

KRISTIN ROTH M.A. CCC-SLP

655 Rockland Road, #4, Lake Bluff, IL 60044 | C: (224) 360-0959 | F: (847) 388-4723
kristin.roth.slp@gmail.com | www.rothspeechtherapy.com

How do I know if my child needs a speech or language evaluation?

Indications of a child needing a speech or language evaluation can include one or more of the following:

If by 6 months, your child does not yet:

- Enjoy playful actions
- Reach for objects
- Turn head when he/she hears a voice
- Recognize their own name
- Babble or vocalize -especially when being talked to or sung to

If by 9 months, your child does not yet:

- Engage in games by smiling or laughing
- Search for objects when moved out of sight
- Mouth objects or toys
- Listen to music or songs
- Respond to name being called
- Wave 'hi' and/or 'bye' when cued or prompted

If by 12 months, your child does not yet:

- Use gestures (reaching to be picked up/down, wave hi/bye, point to objects/toys when interested)
- Imitate movements to a song
- Understand simple commands or questions (sit down, give me, where is your teddy bear?)
- Identify any body parts
- Say mama/dada meaningfully
- Imitate animal sounds, words, or environmental noises (such as 'beep' for a car)
- Use some words to gain attention, label some toys/objects – especially their favorites

If by 18 months, your child does not yet:

- Request help when needed
- Use at least 15 words
- Use consonant sounds /t,d,n,h,p,b,m/
- Request "more"
- Name/label favorite toys or name some familiar family members

If by 24 months, your child does not yet:

- Demonstrate pretend and symbolic play (e.g., pretend play with toys, or use objects to represent something else such as using a banana as a phone)
- Help clean up toys when told
- Follow commands or two step instructions
- Use two word phrases (including adding new words) and use or imitate 3 word phrases
- Tell about something that happened – (e.g. 'played in bath')
- Use at least 50 words

Between 24-36 months, your child should demonstrate ability to:

- Identify body parts and clothing
- Use action words in their speech: jump, eating, wash, playing
- Understand use of objects (e.g., fork is for eating, cup is for drinking, crayon is for coloring)
- Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts (e.g., big/little, cold/hot, open/closed, wet/dry, etc.)
- Use words to ask questions, tell about something that happened, make requests, and answer yes/no consistently
- Use a variety of word combinations (i.e., phrases containing nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs)
- Use communication to request, comment, and ask/answer questions

You should also consider having your toddler evaluated if you notice he/she:

- Shows limited or inconsistent eye contact
- Does not turn when name is called
- Does not recognize familiar people's names
- Does not look towards a sound (e.g., look toward location of loud sounds)
- Does not appear to comprehend what you or others say
- Often answers questions inappropriately
- Does not yet initiate communication with peers or familiar adults
- Is not talking or saying very little
- Talking mostly in vowels (e.g., 'uh ee' for 'yummy' or 'i, i' for 'night night')
- Using one frequently produced sound or syllable to represent a variety of words.
- Not yet combining words into phrases or sentences.
- Not yet babbling or talking, was a "good baby" with little or no fussing, whining, crying

Consider having your school age child be evaluated for speech or language if he/she:

- Cannot be understood by peers and teachers
- Has consistent speech sound errors
- Receives speech or language services at school.
 - Due to high caseloads, schools usually cannot offer individual sessions or the amount of minutes that would help the child progress more rapidly
- Has difficulty expressing ideas clearly, or if language is vague – may often use words such as this, that, there
- Stutters
- Has a hard time learning new vocabulary words, using vocabulary words in the correct context, or has limited vocabulary
- Has a hard time with retelling of a story, movie, or event
- Exhibits difficulty with pronouns and/or grammar (e.g., "her went to the store", "I eated that yesterday")
- Has difficulty maintaining the topic during a conversation
- Has difficulty understanding questions and following directions