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Much *More* Than Words



Monitoring and encouraging communication
development in early childhood



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Tohua ngā whakatipuranga
Ki te inu o te puna Mātauranga
Kia hora ai te whakaruruhau
Te ora ki runga i te iwi
Kia kaha, kia toa, kia manawanui

The generation should seek to drink
From the spring of knowledge
That may give shelter and wellbeing to their tribes
Be strong, be brave, be of strong heart

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INDIVIDUAL RECORD SHEETS AND HANDOUTS FOR PARENTS [POCKET]

Some Ideas to Help with Listening	
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Introduction

- ▲ Statement of Belief
- ▲ Links with Te Whāriki
- ▲ Objectives
- ▲ Definitions

Introduction

STATEMENT OF BELIEF

“Communication is vital for children to be able to contribute their strengths and interests, to find out what they want to know, and to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and care.” (Te Whāriki)

LINKS WITH TE WHĀRIKI

The material in this publication is grounded in the four principles and five strands of Te Whāriki. Whilst communication is a strand in its own right in Te Whāriki, educators will be aware that communication is an integral part of the other four strands.

Much More Than Words is based on the belief that every child needs opportunities to develop essential communication skills. Te Whāriki is the framework for early childhood education centres to provide these opportunities for all children.

Much More Than Words provides strategies for early childhood educators to help children who need additional support.

Much More Than Words will help early childhood educators identify the children requiring additional specialist support.

OBJECTIVES

Much More Than Words will:

- ▲ raise educators' awareness of normal communication development
- ▲ build educator confidence in the ability to reassure parents when there is not a problem
- ▲ assist educators to identify potential communication difficulties
- ▲ provide educators with strategies to meet the needs of individuals with communication difficulties
- ▲ establish effective collaborative practices between educators, parents and Ministry of Education, Special Education (GSE) Early Intervention teams.

DEFINITIONS

Learning to talk involves the development and interaction of many different skills. Although all the elements of communication are inextricably linked, they fall into four broad areas:

- ▲ **Speech Sounds** – the sounds and sequences of sounds that are used for talking. The coordination and strength of mouth muscles is an important factor in speech production
- ▲ **Language** – the words and patterns of words that are used to relate meaning and to communicate ideas and thoughts. Language includes things such as: sentence length, vocabulary, grammar, understanding of what is said and the social use of language for example, greeting, staying on topic, asking and answering questions
- ▲ **Voice** – the sound made by the vocal folds (cords) vibrating. Voice includes volume, pitch, resonance, intonation and overall quality
- ▲ **Fluency** – the smooth, rapid, effortless use of speech and language. ‘Dysfluency’ is stuttering.

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Hearing

- ▲ Hearing and Signs of Hearing Difficulties
- ▲ General Strategies to Help Children with Hearing Loss

Hearing and Signs of Hearing Difficulties

Hearing is a critical part of a child's development. Even a mild or fluctuating hearing loss can affect a child's speech and language development. Early detection makes early treatment and prevention possible. Signs of hearing difficulties include:

- ▲ lack of response to everyday sounds
- ▲ difficulty in locating the source of sounds
- ▲ a delay in understanding and using language
- ▲ inattentive and unfocused behaviour
- ▲ constantly asking for what is said to be repeated
- ▲ mispronouncing words slightly by confusing sounds
- ▲ behavioural problems
- ▲ staring at people's mouths when they talk
- ▲ speaking very loudly.

General Strategies to Help Children with Hearing Loss

TESTING FOR HEARING LOSS

There are different types of hearing loss. Some are caused by problems in the outer and/or middle ear eg, wax build-up, otitis media (glue ear). Other hearing losses are owing to damage to the inner ear.

There are two main types of tests used to investigate hearing. A tympanogram is a procedure that can show how well the ear drum moves. It is helpful in identifying middle ear problems such as glue ear.

NOTE: A child may have a normal tympanogram but still have difficulties hearing.

Audiologists test for damage to the inner ear.

If you are concerned about a child's hearing make a referral for a hearing assessment as soon as possible.

If you have a child in your centre with an identified hearing loss make sure the Advisor on Deaf Children at your local GSE office has been notified. The advisor will be able to give specific advice related to the child's particular type and severity of hearing loss.

Strategies to Help

- ▲ Gain the child's attention by saying his/her name first before speaking.
- ▲ When it is culturally appropriate, gain eye contact with the child before speaking.
- ▲ Keep a listening distance of within two metres.
- ▲ Be aware of background noise.
- ▲ If the child has not heard you, rephrase what you said rather than repeating word for word.
- ▲ Check the child's understanding of instructions by asking a question like "What will you do now?" not "Did you hear me?" and not "Do you understand?"
- ▲ Use a clear voice with normal intonation. Never shout or speak too loudly as this distorts the sound.
- ▲ Face the child while you are speaking.
- ▲ Ensure light is on your face while you are speaking.
- ▲ If you are unsure about the best way to help a child with hearing loss in your centre contact an Advisor on Deaf Children at GSE.

