
Red Flags in Communication Development

Parents often ask about warning signs of speech and/or language problems. This list provides some warning signs that parents can refer to when observing their children's speech and language skills.

At age	Red Flags
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not laugh and squeal• does not look toward new sounds
9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• has limited or no babbling• does not indicate when happy or upset
12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not point to objects• does not use gestures such as waving or shaking head
15 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• has not used first word• does not respond to "no" and "bye-bye"
18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not use at least six to ten words consistently• does not hear well or discriminate between sounds
20 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not use at least six consonant sounds• does not follow simple directions
24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• has a vocabulary of less than 50 words• has decreased interest in social interactions
36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• strangers have difficulty understanding what the child is saying• does not use simple sentences

Other Concerns

- Is a very picky eater (willing to eat only four or five foods, gags on certain textures)
- Has difficulty with transitions
- Uses repetitive and/or perseverative behaviors
- Shows no interest in communicating
- Drools excessively
- Stutters more consistently and for longer than six months