

Early Amplification: What to Expect

Children who have received a cochlear implant under 2 years of age have been able to develop speech and language skills sufficient to be successfully mainstreamed by second grade. The benchmarks listed below are a guide to that achievement. Children who are implanted at one year old may be expected to reach the same benchmarks, except at 4-6 months post-activation (18 months old), they may produce fewer words. Hearing aid users are expected to perform equally as well.

Almost immediately after activation

Demonstrates detection of sounds across all frequencies
Demonstrates detection of the Ling 6 sounds
Demonstrates detection of a variety of environmental sounds

0-4 months post activation

This seems to be a "listening" time.

Since the children are very young, it is difficult to assess what they are truly understanding.

ee (feet)	s
-o-, (hot)	sh
oo (shoe)	m

4-6 months post activation

Identifies of at least 35 to 50 words, in closed sets in lessons. These words include mostly nouns and verbs.
Names about 75% of the items or actions they understand
Produces recognizable approximations of at least 85% of the words learned, in imitation of the teacher's model, matching duration and a vowel or consonant
Uses some single words to express their wants and needs

1 year post activation

Identifies 75 to 100 words, consisting of nouns, verbs, some early developing adjectives and early developing prepositions, when pictures or objects representing those words are presented in sets of at least four words
Produces at least 90% of the words they can identify in closed sets

Develops understanding of some early developing two-word combinations (noun-noun, noun-verb, verb-noun)

Produces some early developing two-word combinations (noun-noun "boy ball", noun-verb "boy throw", verb-noun "throw ball") in a lesson setting
Uses single words and some common phrases and expressions to express their thoughts and ideas

15 months to 18 months post activation: A language explosion seems to occur

Learns vocabulary outside of the classroom or therapy environment
Has more than 250 vocabulary words
Comprehends simple three- and four- word sentences
Uses a variety of two-word combinations spontaneously

2 years post activation

Has more than 500 words - too many to count
Comprehends of a variety of simple sentences and questions
Uses simple sentences of 4-6 words when speaking spontaneously

Factors which may affect the child's potential to reach such high goals:

- Normal intelligence
- Be a consistent wearer of her implant
- No concerns in relation to speech or oral motor skills
- Appropriate amplification, specifically well-fitted hearing aids and/or an appropriate MAP if a cochlear implant user