

KITSAP COUNTY CHILD HEALTH NOTES

Promoting partnerships between primary health care providers, families & the community to support early identification of children with special needs and comprehensive care within a primary care Medical Home.

Distributed by: Kitsap Medical Home Leadership Network

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RED FLAGS IN SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Speech and language development begin long before a child utters the first recognizable word!

Even before birth, a child is listening to speech sounds and attaining the prelinguistic communication skills on which future language development will depend. Early exposure to language through face-to-face conversation and books sets the stage for speech and language acquisition. The timely attainment of communication, speech, and language milestones sets the foundation for a child’s subsequent academic and social success.

Speech and language delays:

- Can be identified early, even though findings are subtle in the first two years of life.
- Do not generally self-resolve, especially when associated with other disabilities.
- Are associated with increased incidence of learning disabilities, especially in reading and writing.
- Can impact behavior and the ability to form peer relationships.
- May be the first sign of hearing loss in infants, or autism spectrum disorder in toddlers.
- May be associated with oral motor problems that can impact feeding and may benefit from consultation with a feeding team.

In unfamiliar settings (or Primary Care Clinics), children may not fully display their communication skills. When concerns are present, parent report should be used to supplement observations. If English is not the primary language used at home, parents should be asked to report on their child’s communication in his/her stronger language.

- **IF** one or more red flags are present, or a parent expresses concern, further speech/language assessment may be indicated.
- **IF** hearing loss is suspected at any age – a complete audiological examination is indicated.

Early Intervention for speech and language delays:

- Assists a child in attaining communication, social and academic milestones through individual and peer-group therapy, and by teaching parents to provide enriched communication opportunities.
- Ensures that caregivers and teachers set reasonable communication expectations to prevent a child’s frustration from turning into behavior problems or low self-esteem.

RED FLAGS IN SPEECH/LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

**SIGNS OF POSSIBLE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER*

0-6 months

- Fails a newborn hearing screening
- Identified neuro-developmental delay or disorder
- Does not startle to or awaken to loud sounds
- Does not respond to changes in tone of voice
- Does not smile or interact with others

9 months

- Is still making only vowel sounds, with no speech-like consonants (e.g. “aaa” instead of an occasional “mmm” or “bah”)

12 months

- Is not babbling (saying “ba-ba-ba” or “dee-dee”)*
- Is not using eye gaze or gestures like pointing and showing, to communicate interests or needs*
- Has infrequent eye contact or little interest in interaction*
- Does not respond to own name, or common words like “no”, “bye-bye”, etc.*

18 months

- Is not saying 10 single words (does not have to be pronounced perfectly)

24 months	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not say at least 50 single words Is not combining words into two-word phrases (e.g., “mommy go”, “daddy ball”)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not follow simple directions (e.g., “Roll the ball”) Does not point to named body parts or pictures
36 months	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Says only one or two words at a time (e.g., “kick ball” instead of “I kick ball to daddy”) Cannot answer “what” or “who” questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not initiate conversations; speaks only when spoken to, or only repeats what others say* Strangers understand less than half of what child says
4 years	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talks only about the “here and now” rather than events in the past and future, objects/people that are not present, etc. Puts words in the wrong order in sentences, and /or leaves out little words (<i>in, the, of</i>) and word endings (<i>-ing, -ed,-s</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not follow two-step directions Cannot listen to 2-3 lines of a story and answer simple questions about it Speech is still hard to understand (i.e., many sound errors)
5 years	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses only 3-4 word sentences to talk about “here and now” Talks a lot, but does not engage in reciprocal conversation and/or make comments relevant to the situation* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot answer “how” and “why” questions, or questions about past or future events Still has trouble with early speech sounds (<i>other than r, l, and th</i>)

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE RESOURCES

➤ Local:	Link Audiology Kitsap County Family Resources for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing	(360) 551-4800 connect@linkaudiology.com http://www.kitsappublichealth.org/communityHealth/files/CSHCN/ResourcesHearingImpairedKitsap.pdf
➤ WA State:	Diagnostic Clinics for Infants in WA Reach Out and Read WA	http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/344-040_EHDDIPedAudioSvcs.pdf http://www.reachoutandreadwa.org/
➤ National:	American Speech and Language Association Identify the Signs of Communication Disorders American Academy of Pediatrics	http://www.asha.org http://identifythesigns.org/ www.aap.org

KITSAP COUNTY SPECIAL NEEDS INFORMATION AND REFERRAL RESOURCES

WithinReach Family Health Hotline:	1-800-322-2588, 1-800-833-6388 TTD www.parenthelp123.org/ (English/Spanish and telephonic interpretation for other languages)
For Children Birth - 18:	Contact Public Health Nurse Children with Special Health Care Needs Coordinator: (360) 728-2235 www.kitsappublichealth.org/cshcn
For Children Under Age 3:	Contact County Lead Family Resources Coordinator: Holly Ridge Center (360) 373-2536 frc@hollyridge.org
For Children 3 and Over:	Contact Local School District: http://www.hollyridge.org/ficc/FreeChildfindScreeningContacts2.htm
Family Support:	The Arc of Kitsap & Jefferson Counties: (360) 377-3473 www.arckj.org
	Kitsap County Parent Coalition: (360) 373-2502 Ext.100 www.kitsapcountyparentcoalition.com