

# WHEN TO REFER

## for speech therapy



### DID YOU KNOW?

Parents often see conflicting advice when it comes to speech and language development. When is time to see a specialist instead of “wait and see” what happens? Here are some considerations.

#### WHAT ARE SOME CAUSES OF SPEECH & LANGUAGE DELAYS?

- ✓ Medical complications (e.g., traumatic brain injury)
- ✓ Genetic differences
- ✓ Neurological differences (e.g., autism, ADHD)
- ✓ Other environmental factors (e.g., poor nutrition, exposure to drugs/smoking, etc.)

**\*Note: there may not always be a known cause**

#### WHAT DOES NOT CAUSE SPEECH & LANGUAGE DELAYS?

- ✗ Parents teaching or talking to their child “wrong”

#### WHAT ARE SOME RED FLAGS FOR A POTENTIAL SPEECH OR LANGUAGE DELAY?

- Child cannot communicate basic needs in functional ways (e.g., a toddler who does not use gestures or words)
- Child is difficult to understand by both familiar and unfamiliar people
- Child has a limited vocabulary (e.g., less than 50 words by the age of 2 years old)
- Child does not seem to understand what is being said to them, or they have difficulty following directions
- Parents or teachers are concerned about child’s communication skills

Curious about how most children typically develop at specific ages? Refer to our **milestone handouts**- curated from the most recent research for you to use as a guide regarding how a child is developing.



**Concerns?  
Refer, don't deter!**



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