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Listening

- ▲ Helping Children to Listen
- ▲ Fun Activities to Develop Listening Skills

Helping Children to Listen

Some children have trouble tuning in, understanding and remembering what is said to them. Applying the following strategies will help with listening:

- ▲ make sure that you have the child's attention. Be aware of distractions, particularly when the child needs to concentrate on what you are saying
- ▲ if it is culturally appropriate, establish eye contact and stand or sit close to the child when you speak
- ▲ slow down your rate of speech. Pause to give the child time to think before responding
- ▲ repeat or rephrase your message when the child does not understand
- ▲ speak clearly. Use gestures, pauses and inflection to emphasise the message
- ▲ model good listening behaviours. Take the time to listen. Stop what you are doing and give your full attention as you listen. Set aside specific times for sharing conversation and interacting with individual children
- ▲ simplify the language of your message. Use clear and concise vocabulary and sentence structure. If the message is too difficult to understand the child will stop listening.

Fun Activities to Develop Listening Skills

The following are a few starter ideas for listening activities adapted from *Listening with Kids* by Linda Serway.

TUNING IN

Listening Walk

Go for a ten minute 'listening walk' with a child or group of children. See how many noises you can identify together. It may help to stop, close your eyes and listen. What is making the noise? Where is it? Is it loud or quiet?

Rhyming

Say a word and see how many rhyming words the children can think of. Some starter words are: boat, toe, cat, lake, cook, wig, chin, clock.

Louder – Softer

Play a song on the cd player. Ask the children to listen as you turn the volume up and down. Tell them to stand up when the sound increases and to squat down when the volume goes down.

LISTENING TO REMEMBER

Farmer, Farmer I Can Hear

Talk about animals you would see on a farm. Identify the sounds they make. Clap and chant in rhythm “Farmer, farmer I can hear, all the animals you have near”. Make the sound of an animal. Repeat the chant and the animal sound, then add a second animal sound. Have the children repeat the chant and sound sequence correctly before adding a new animal sound.

Shopping List

The same kind of game can be played as a shopping list – “I went to town and I bought a...” with each child trying to remember what came before and taking a turn to add something to the list.

Story Time

Select a story at the child’s language and interest level. Read the story aloud. At the end of each page or paragraph stop to ask questions. Ask the child to tell you what just happened in the story. Follow the story with questions relating to the sequence of events.

LISTENING TO UNDERSTAND

What’s in the Bag?

Fill a bag with everyday objects. Choose an item and without showing the children, describe three or four details about it – colour, size, texture, shape, function. Ask the children to guess what it is you are holding. This is also a good expressive language activity when you reverse roles and ask the children to describe what they are holding.

Find It

Look around the room and think of something you can describe by location; for example, the fishbowl. Give the child three clues about how to find it – “it’s at the back of the room, it’s on the table, there’s a net beside it”.

Who Am I?

Talk about different kinds of jobs that people have. Choose an occupation. Give the child two or three clues about that job. For example, ‘Postie’ – “I ride a bike, I carry lots of letters, I see a lot of houses every day...”

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Speech

- ▲ Speech Sound Development
- ▲ Taking a Speech Sample
- ▲ Responding to Speech Sound Errors
- ▲ Fun Activities to Promote Speech Sound Development
- ▲ Speech Sound Errors – What to Do and When to Refer

Speech Sound Development

There is a wide range of what is considered normal in a child's acquisition of speech sounds. Children's ability to use different speech sounds normally develops in an order related to how hard the sounds are to make.

Some consonant sounds such as 'b' and 'm', are easy to make and are typically among the first to be achieved. More complex movements are required for sounds such as 'ch' and blends of two sounds like 'sp' and 'fl' – these sounds generally develop later on. The chart on page 11 is a guide to the approximate ages by which most children have developed each sound.

Many vowel sounds (a, e, i, o, u) are used by two and a half years. All should be achieved by four years. Children from non-English speaking backgrounds may carry an accent on the vowel sounds.

INDIVIDUAL SOUND ERRORS

The types of errors a child may make include:

- ▲ changing a sound to another English sound for example, 'car' to 'tar'; 'fire' to 'pire'; 'sun' to 'dun'
- ▲ distorting a sound to a non-English sound for example, a 'slushy' 's' or a nasal 'snort'. The substitution of a non-English sound is an error that does not usually resolve spontaneously.

PATTERNS OF SOUND CHANGES

As well as having difficulties with individual sounds, children often use patterns of 'shortcuts' to make words easier for them to say. These patterns are called 'phonological processes' and there are many different types. You may have heard the following common processes in a young child's speech:

- ▲ leaving out the final consonant in a word; for example, 'ca' for 'cat'
- ▲ dropping unstressed syllables for example, 'nana' for 'banana'; 'sketti' for 'spaghetti'
- ▲ repeating the first syllable of a word for example, 'bobo' for 'bottle'.

