



Early Detection of Speech, Language, and Hearing Disorders (from ASHA.org)

Do you have a child 3 years old or younger? Are you worried because your child doesn't seem to listen? Has your child started to say any words? Does your child cry a lot or have tantrums? Your child may have early signs of a speech, language, or hearing disorder.

Don't wait and hope your child will outgrow a communication problem. Early detection leads to early treatment. The earlier you get help for your child, the better.

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and audiologists can help your infant or toddler who has a speech, language, or hearing disorder. SLPs help with language disorders, speech sound disorders, stuttering (disfluency), and voice disorders.

Identify the Signs

Here are some of the signs to help you determine if your child has a speech, language, or hearing disorder. More information about identifying the signs of communication disorders is available at [Identify The Signs](#).

Signs of a Language Disorder

- Doesn't smile or interact with others (birth–3 months)
- Doesn't babble (4–7 months)
- Makes few sounds (7–12 months)
- Does not use gestures (e.g., waving, pointing) (7–12 months)
- Doesn't understand what others say (7 months–2 years)
- Says only a few words (12–18 months)
- Doesn't put words together to make sentences (1½–3 years)
- Has trouble playing and talking with other children (2–3 years)
- Has problems with early reading and writing skills—for example, may not show an interest in books or drawing (2½–3 years)

Ways to Help With Language Disorders

- Listen and respond to your child
- Talk, read, and play with your child
- Communicate with your child in the language that you are most comfortable using
- Know that it's good to teach your child to speak a second language
- Talk about what you are doing and what your child is doing
- Use a lot of different words with your child
- Use longer sentences as your child gets older
- Have your child play with other children

Signs of a Speech Sound Disorder

- Says *p*, *b*, *m*, *h*, and *w* incorrectly in words (1–2 years)
- Says *k*, *g*, *f*, *t*, *d*, and *n* incorrectly in words (2–3 years)
- Produces speech that is unclear, even to familiar people (2–3 years)

Ways to Help With Speech Sound Disorders

- Say the sounds correctly when you talk—it's okay if your child makes some mistakes with sounds
- Don't correct speech sounds—it's more important to let your child keep talking

Signs of Stuttering (Disfluency)

- Struggles to say sounds or words (2½–3 years)
- Repeats first sounds of words—"b-b-b-ball" for "ball" (2½–3 years)
- Pauses a lot while talking (2½–3 years)
- Stretches sounds out—"f-f-f-f-farm" for "farm" (2½–3 years)

Ways to Help With Stuttering or Disfluency

- Give your child time to talk
- Do not interrupt or stop your child while he or she is speaking
- See an SLP if you are concerned (Many young children stutter for a short period of time; in most cases, the stuttering will stop.)

Signs of a Voice Disorder

- Uses a hoarse or breathy voice
- Uses a nasal-sounding voice

Ways to Help With Voice Disorders

- See a doctor if your child sounds hoarse or breathy or has a nasal-sounding voice
- Tell your child not to shout or scream
- Keep your child away from cigarette smoke

Audiologists help with **hearing loss**.

Signs of a Hearing Loss

- Shows lack of attention to sounds (birth–1 year)
- Doesn't respond when you call his/her name (7 months–1 year)
- Doesn't follow simple directions (1–2 years)
- Shows delays in speech and language development (birth–3 years)

Ways to Help With Hearing Loss

- See an audiologist if your child did not pass the newborn hearing screening
- Go to an audiologist if you have any concerns about your child's hearing (some hearing losses can begin months or years after birth).
- Ask your audiologist about the need for hearing aids or cochlear implants

- See more at: <http://www.asha.org/public/Early-Detection-of-Speech-Language-and-Hearing-Disorders/#sthash.dbuM2PjH.dpuf>



Understanding Speech and Language in Toddlers

What should my child be able to do at 2-3 years?

Hearing and Understanding	Talking
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understands differences in meaning ("go-stop," "in-on," "big-little," "up-down").• Follows two requests ("Get the book and put it on the table").• Listens to and enjoys hearing stories for longer periods of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a word for almost everything.• Uses two- or three- words to talk about and ask for things.• Uses <i>k, g, f, t, d, and n</i> sounds.• Speech is understood by familiar listeners most of the time.• Often asks for or directs attention to objects by naming them.

What can I do to help?

- Use clear, simple speech that is easy to imitate.
- Show your child that you are interested in what he or she says to you by repeating what he or she has said and expanding on it. For example, if your child says, "pretty flower," you can respond by saying, "Yes, that is a pretty flower. The flower is bright red. It smells good too. Does Sam want to smell the flower?"
- Let your child know that what she or he has to say is important to you by asking him or her to repeat things that you do not completely understand. For example, "I know you want a block. Tell me again which block you want."
- Expand on your child's vocabulary. Introduce new vocabulary through reading books that have a simple sentence on each page.
- Name objects and describe the picture on each page of the book. State synonyms for familiar words (e.g., mommy, woman, lady, grown-up, adult) and use this new vocabulary in sentences to help your child learn it in context.
- Put objects into a bucket and have your child remove one object at a time, saying its name. You repeat what your child says and expand upon it: "That is a comb. Sam combs his hair." Take the objects from the bucket and help your child group them into categories (e.g., clothes, food, drawing tools).
- Cut out pictures from old magazines and make a scrapbook of familiar things. Help your child glue the pictures into the scrapbook. Practice naming the pictures, using gestures and speech to show how you use the items.
- Look at family photos and name the people. Use simple phrases/sentences to describe what is happening in the pictures (e.g., "Sam swims in the pool").
- Write simple appropriate phrases under the pictures. For example, "I can swim," or "Happy birthday to Daddy." Your child will begin to understand that reading is oral language in print.
- Ask your child questions that require a choice, rather than simply a "yes" or "no" answer. For example, rather than asking, "Do you want milk? Do you want water?", ask, "Would you like a glass of milk or water?" Be sure to wait for the answer, and reinforce successful communication: "Thank you for telling mommy what you want. Mommy will get you a glass of milk."
- Continue to sing songs, play finger games ("Where is Thumbkin?"), and tell nursery rhymes ("Hickory Dickory Dock"). These songs and games introduce your child to the rhythm and sounds of language.
- Strengthen your child's language comprehension skills by playing the yes-no game: "Are you a boy?" "Is that a zebra?" "Is your name Joey?"

- See more at: <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/23/#sthash.bi2sIkgt.dpuf>