

Module 6: Promoting Communication in the Home

Section: Step-By-Step Approach

Step One: Set Realistic Expectations

- Early intervention by six months of age
- Aim for age-appropriate language development
- Be aware of developmental norms for same-age children

Activity 6.4: Familiarize Families with the Role of Assessment and Monitoring in Guiding Their Child’s Language and Communication Development

- A. Review the role of assessment and monitoring in guiding a child’s language and communication acquisition process. Include the importance of:
- assessing and monitoring a baby’s receptive and expressive language competence in both visual and auditory modalities,
 - assessing pragmatic language (e.g., functional social communication, including turn taking and greetings), and
 - using a child’s current milestones to guide development of goals and monitoring of progress in response to intervention.
- B. Explore a variety of checklists and scales in documenting and monitoring a child’s language and communication milestones. Determine which checklists or scales best meet the needs of the family and the child you are serving.
- Examples of tools available to assist in documenting information about *visual language abilities*:
 - Visual Communication and Language Scale (VCSL)
 - MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory for American Sign Language (ASL-CDI)

- Examples of tools available to assist in documenting information about *spoken language abilities*:
 - [Meaningful Auditory Integration Scale \(IT-MAIS\) \(PDF\)](#)
 - [LittleEARS Pediatric Assessment Tools \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Functional Auditory Performance Indicators \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Ages and Stages of Spoken Language Development \(AG Bell\)](#)
 - [The First Years Milestones Chart](#)
 - [Scales of Development \(ISD\), Cochlear Corporation](#)

C. Use milestone checklists and scales in a variety of ways with families:

- Share copies of the page/pages of the milestones that relate to a child's age and stage of development. Add in more pages of the checklist, sharing the full scope of milestones as appropriate.
- Review where the child is and next steps in skill development. (Emphasize that babies develop skills in different timelines.) Discuss with the parent which milestones are met and which ones are emerging.
- Use the scale to acknowledge the efforts of the family in supporting the child's language foundation using sign language, listening development, and social communication as applicable to the child's profile.
- Look back with families to earlier stages and celebrate progress.
- Look forward with families to future stages to develop goals.

D. Keep in mind that use of checklists and scales may be both affirming and anxiety producing in monitoring a child's progress. It is important to share with families that these tools are only one part of what needs to be a comprehensive team assessment process that looks at all aspects of a child's language and communication development and includes professionals qualified in completing these evaluations (e.g., speech-language pathologist, ASL specialists). Enlist other specialists from the child's educational and support service team as needed to obtain a full language assessment and to address a child's plan related to appropriate language and communication strategies to match the characteristics of the child.

Additional Resource:

For more information, see [Communication Language Milestones](#) from Module 6.

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