These three patterns usually stop by three and a half years. Some patterns may persist for longer such as reducing sound clusters to one sound for example, 'pug' for 'plug'.

INTELLIGIBILITY NORMS

Sometimes a child may be able to produce a range of sounds within normal age limits, but overall it is still hard to understand them. The following is a guide to the approximate level of intelligibility expected:

By age two years 25% intelligible – understood by closest family members

By age three years understood by adults who live or work with children

By age four years 90% intelligible – understood by wider population.

For more information go to:

www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/library/23_factsheet.pdf or Bowen, C. (2006).

Speech Intelligibility from 12 to 48 months. www.speech-language-therapy.com/intelligibility.htm

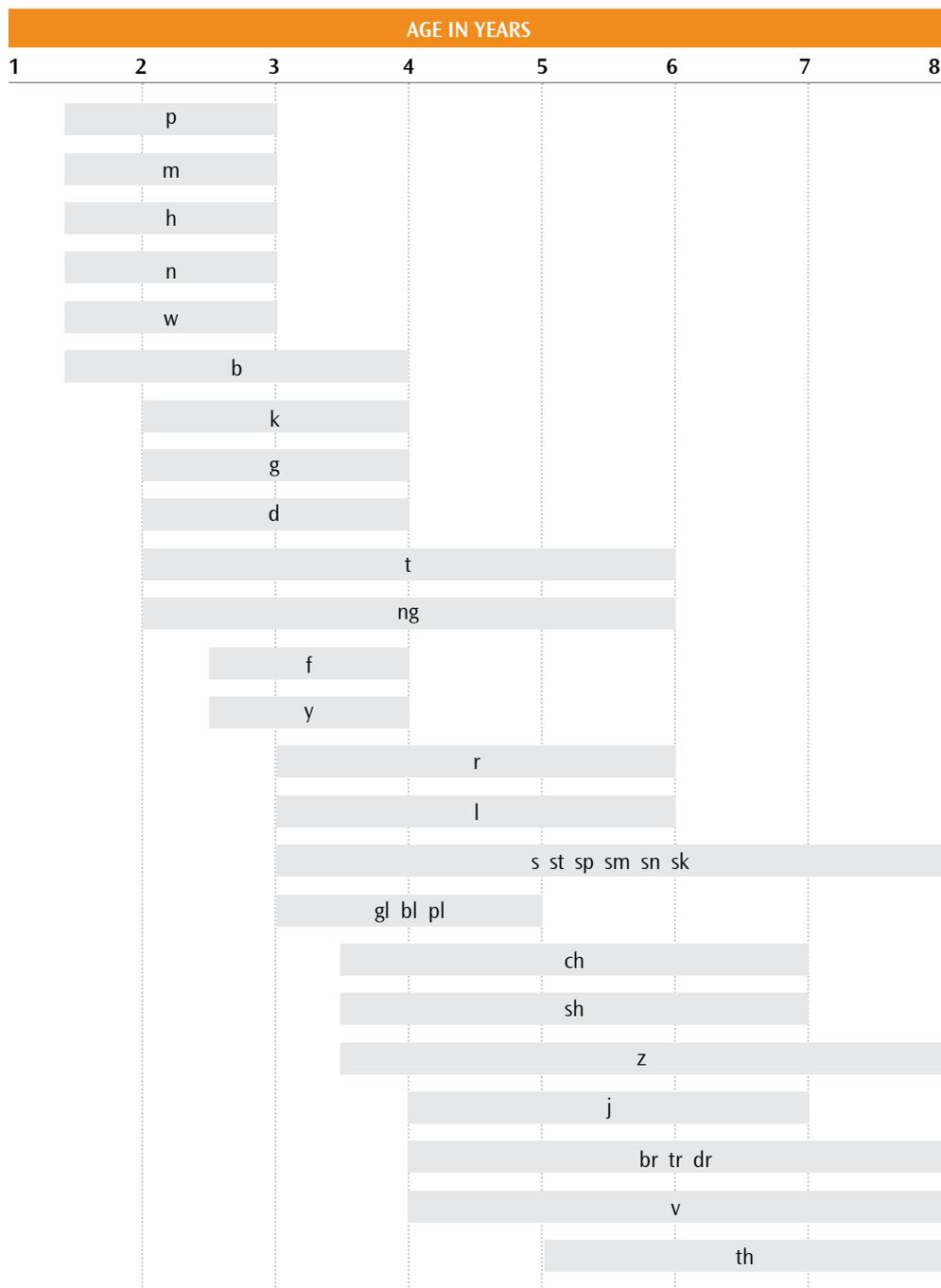
ORAL MOTOR CONTROL – CONTROL OF MUSCLES OF THE MOUTH SUCH AS LIPS AND TONGUE

The muscles used for speech are the same as those required for sucking, eating and saliva control. Children with speech difficulties sometimes have problems with the strength, movement and/or coordination of these muscles.

WHEN DO SOUNDS DEVELOP?

