, sometimes imitating an adult
2 – 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watches other children and briefly joins in their play • Participates in associative play • Requests permission for items or activities • Begins to use language for fantasies, jokes, and teasing • Makes conversational repairs when listener does not understand

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Age	Milestones
2 – 3 years, continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in longer dialogues • Begins to play house • Participates in simple group activities • Defends own possessions • Carries on "conversation" with self and dolls • Engages in simple, make-believe activities • Begins to control behavior verbally rather than just physically • Holds up fingers to tell age • Looks for missing toys • Helps put things away
3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows two-step related directions without cues • Takes turns and plays cooperatively • Relates personal experiences through verbalization • Separates from primary caregiver easily • Frequently practices conversation skills by talking to self • Begins dramatic play, acting out whole scenes • Shows frustration if not understood • Expresses ideas and feelings
4 – 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows three-step directions without cues • Uses direct requests with justification (e.g., "Stop that. You're hurting me.") • Uses words to invite others to play • Uses language to resolve disputes with peers • Plays competitive exercise games • Has good control of the elements of conversation • Speaks of imaginary conditions, such as "What if ..." or "I hope ..."
5 – 6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to use word plays • Uses threats and promises • Asks meanings of words • Likes to complete projects • Makes purchases at stores • Asks questions for information • Chooses own friends • Takes more care in communicating with unfamiliar people • Engages in cooperative play, such as making group decisions, assigning roles, and playing fairly • Announces topic shifts

We'd like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: AutismInfo (www.autisminfo.com/milestones.htm#B); Beyond Therapy (http://centraltherapy.com/?page_id=140); Brooks & Engmann-Hartung (1987); the Child Development Institute (www.childdevelopmentinfo.com); Communication Works (www.cwtherapy.com/pragmatics2.html); KidTalk, Inc. (www.kidtalk.org/milestones.html); the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/voice/speechandlanguage.asp>); Nicolosi, Harryman, & Kresheck (2006); and Shulman (1991). For more information, please see the full References, Websites, & Resources list on pages 22-24.