

Frequently Asked Questions About Speech and Language Development

Many parents have questions about how well their child is learning to speak. Here are answers to the most common questions that parents ask.



Can a parent tell whether a child's speech is developing well?

You know your child best. You talk and listen to your child more than anyone else. If you are concerned about the way your child is learning to talk, call smallTALK at 519-272-8216 or 1-866-333-7716.

Do babies understand when we talk to them?

Babies do not understand the meaning of all the words we say at first. Babies learn about sounds and words when we talk to them. Talking to your baby while bathing and feeding him/her helps your baby learn about language and words from hearing you talk.

Is it common for younger children in families not to talk?

Sometimes younger children find that they can make themselves understood by making gestures and noises instead of words. Or, older children may speak for younger ones. Parents should encourage younger children to talk just as much as older ones.

Can a smart child have a speech problem?

Yes. Any child can have a speech or language problem. It does not mean that the child is less intelligent.

Will my child grow out of a speech or language problem?

Some children do grow out of speech or language problems. However, it is best not to wait and see. The sooner a problem is discovered, the sooner something can be done to help.

If we speak more than one language at home, will it cause our child to have a speech or language problem?

No. A child usually says his/her first words around the same age, no matter how many languages are spoken in the home. If you are concerned about the way your child is learning to talk in any language, call smallTALK.

Should I worry if my child stutters?

Children often repeat words or phrases when they learn to talk. This is normal for most children between two and five years old. Your child may do this for a few days or more. If you are worried about whether your child stutters, call smallTALK.

Should I wait until my child starts school?

No. If you think your child may have a problem, call right away. It is better to treat a speech or language problem early. Your child will have more time to develop the skills needed at school.

Adapted with permission from material developed by First Words Preschool Speech and Language Program of Ottawa-Carleton led by Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services.

Parents, trust your instincts and call us if you ...

- have questions or concerns about the way your child's speech and language skills are developing
- want to refer your child for a speech and language assessment
- want more information on other topics related to speech and language development



Huron-Perth Preschool Speech/Language Initiative

DON'T WAIT - EARLY HELP MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Call 519-272-8216 or 1-866-333-7716 and ask for smallTALK

Visit our web site at www.smalltalkinfo.ca

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