This chart shows the range of ages at which children typically acquire consonant sounds. The end of each bar represents the age by which most children have achieved each sound (Adapted from Sander, E.K. When are speech sounds learned? *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 1972, 31, 62. Some examples of consonant blend acquisition have been added from Templin Darley, 1947).

Speech Sound Development Chart



Responding to Speech Sound Errors

Remember that learning to use speech sounds takes time and there is a natural sequence of development. A child who is making speech sound errors is not being naughty or lazy.

- ▲ You can correct the child's sounds quite naturally within a conversation. When you hear an error, repeat the word correctly within the conversation so that the child can compare his/her pronunciation with yours eg,

Child "I see a bish!"

Adult "Yes I see a fish ... wow..... It's a big fish....The fish is swimming".

You can emphasise the error sound if you like, but the child should not be required to repeat the word or produce the sound correctly. You are simply giving a good speech model.

- ▲ **Remember, responding to what the child is saying is more important than responding to how it is said.**
- ▲ Have fun playing with sounds.

Fun Activities to Promote Speech Sound Development

All the sounds that are used in English can be practised in play. The more these sounds are practised and refined, the clearer they will become in speech. You might like to try some of these activities at mat-time, with small groups, or with individual children as part of other activities. Exaggerate both the sounds and your facial expression to give a clear model for the children to imitate. Remember, you are **making the sound, not saying the letter** ie, 'mmm' not 'em'.

B

- ▲ a boat that goes bbb as it chugs along
- ▲ a ball that bounces bbb
- ▲ try peek-a-boo or something that says 'boo'

P

- ▲ making a paper person bend over by whispering a 'p' sound
- ▲ blowing out candles
- ▲ blowing bubbles

M

- ▲ a car or trolley that goes mmmm
- ▲ things that taste yummy – mmm

T

- ▲ tapping a hammer on anything
- ▲ a dripping tap goes ttt
- ▲ a ticking clock

D

- ▲ pretend to be banging a drum ddd

F

- ▲ imitate a rabbit's teeth fff
- ▲ a sky rocket as it fizzes up fff

V

- ▲ a noisy plane, truck or car goes vvvvv

CH

- ▲ the train goes ch ch ch toot toot

SH

- ▲ tell people to be quiet
- ▲ look the baby's sleeping – sh

S

- ▲ a snake sound
- ▲ the sound of air coming out of a tyre
- ▲ filling up a car with petrol

Z

- ▲ bees or other flying insects can go zzz

G

- ▲ a noisy drinker goes ggg
- ▲ give dolls a drink or pretend to drink from a cup going ggg

