

Speech Therapy Referral Checklist for Parents

Use this checklist to discuss concerns with your pediatrician.

Delayed Speech Development

By Age 1

- Not using gestures (pointing, waving, reaching)
- Not babbling or making a variety of sounds

By Age 2

- Speaking fewer than 50 words
- Not combining two words (e.g., “more juice,” “mama up”)

By Age 3

- Not using short sentences (3–4 words)
- Difficulty putting words together to form simple sentences

By Age 4

- Struggling to form clear, complete sentences
 - Vocabulary seems limited for age
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Difficulty Understanding Language

By Age 2–3

- Trouble following simple directions (“Come here,” “Give me the toy”)

By Age 3–4

- Not understanding basic questions (“Where is your shoe?”)
- Difficulty following two-step directions (“Pick up your toy and put it in the basket”)

By Age 4

- Has trouble understanding stories, conversations, or instructions
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Trouble Speaking Clearly

- Hard for familiar people (family, teachers) to understand child's speech
 - Frequently mispronounces sounds (e.g., "wabbit" for "rabbit")
 - Leaves out sounds in words (e.g., "nana" for "banana")
 - Uses only a small number of words
 - Repeats the same words frequently
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Stuttering Concerns

- Repeating sounds or words ("I I I want...")
 - Frequent pauses while trying to talk
 - Shows tension, frustration, or struggle when speaking
 - Gets "stuck" on sounds or words (blocking)
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Lack of Interest in Speaking or Social Interaction

- Child rarely initiates conversation or avoids talking
 - Prefers solitary play
 - Avoids games or activities that require communication
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Regression in Speech or Language

- Child stops using words they previously used
 - Returns to babbling after previously speaking
 - Sudden loss of communication skills
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If you checked one or more boxes...

It may be helpful to talk with your pediatrician about a referral to a **pediatric speech-language pathologist (SLP)** for a full evaluation. Early support can make a big difference in communication, learning, and social confidence.