Speech and Language Impairments (SI)

There are many kinds of speech and language disorders that can affect children. Children’s speech may be impacted in the area of articulation, fluency, voice, and language.

Characteristics

Children with Speech and Language Disorders may be hard to understanding; leave out or change certain sounds; have an abnormal number of repetitions, hesitations, prolongations, or disturbances in their speech; may have problems with the pitch, loudness, resonance, or quality of the voice; or use words improperly, have an inability to express ideas, have a reduced vocabulary, or display an inability to follow directions.

Tips for Parents

- Learn the specifics of your child’s speech or language impairment. The more you know, the more you can help yourself and your child.
- Be patient. Your child, like every child, has a whole lifetime to learn and grow.
- Be well informed about the speech-language therapy your son or daughter is receiving.
- Give your child chores. Chores build confidence and ability. Keep your child’s age, attention span, and abilities in mind. Break down jobs into smaller steps. Explain what to do, step by step, until the job is done. Demonstrate. Provide help when it’s needed. Praise a job (or part of a job) well done.
- Listen to your child. Don’t rush to fill gaps or make corrections. Conversely, don’t force your child to speak. Be aware of the other ways in which communication takes place between people.

Resources

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)