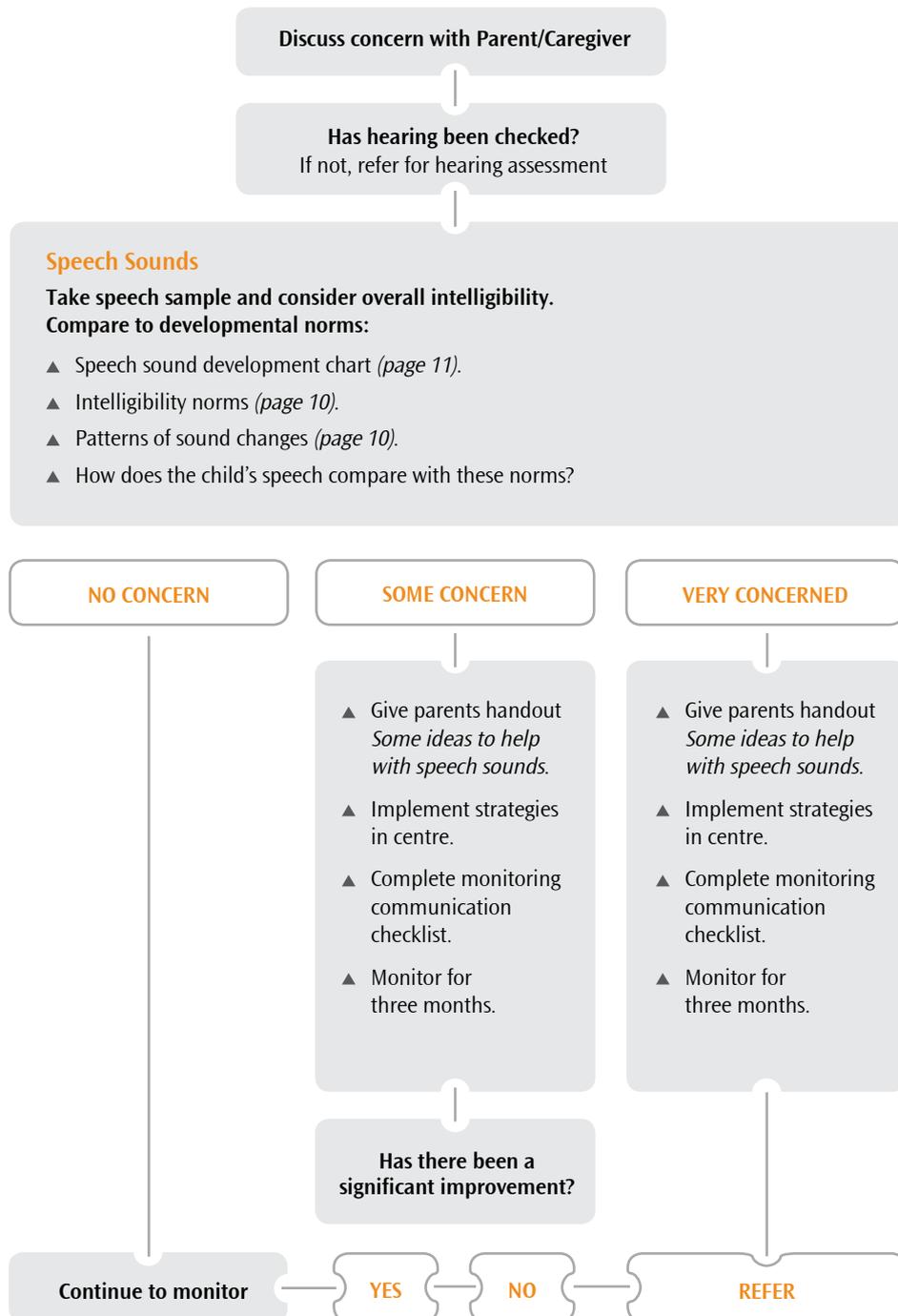
K

- ▲ the click of a camera as a photo is taken

Other sound sequences can be used to practise vowel sounds and assist younger children to gain control over their lips and tongues.

- ▲ animal noises
- ▲ phone ringing – brring brring
- ▲ exaggerated laughing – ho ho hee he ha ha
- ▲ exaggerated crying – boo hoo
- ▲ something's wrong or broken – uh oh, oh no
- ▲ big smiles – eee
- ▲ fish face, hooting like an owl ooo
- ▲ blowing kisses

Speech Sound Errors – What to Do and When to Refer



REFER IF:

- ▲ the child is only using vowel sounds (a, e, i, o, u) and no consonants after age one
- ▲ the child's speech is well outside of the range of normal in terms of; speech sound development, use of 'shortcuts', or intelligibility (see norms)
- ▲ the child is making 'non-English' speech sound distortions
- ▲ after age two the child has difficulty coordinating the mouth movements required for speech and/or produces words with sounds in the wrong order eg, 'puc' for 'cup'
- ▲ the child has difficulty chewing, sucking, or drools excessively (not only when teething).

Much *More* Than Words

Language

- ▲ Language Development
- ▲ Social Use of Language
- ▲ Making a Communication Observation
- ▲ Taking a Language Sample
- ▲ General Strategies to Encourage Language Development
- ▲ Specific Language Development Techniques
- ▲ Encouraging a Reluctant Speaker to Talk
- ▲ Language Development – What to Do and When to Refer

Language Development

There is a wide range of what is considered to be normal in a child's language development. No two children say or understand exactly the same things at the same ages. However, there is a series of language stages that most children pass through. The following provides a guide to the ages and stages of development. It is a representative sample of things to consider and is not intended as an exhaustive list of skills at each age.

Expressive and Receptive Language Checklist

BIRTH – 12 MONTHS

(adapted from 'Exchanges 2' – Department of Education, Queensland, Australia)

3-6 months

- ▲ attends to surroundings
- ▲ looks and listens
- ▲ follows movement with eyes
- ▲ looks at people
- ▲ smiles
- ▲ cries
- ▲ makes throaty sounds

6-8 months

- ▲ attends to one thing at a time
- ▲ begins to learn how one thing affects another
- ▲ early turn-taking with actions eg, smiling in response to adult greetings
- ▲ understands general meaning carried by intonation
- ▲ laughing, crying, cooing, babbling

8-12 months

- ▲ imitates adults' behaviour eg, waving
- ▲ has understanding of object permanence (looks for things which are out of sight)
- ▲ understands because of clues from situation
- ▲ enjoys repetitive games like peek-a-boo
- ▲ turn-taking with sounds
- ▲ develops intention to communicate
- ▲ initiates interaction
- ▲ 'talks' to adults using sound combinations
- ▲ babbling, experimenting with sounds

12 months onwards

- ▲ begins to understand how to affect others
- ▲ learning words that are most meaningful
- ▲ communicates to be social, to ask and to show

ONE TO THREE YEARS

By 18 Months

- ▲ single word stage... uses up to 50 words
- ▲ jargon common eg, unintelligible made-up words or sentences
- ▲ word strings eg, mum... car... keys
- ▲ pseudo two-word utterances eg, allgone
- ▲ dances or bounces to music
- ▲ follows simple one-step commands; eg, pick up the cup (situation, gesture and intonation clues are important for understanding)
- ▲ looks at person talking
- ▲ identifies object in a book
- ▲ looks for objects that are out of sight

