



When to Call: Does your preschooler need Speech Language Therapy?

Three and four-year-olds are busy developing rapidly in many areas of life as they start to acquire vocabulary, refine how they say their sounds, grasp sentence structure, question their environment, and work on their social and play skills. **We recommend scheduling an evaluation with a Speech Language Therapist if your preschooler has difficulty with these skills related to language and feeding:**



Language

Consider speech language therapy if your preschooler is not doing the following at the specified age ranges:

Two to three years:

- Is not following two-step directions (i.e. "Get the book and give it to me.")
- Does not enjoy listening to stories for more than a few minutes
- Uses gestures more than words to ask for things
- Is not combining two to three words
- Speech is not understood by familiar listeners
- Uses more vowels than consonants when speaking
- Seems to be frustrated when they are not understood

Three to four years:

- Is not responding when you call from another room
- Does not answer simple questions (who/what/where/when/why?)
- Is not able to talk about things that happen to them
- Is not speaking in sentences
- Speech is not understood by people outside of the family
- Speech includes frequent repetition of words and syllables

Four to five years:

- Does not appear to understand most of what is said at home and at school and cannot communicate easily with children or adults
- Cannot talk about books and stories they have just read
- Is not using sentences that contain lots of detail
- Is not using rhyming words
- Cannot tell a simple story



Feeding

Consider speech language therapy if your preschooler has difficulty with any of the following:

- Has difficulty biting or chewing food during mealtime
- Needs a prolonged period of time to chew and/or swallow
- Demonstrates a change in vocal quality during/after eating (i.e. gurgled or hoarse when speaking/making sounds)
- Has significant difficulty transitioning between different food stages
- Has difficulty swallowing liquids or solids
- Has difficulty sucking or drinking from a cup
- Has difficulty taking foods from a spoon or chewing foods
- Exhibits gagging, choking or coughing during feeding