SNOHOMISH 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: Children with Special Health Care Needs and Snohomish County Early Intervention Program.
Contributors: University of Washington, Center on Human Development & Disability, and Washington State Department of Health (DOH). Revised and updated by: John C. Thorne, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, UW Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences. Reviewed by: Katherine TeKolste, MD, UW Medical Home Partnerships Project, Judy Ward, RN, Snohomish Health District, and Joan Zerzan, MS, RD, DOH.

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 Clinic), 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0-6 months</th>
<th>9 months</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fails a newborn hearing screening</td>
<td>Is still making only vowel sounds, with no speech-like consonants (e.g. “aaa” instead of an occasional “mmm” or “bah”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identified neuro-developmental delay or disorder</td>
<td>Does not respond to changes in tone of voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not startle to or awaken to loud sounds</td>
<td>Does not smile or interact with others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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|
| Does not respond to changes in tone of voice | Does not smile or interact with others |
| Does not startle to or awaken to loud sounds | Does not smile or interact with others |
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### Speech and Language Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</table>
| 12 months | - *Is not babbling (saying “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 (don’t have to be pronounced perfectly) |
| 24 months | - Does not say at least 50 single words  
- *Is not combining words into two-word phrases (e.g., “mommy go”, “daddy ball”)  
- Does not follow simple directions (e.g., “Roll the ball”)  
- Does not point to named body parts or pictures |
| 36 months | - 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.  
- *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 | - 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 (in, the, of) and word endings (-ing, -ed, -s)  
- 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 | - 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  
- Cannot answer “how” and “why” questions, or questions about past or future events  
- Still has trouble with early speech sounds (other than r, l, and th) |

**Local:** Seattle Children’s Hospital-Audiology, Bellevue  
Providence Children’s Center, Neurodevelopmental Clinic  
Phone: 206.987.5173; Fax: 206.884.9370  
Phone: 425.258.7086  

**WA State:** Diagnostic Clinics for Infants in WA  
WA State Resources by County for Children with Hearing Loss and their Families  
Reach Out and Read WA

**National:** American Speech and Language Association  
Identify the Signs of Communication Disorders  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
AAP Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics  
[http://www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)  
[http://identifythesigns.org/](http://identifythesigns.org/)  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)  
[www.dbpeds.org](http://www.dbpeds.org)
**SNOHOMISH COUNTY SPECIAL NEEDS INFORMATION AND REFERRAL RESOURCES**

**WithinReach Family Health Hotline:** 1.800.322.2588, 1.800.833.6388 TTD  [www.parenthelp123.org/](http://www.parenthelp123.org/)  
(English/Spanish and telephonic interpretation for other languages)

**Family Support:**  
Arc, Parent to Parent: 425.258.2459, ext. 111

**For Children Birth - 18:**  
Children with Special Health Care Needs 425.339.8652  
Snohomish Co. Early Intervention Program 425.388.7402  
[EarlyInterventionProgram@snoco.org](mailto:EarlyInterventionProgram@snoco.org)

**For Children Birth – 3:**  
Arc, Parent to Parent: 425.258.2459, ext. 111

**For Children 3 and Over:**  
Contact the local school district:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District:</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>District:</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arlington</td>
<td>Cindy Prouty</td>
<td>360.618.6295</td>
<td>Darrington</td>
<td>Val Cook</td>
<td>360.436.2150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonds</td>
<td>Debbie Rothfus</td>
<td>425.431.7555</td>
<td>Everett</td>
<td>Child Find Intake</td>
<td>425.385.5777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granite Falls</td>
<td>Nancie Wilder</td>
<td>360.283.4311</td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>Linda Tate</td>
<td>360.793.1330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Stevens</td>
<td>Christine Eason</td>
<td>425.335.1643</td>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td>Child Find Intake</td>
<td>360.652.4500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marysville</td>
<td>Cathy Fridrich</td>
<td>360.965.0170</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>Joyce Wilson</td>
<td>360.804.2606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukilteo</td>
<td>Belinda Kelly</td>
<td>425.356.1277</td>
<td>Northshore</td>
<td>Shelly Fields</td>
<td>425.408.5594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snohomish</td>
<td>Cheri Peich</td>
<td>360.563.7321</td>
<td>Stanwood</td>
<td>Special Services</td>
<td>360.629.1236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultan</td>
<td>Cyd Leahy</td>
<td>360.793-9801</td>
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