By Two Years

- ▲ two words together eg, bye teddy, daddy gone, more drink
- ▲ uses words to request desired objects rather than just to name
- ▲ can ask questions – what's that? Where?
- ▲ answers question – what's this?
- ▲ names objects and pictures spontaneously
- ▲ responds to simple two part instructions eg, put teddy in the bed
- ▲ uses negatives... no
- ▲ points to some body parts when asked eg, eyes, ears, nose
- ▲ use of jargon decreases

By Three Years

- ▲ uses sentences of three or more words – not grammatically correct or complete eg, me push car
- ▲ has a vocabulary of several hundred words
- ▲ talks about things not present eg, things that happened in the past
- ▲ uses some adjectives (eg, big) and adverbs (eg, fast)
- ▲ talks about the actions of others
- ▲ adds information to that of others
- ▲ asks an increasing number of questions
- ▲ answers questions eg, what's daddy doing? Where?
- ▲ refers to self with full name
- ▲ enjoys repeating words and sounds
- ▲ imitates simple actions
- ▲ can listen attentively to short stories and books

FOUR TO FIVE YEARS

By Four Years

- ▲ sentences become increasingly complex – expansion in the number of words per sentence
- ▲ great increase in the number and type of words used
- ▲ answers whose, who and why questions
- ▲ uses location words – in, on, under
- ▲ refers increasingly to events and objects in the past or future
- ▲ understands some concepts of time such as now, soon, and later
- ▲ asks who, what, where, and why questions
- ▲ recognises common everyday sounds
- ▲ carries out series of two related commands eg, put your fork down and pick up your spoon
- ▲ can identify some objects by use eg, which one do we write with?

By Five Years

- ▲ uses complete sentences – minor grammatical immaturities are common; eg, runned, mouses
- ▲ has basic understanding of concepts related to number, size, weight, colour, texture, distance, position and time – understands the concepts of tallest, biggest, same, more, on, in, under
- ▲ understands the order of daily routines eg, breakfast before lunch, lunch before dinner, dinner before bedtime
- ▲ adapts language to listener's level of understanding eg, to baby sister: daddy go bye-bye; to mother: daddy went to the shop to get a paper
- ▲ asks and answers who, what, when, why and where questions
- ▲ follows two unrelated directions eg, put your milk on the table and get your coat on
- ▲ refers increasingly to the activities of others
- ▲ links past and present events
- ▲ asks meanings of words – tries to use new words, not always correctly
- ▲ classification skills and reasoning ability are developing

Social Use of Language

A child's ability to use language socially is an important skill which, just like other language components, develops gradually over time. Communication involves much more than words and there is a lot for a child to learn. The social nature of language is reflected within all strands of Te Whāriki.



SOCIAL USE OF LANGUAGE CHECKLIST

Before Age Two Years

Children's use of language is usually erratic and disjointed. The child is not yet aware of the listener's needs and will often talk about things of which the listener has no experience or knowledge. Parents and other conversation partners usually end up doing most of the 'work' in making sense of the interactions.

By Age Three Years

The child has learned many things about conversations. The child will initiate dialogue and has learned how to obtain and hold a listener's attention. Conversational turn-taking is developing. Knowledge of how to respond to someone is also growing eg, answering simple questions with appropriate answers.

General Strategies to Encourage Language Development

Use meaningful language and activities:

- ▲ always follow the child's lead and comment about the activities or topic he/she is focusing on at the time. Language is learned best when it is interesting and relevant.

Be aware of background noise and distractions:

- ▲ children's ability to 'tune in' to something is reduced when there are other things competing for their attention.

Gain their attention before speaking:

- ▲ this can be by speaking their name or, when culturally appropriate, a touch or establishing eye contact.

Keep it short and simple:

- ▲ use language at the appropriate level of complexity eg, if a child is only speaking in single words, your utterances should be at the same level or slightly longer, two words. Eg, 'car' or 'red car'.

Use specific vocabulary:

- ▲ keep your utterances clear and succinct. A child is more likely to respond appropriately if you tell them, "put your cup on the bench", rather than "put it over there".

Create the need to talk:

- ▲ ensure that talking is necessary for the child. While we are often able to anticipate or identify the child's need, wait until an attempt to verbalise the problem is made before responding.

Allow time to respond:

- ▲ pause for longer than is usual. Give the child an opportunity to reply to you.

Give positive reinforcement:

- ▲ always reward communication attempts by responding to the child's intended meaning even if the form of communication is not correct.

Repeat, repeat, repeat:

- ▲ children need to hear the same language many times before they will remember it or use it themselves.

Reduce the number of questions:

- ▲ try to keep the number of questions you ask the child to a minimum, especially those requiring just one-word answers such as, "What's this?" Instead, focus on feeding in language by making comments about what you and/or the child are doing.

Specific Language Development Techniques

While the following are useful techniques to use with all children in a centre they can make a particular difference when used in a focused way with an individual child.

