

# Supporting Language & Literacy

## 12 Months: Back-and-Forth Conversations

Back-and-forth conversations will sound and feel a little different as your baby starts to communicate using sounds and words. You can encourage this type of turn-taking in conversations through play.

### Tips & Activities



**Teach your child what to do when they display unwanted behaviors.** Instead of “*Don’t pull the cat’s tail,*” try, “*Gentle hands with the cat.*”

**Try turn-taking in conversation through play.** Take turns making animal sounds, *RAWR!*



**Encourage imaginary play.** Use any object and “*make*” a call to your child.



**Sing songs about routines,** e.g. “*This is the way we wash our hands.*”



**Respond with words,** facial expressions, & gestures when your child points.

## Common Language Milestones



Uses gestures like pointing, waving, and shaking head “no”

Can say 1 to 2 words meaningfully, e.g. ‘*dada,*’ ‘*up,*’ or ‘*hi*’

Responds to simple directions, e.g. ‘*come here*’ or ‘*no*’

Pays attention to where you are looking and pointing

Imitates sounds, simple words, and actions

# Early Detection *is* Intervention

Your child is always learning! As a caregiver, you have an amazing opportunity to guide them on a path to success.

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Talk with your child's healthcare provider if your child:



Shows no recognition of familiar words, such as "*mama*," "*dada*," or "*doggy*"



Does not turn when someone calls their name



Source: [pathways.org](http://pathways.org)

## Additional Resources

[Pathways: Communication](#)

[Harvard University: Center on the Developing Child](#)

[Cox Campus](#)

[The Basics](#)

[CDC Milestones](#)