



# Pediatric Speech Therapy — Red Flags

## Under 18 months

- No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions by 6 months
- No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles or other facial expressions by 9 months or thereafter
- No babbling by 12 months
- Does not respond to his/her name by 12 months
- No sharing/reciprocal interactions like pointing, sharing, reaching or waving by 12 months.
- No pointing out objects of interest by 14 months (pointing out a car driving by)
- Does not understand simple common words like mama or milk
- Is not using any words by 16 months
- Does not imitate gross motor movements, like clapping or stopping feet



## By 18 months

- Does not use at least 8-10 meaningful words
- Does not follow simple commands like:
  - “come here”
  - “stop”
  - “don’t”
  - “give me the \_\_\_”
  - “touch your nose”
- Does not follow your pointing with his/her gaze
- Is not playing “pretend” with items (talking on the toy phone, feeding a doll)
- Does not play in proximity to other children





### By Age 2

- No 2-word meaningful phrases (without imitating or repeating)
- Does not follow simple 2-step commands such as “get the ball and put it on the table”
- Speech is not at least 50% understandable
- Cannot point to pictures of items in books when asked

### By Age 3

- Is not using 3 and 4 word sentences
- Speech is not at least 75% or more understandable
- Child is leaving the beginnings or ends off of most words
- Cannot accurately answer yes/no questions
- Cannot answer simple “wh” questions like “who is that” or “where is the truck”
- Does not play with other children
- Is experiencing stuttering behavior for more than 6 months

### By 4 to 5 Years

- Is not 100% understandable to strangers despite age appropriate articulation errors (may not be able to yet say: r, sh, ch, l, or th)
- Is not consistently using 4+ word, complex sentences
- Is not asking a variety of questions to gain information (who, what, where, why, when)
- Is having difficulty with grammar or pronoun use
- Cannot tell a simple story on topic
- Cannot follow simple 2-step directions
- Has difficulty answering simple who, what, where and why questions
- Is not yet able to name a few letters, numbers and rhyming words.

### Overall Warning Signs

- **ANY** loss of speech or babbling or social skills at **ANY** age
- Never gestures or imitates
- Does not appear to understand speech, or appears to be unable to hear
- Never develops words beyond repeating others over and over