

"What I know for sure is that what you give comes back to you."



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Special Education Newsletter



The National Statistics on Learning Disabilities

- 1 of 5 people in the U.S. has a learning disability.
- 2.9M school-aged children in the U.S. are classified as having a specific learning disability and receive special education support. Over 70,000 of these students are in the Kansas City metro area.
- 80% of students identified with a learning disability have a primary deficit in the area of reading.
- 2/3 of secondary students with learning disabilities are 3 grade levels behind in reading.

Developing self-control

What keeps your child from whining in a store or grabbing a friend's toy when they're playing? The answer is self-control, and it's a lifelong skill that your youngster can develop now.

Practice problem solving. Encourage your child to find alternatives when he/she can't have their way. Help them brain-storm ways to distract themselves if they get upset in a store.



Use signals. Together come up with silent reminders that can boost your youngster's self-control

Play together. Stretch your child's self-control with silly games. For example, the "Staring Game", "Hide-and-Seek", and ask funny questions like "are you hiding in your back pack?" The goal is to keep from laughing and giving away your location

Focus on Facts, Listen Well to Improve Meeting Outcomes

For parents, educators, and especially for children with disabilities, it is important that special education meetings go well. Here are some tips to make that happen.

- Separate facts from emotion
- First arrive at a shared goal
- Listen fully to others
- Peak purposefully
- Match words and body language
- Own your feelings
- Take a break if necessary
- Be willing to say "I don't know"
- Be willing to say "I was wrong"



What is Speech Therapy and How Can It Help

Although more than 5 million children in the United States have a speech, language, and/or hearing disorder, parents are often uninformed and/or unsure about what to do when they have concerns about their child's communication skills. It is important to address any concerns as soon as possible. Speech, language and/or hearing delays or disorders can affect a child's ability to learn, socialize with others, and be successful in school.

Speech and language problems can occur at any time in a child's life. They can be caused by accidental injury, illness, or inherited by birth. Child speech and language include:

- Stuttering
- Articulation problems
- Language disorders such as the slow development of vocabulary, concepts, and grammar
- Voice disorders

Parents who suspect their child as a communication disorder should see an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist. These professionals identify, assess, and treat speech and language problems. The initial evaluation can provide a wealth of information about your child's current level of



functioning in a variety of speech-language areas and determine if they would benefit from speech therapy. Even if the problem cannot be eliminated, we can teach the child strategies to help them cope with their communication disorders, or provide them with the appropriate technology.

Milestones of Language Development

Having the child's hearing checked is a critical first step. The child may not have a speech or language impairment at all but, rather, a hearing impairment that is interfering with his or her development of language. It's important to realize that a language delay isn't the same thing as a speech or language impairment. Language delay is a very common developmental problem. With language delay, children's language is developing in the expected sequence, only at a slower rate. In contrast, speech and language disorder refers to abnormal language development. Distinguishing between the two is most reliably done by a certified speech-language pathologist.

What Causes Speech and Language Disorders?

Some causes of speech and language disorders include hearing loss, neurological disorders, brain injury, intellectual disabilities, drug abuse, physical impairments such as cleft lip or palate, and voice abuse or misuse. Frequently, however the cause is unknown.

Help for School-Ages Children

Many children are identified as having a speech or language impairment after they enter the public school system. A teacher may notice difficulties in a child's speech or communication skills and refer the child for evaluation. Parents may ask to have their child evaluated. This evaluation is provided free by the public school system. If the child is found to have a disability under IDEA- such as speech-language impairment- school staff will work with his or her parents to develop an IEP that will describe the child's unique needs and the services that have been designed to meet those needs.

Parenting tips for helping your child's Speech and Language

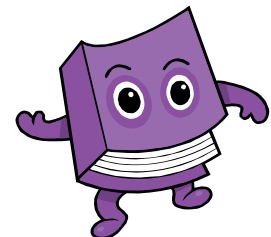
- Start talking to your child at birth
- Respond to your baby's coos and babbling
- Play simple games with your baby
- Listen to your child, look at them when they talk to you
- Describe for your child what they are doing, feeling, hearing in the course of the day
- Encourage storytelling and sharing information
- Don't try to force your child to speak
- Read books aloud
- Expand on what your child says
- Talk a lot to your child
- Plan family trips and outings
- Look at family photos and talk about them
- Answer your child every time they speak



- Ask your child lots of questions
- Use gestures along with words
- Don't criticize grammar mistakes
- Play with your child one-on-one

Did you know?

The average child spends four hours a day watching TV. Experts suggest no more than one hour. Ask your youngster to keep track of his TV viewing every day for a week. Then, work together on a plan for cutting down. *Ideas:* Swap one game show each day for an active game outside. Turn off the set during meals and homework.



The Late Talker

By Marilyn Agin, Lisa Geng, and Malcolm Nicholl

Written by a developmental behavioral pediatrician and a parent, this book can help parents get services and advocate for their children with communication delays. It suggests which diagnostic codes are most likely to get health insurance companies to cover services for speech and language problems and provide resources for parents, including where to get legal aid, publications, and more information.



Happy Holidays!



