



Let's Talk

Fragile X Syndrome and Your Child

“ My 3-year-old son, Daniel, was just diagnosed with fragile X syndrome. We've known that he's had some problems talking and paying attention. He's been working with a speech-language pathologist for a while. What does this mean for his services? Will he continue to qualify? ”

—Ari

What Is Fragile X Syndrome?

Fragile X, or fragile X syndrome, is caused by a problem with a specific gene. More boys have this problem than girls, and boys usually have more severe problems than girls. When they get older, children with fragile X syndrome may have large ears, a long face, and a large head. Children with fragile X also may have autism. Fragile X is the most common form of mental retardation that runs in families.

What Kinds of Speech and Language Problems Do Children With Fragile X Have?

Your child may have had some troubles learning how to talk. It is very common for children who have fragile X to have some problems with speech and language. There are other ways that your child's speech and language might be affected. He may:

- Not look at people when he is talking
- Say the same things over and over
- Do things before he can stop himself
- Get sidetracked when talking
- Not speak clearly
- Leave out parts of words
- Not understand the tone of voice of other people
- Talk too fast

Fast facts

- Fragile X syndrome is the most common form of mental retardation that runs in families.
- Children with fragile X can have speech and language problems.
- Speech-language pathologists, or SLPs, can help.



Fragile X Syndrome and Your Child

How Can a Speech-Language Pathologist Help?

A speech-language pathologist, or SLP, can help your child learn how to say words and follow directions. The SLP can also work on other areas.

Your child may have had a number of ear infections. The SLP can:

- Check your child’s hearing
- Refer you to a hearing specialist, called an audiologist, if your child has trouble hearing

Your child’s SLP will continue to:

- Give you ways to help your child learn to listen and speak better
- Work with other specialists on a team to help your child become better at listening and speaking

- Help your child get ready for school
- Help your child become a part of activities at home, in your neighborhood, and in school
- Give you ideas about other programs that may help your child, like play groups or camps
- Give you names of fragile X parent groups

How Can I Help My Child at Home?

There are a number of things that you can do to help your child at home:

- Keep your child on the same topic as you
- Tell her to stop when she is repeating herself
- Let her know that she is talking too fast
- Play games with the way that you say words or emphasize different parts of a sentence
- Help your child with her schoolwork

“Daniel still sees an SLP twice a week. The SLP is working with the teacher and me to help Daniel understand what people are saying. I’m relieved that the SLP will keep working with him. The SLP seems to know Daniel and how to get him to talk! I don’t know what we’d do without the SLP’s help.”

—Ari

Fragile X syndrome can change your child’s life. Help is available.

To learn more about speech and language development and disorders or to find an SLP near you who has been certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), visit www.asha.org or call 800-638-8255 or (TTY) 301-296-5650.

My SLP’s name is

Appointment

Compliments of
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
and