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Better Hearing and Speech Month - Identify the Signs

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May is "Better Hearing and Speech Month," a month dedicated to raising awareness about communication disorders and the professionals who treat them. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's (ASHA) campaign, Identify the Signs, seeks to help parents recognize signs of speech, language, and hearing disorders and find the help needed to address these disorders.



Signs of a Language Disorder



Age Range	Sign
2 - 3 months and up	• does not smile/interact with others
4 - 7 months	• does not babble ("bababa")
7 - 12 months	• very few sounds or gestures (pointing)
7 months - 2 years	• poor comprehension of what others say
1 1/2 - 2 years	• all speech is difficult for familiar listeners to understand
1 1/2 - 3 years	• does not combine words into sentences
2 - 3 years	• difficulty talking to and playing with peers
2 1/2 - 3 years	• difficulty with early literacy and pre-writing skills

Signs of a Speech Sound Disorder



Age Range	Sign
by age 3	• incorrect production of early sounds /p,b,m,h, w/ in words
by age 4	• incorrect production of /k,g,f,t,d,n/ in words
by age 5	• speech is unclear, even to familiar listeners

Signs of a Stuttering Disorder



Age Range	Sign
2 1/2 - 3 years	• difficulty producing sounds or words
2 1/2 - 3 years	• repeats the first sound of words (b-b-b-baby for "baby")
2 1/2 - 3 years	• frequent pauses of silence when talking
2 1/2 - 3 years	• stretching sounds out while talking (sssss-silly for "silly")

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Signs of a Voice Disorder



Age Range	Sign
any age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hoarse- or breathy-sounding voice
any age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nasal quality to voice

Signs of a Hearing Problem



Age Range	Sign
birth - 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> poor attention to sounds in the environment
7 months - 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not respond when name is called
1 - 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> difficulty following simple directions
birth - 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> delays in speech and/or language development
any age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> scratching or pulling at ears
school-age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited academic progress, especially math and/or reading
school-age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> social isolation and unhappiness at school
school-age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discomfort in ears after exposure to loud noise

If you think your child may have problems with speech, language, or hearing...

Do not hesitate to ask your child's pediatrician about an evaluation from a certified Speech-Language Pathologist or Audiologist. If your child is school-age, discuss your concerns with his/her teacher. Identifying a communication disorder early plays a key role in how soon effective and appropriate treatment can take place.



Resources:

Identify the Signs of Communication Disorders by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Retrieved 4/13/2017 from www.identifythesigns.org

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