COMMENTING

- ▲ Talk about what you and the child are doing.
- ▲ Focus on what the child is doing, not saying.
- ▲ Speak to the child at his/her language level or just above it.
- ▲ Simplify your language to short, simple but complete sentences so the child can understand everything that is said.
- ▲ Talk about things happening here and now.
- ▲ Remember, you are commenting, not asking questions.

EXPANSION

You are now expanding the child's talking to a more adult form. This technique does not require the child to talk. You are modelling language to help them move forward in their language development. The child is not required to repeat your expansion.

car	a car
them pigs	they're pigs
want drink	want a drink
truck	red truck or the truck is going.

The following techniques require only a minimal response and may be useful to encourage language from a reluctant speaker.

CHOICE QUESTIONS

- ▲ This technique demands a response from the child.
- ▲ The child is given two alternatives using questions.
- ▲ This is a useful technique to elicit one-word responses or complex sentences eg,

"Is he walking or running?"

"Is it in or on?"

"Is he sitting in the tree or climbing up the tree?"

- ▲ Be sure to use questions at the language level of the child.

SENTENCE COMPLETION

This technique demands a response by requiring the child to complete your sentence.

You can use this technique from single words through to phrases eg,

The boy is in the “bath”

The boy is in “the bath”

The boy is “in the bath”

- ▲ Help the child finish the sentence by using gestures and facial expression.
- ▲ Remember, only use this technique to elicit words/phrases you know the child already knows.

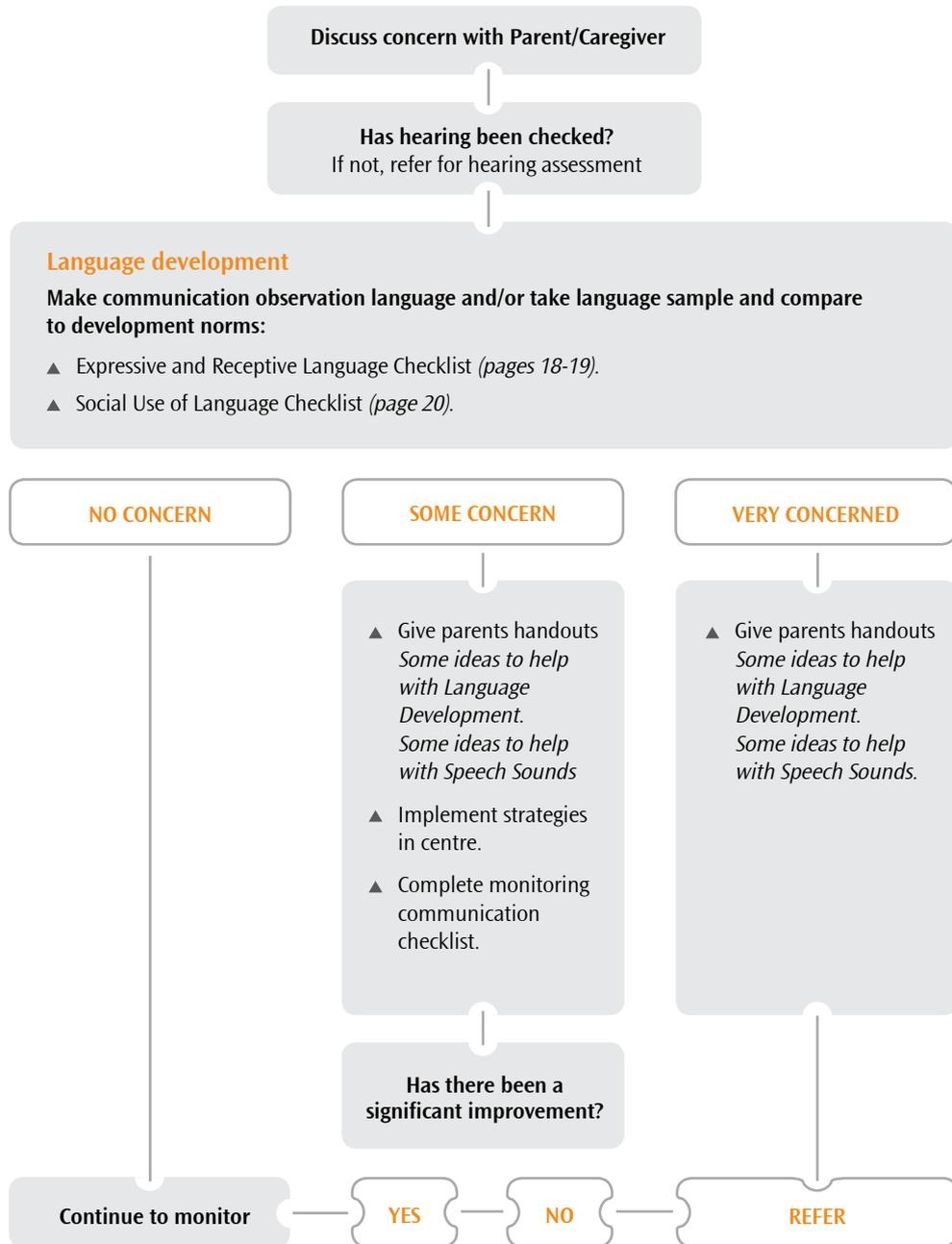
Encouraging a Reluctant Speaker to Talk

Many children arriving in new situations are reluctant to talk. It is normal for a child to take time to feel comfortable in a new setting. Speaking requires confidence, especially in front of a group.

