

WHEN SHOULD PARENTS SEEK SPEECH THERAPY?

THINGS TO KNOW

Speech and language development varies across young children. Some communication signs may indicate additional support is helpful. This guide explains milestones, red flags, and early intervention.

Why Early Intervention Matters

Waiting too long may delay important developmental support. Early intervention supports communication, learning, and social development. Evaluations help identify whether additional support may benefit children.

Milestones to Watch

By 12–18 Months

- Babbling, pointing, or gesturing by 12 months
- Using single words by 15–18 months
- Eye contact
- Respond to their name
- Imitate sounds or gestures

By Age 2

- 50+ words
- Combine two words together (e.g., “more milk,” “mommy go”)
- Follow simple directions

• Ages 3–5

- Easy for others to understand
- Form sentences
- Use simple grammar appropriately
- Follow classroom directions
- Engage socially
- Initiate communication for multiple purposes (i.e., request, protest, call attention, comment)

Other Important Signs

Seek guidance sooner if your child:

Loses previously learned communication skills
Shows minimal interest in communicating
Has limited attention to family members or caregivers
Seems frustrated by communication difficulties

Primarily communicates through gestures or hand-leading past 12–18 months
Becomes frustrated or has behavioral challenges when trying to communicate
Has persistent pronunciation errors past age 3

Types of Therapy

- **Speech Therapy (ST):** Communication, language, speech clarity, late talking, pronunciation
- **Occupational Therapy (OT):** Sensory regulation, coordination, feeding, fine motor skills
- **Physical Therapy (PT):** Gross motor skills such as sitting, crawling, and walking

Steps to Take

If you have concerns:

- Talk with your child’s pediatrician
- Trust your parental instincts—sometimes concerns are present even if others are unsure
- Contact your local school district for school-age evaluations and support
- Explore state and local early intervention resources, such as Regional Centers or Early Intervention (EI) programs

Call or email now to access our **FREE** 30-minute phone consultations for families
Contact us: (510) 441- 8240 or info@ascendrehabinc.com