

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

Pragmatics, *continued*

Age	Milestones
2 – 3 years, <i>continued</i>	<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 (www.centrafltherapy.com/milestones4.htm); 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.