



Phonological Pattern Suppression by Age

Children with normally developing articulation seem to suppress certain phonological processes within approximate time frames. The approximate age of suppression is helpful when determining normal versus disordered phonological systems and can be used as a guideline when determining treatment goals. This chart summarizes the ages by which at least 75% of children no longer use a given process.

Individual Process	Description	Example	Likely Age of Disappearance
Denasalization	changing a nasal consonant to a nonnasal	mat → /bæt/	2.6
Assimilation	changing a phoneme so it takes on a characteristic of another sound in the word	cat → /tæt/	3
Affrication	substituting an affricate for a nonaffricate	sheep → /tʃip/	3
Final consonant deletion	omitting a singleton consonant at the end of a word	cat → /kæ/	3
Fronting of initial velar singles	substituting a front sound for a back sound	can → /tæn/	4
Deaffrication	replacing an affricate with a continuant or stop	chip → /sɪp/	4
Cluster reduction (without /s/)	omitting one or more consonants in a sequence of consonants	grape → /gep/	4
Depalatalization of final singles	substituting a nonpalatal for a palatal sound at the end of a word	dish → /dɪt/	4.6
Depalatalization of initial singles	substituting a nonpalatal for a palatal sound at the beginning of a word	shy → /taɪ/	5
Alveolarization	substituting an alveolar for a nonalveolar sound	chew → /tu/	5
Final consonant devoicing	substituting a voiceless final consonant for a voiced consonant	bag → /bæk/	5
Cluster reduction (with /s/)	omitting /s/ in the initial position of a cluster	step → /tɛp/	5
Labialization	replacing a nonlabial sound with a labial sound	tan → /pæn/	6
Initial voicing	substituting a voiced consonant for a voiceless consonant before a vowel	sun → /zʌn/	6
Gliding of initial liquids	substituting a /w/ or /j/ for another consonant	run → /wʌn/	7
Epenthesis	adding a sound, typically /ʌ/, between two consonants	black → /bʌlæk/	8

Peña-Brooks, A., & Hedge, M.N. (2007). *Assessment and treatment of articulation and phonological disorders in children*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.