



Let's Talk

Your Child's Speech and Language Evaluation

“My son Michael just turned 2 years old and isn't talking very much. He seems to understand what we say. But he says only 1 or 2 words. He just points to what he wants and says, “Uh uh.” Sometimes Michael gets very upset when we can't understand him. His day care teacher says he should get an evaluation from a speech-language pathologist.”

—George

How Do I Know to Get Help?

Trust your own judgment. Some family, friends, or doctors may say that your child will grow out of the problem. This is not always true. Get an evaluation just to be sure.

Here are a few examples of when your child may need an evaluation:

Speech Concerns

- Your child is not saying sounds expected for his age.
- Strangers have trouble understanding your 3-year-old child.
- Your child's teacher and classmates don't understand what your child says.
- Other children make fun of the way your child talks.
- Your child stutters.
- Your child shows frustration about his speech.
- Your child's voice sounds hoarse, or he talks too loudly or too softly.

Language Concerns

- Your child is not saying words (by age 1).
- Your child doesn't put 2 words together (by age 2).
- Your child doesn't put more words together as she gets older.

Fast facts

- Does your child have problems talking or understanding? Your child may need a speech and language evaluation.
- The earlier you get help, the better.
- Speech-language pathologists, or SLPs, evaluate and treat speech, language, and swallowing problems.



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- Your child doesn't follow simple directions.
- Your child doesn't use new words.
- Your child doesn't have conversations.
- Your child has problems reading and writing.

If you are teaching your child another language at home, keep using that language. Speaking two languages will not cause a language disorder.

Your Child's Speech-Language Evaluation

It is best to get your child evaluated early if you think he has a problem. Speech-language pathologists, or SLPs, evaluate children who have trouble making sounds, talking, and understanding. The evaluation may take more than one session.

Your SLP will talk with you about:

- Your child's birth and medical history
- Reports from doctors, psychologists, or teachers
- Your child's hearing and may recommend a hearing test if he hasn't had one

The SLP will also:

- Talk with your child to get to know her and see how she talks about things that interest her
- Listen to your child's speech and language—particularly to the sound of her voice and how she says sounds, words, and sentences
- See if your child's sounds and words are what's expected for her age
- See how well she follows directions
- Listen to how she talks about pictures, stories, and books
- Give your child speech and language tests to see how her speech compares with other children the same age

The SLP will work with an interpreter if your child speaks more than one language. After the evaluation, the SLP will write a report and talk to you about the results. Speech and language treatment may be recommended. The SLP can help you locate services for your child.



Your Child's Speech and Language Evaluation

Where to Get Your Child Evaluated

SLPs work in a variety of settings including homes, schools, hospitals, private clinics, outpatient rehabilitation clinics, and universities. You can take your child to a clinic, or you can contact your local school and ask about getting your child evaluated.

“After Michael was tested by his SLP, I had a much better understanding of what was happening with his speech and language. The SLP helps him say sounds and words. He's much happier now that he can talk.”
—George

Speech and language problems can change your child's life. SLPs can help.

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