It is important to give the child time for settling in without pressure to communicate verbally. However, we hope that, sooner or later, the child will want to share and respond. The following are suggestions to encourage a reluctant speaker to start talking:

- ▲ focus on encouraging, not forcing, the child to speak. Pressures, including punishment, bribery or consequences, don't work. Keep oral language times fun
- ▲ avoid direct questions. If you must ask a question try to make it a simple yes or no and accept a nod or shake of the head initially. Children are more likely to offer speech when they feel all their communication attempts are accepted
- ▲ remember that some children are naturally less talkative than others
- ▲ create a verbal climate around the child by talking with someone nearby, by commenting in a low-key way on what s/he is doing and moving on before there is pressure on the child to respond
- ▲ help the child to take small gradual steps towards speaking in front of others. Once a child is beginning to use single words in a one-to-one setting encourage them to talk in a small group. Wait until the child feels comfortable speaking in a small group before building up to a larger group
- ▲ reinforce the child's talking by responding positively to the meaning rather than giving direct praise or drawing attention to the child.

Language Development – What to Do and When to Refer



REFER IF:

- ▲ the child shows deviation or a delay of more than 6-12 months from the Intelligibility Norms
- ▲ the child's language compares adequately with age norms but your overall impression causes you to remain concerned about the child's communication.

Much *More* Than Words

Children From Non-English Speaking Backgrounds

- ▲ Things to Remember When Considering Communication
- ▲ Non-English Speaking Backgrounds – What to Do and When to Refer

Children from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds

Children follow different paths to second language acquisition and the stages they pass through can vary quite widely. The following are some very general guidelines.

- ▲ **Children can be expected to go through some periods of mixing their two (or more) languages.** This may happen within the same sentence. It occurs because vocabulary may exist in one language but not in the other. Also, words from one language may convey a message that is not easily translated into the other language.
- ▲ **Children may not be equally skilled in both languages.** It is common for there to be greater understanding than actual use of one language.
- ▲ **There may be periods when one language is used more than the other.**

Things to Remember when Considering Communication

- ▲ For new children in a centre, from a non-English speaking background, everything may be unfamiliar.
- ▲ Cultural differences may mean the child's interaction style differs from that of other children in your centre.
- ▲ Bilingual acquisition is facilitated if children have sustained, rich and varied experiences in both languages.
- ▲ Parents can facilitate bilingual proficiency by using the language they know best and by using it in varied and extensive ways.

Non-English Speaking Backgrounds – What to Do and When to Refer

- ▲ Discuss any concerns with parents/caregivers. It is very important to find out how well the child is communicating in their first language. You may need assistance to do this if the parents/caregivers have English as a second or third language.
- ▲ If the parents/caregivers report there is no problem with the first language it is likely that the English difficulties are related to the 'newness' of the language. With continued exposure to English and plenty of language stimulation, English proficiency should grow over time.
- ▲ If there is concern about the child's use of their first language, it is more likely there could be a general language delay or disorder. In this case follow the same set of procedures as recommended for language delay in monolingual children.

Much *More* Than Words

Voice

- ▲ Voice – What to Look For
- ▲ Voice – What to Do and When to Refer

Voice – What to Look For

SOME STRATEGIES

Volume, pitch and quality are all aspects of speaking related to the voice. Some possible problems include:

- ▲ a voice which is frequently or constantly hoarse (even when the child doesn't have a cold)
- ▲ a voice which is excessively loud or quiet
- ▲ any other voice quality which sounds particularly unusual eg, very nasal.

IF THE CHILD HAS A HOARSE VOICE

A hoarse voice is often a result of the child giving their voice box 'a hard time' for example, by yelling a lot, making a lot of 'growly' or animal noises, using a pitch that is much higher or lower than their natural pitch. Although these types of voices can cause some damage to the vocal cords this is usually temporary. Encourage these strategies to reduce the behaviour and monitor for two to three months before referring:

- ▲ encourage the child to take regular drinks of water. This helps to 'oil' the vocal cords and helps them to work together smoothly
- ▲ discourage the child from making a lot of animal or 'growly' noises, such as roaring like a lion, making machine noises, high pitched squeaking etc. This type of voice use can strain the vocal cords
- ▲ discourage the child from yelling or screaming during play. Suggest alternative activities which do not involve the use of a loud voice
- ▲ praise the child for using a quiet voice
- ▲ instead of calling out across a room, encourage the child to come closer
- ▲ reduce background noise (TV, radio, open window) when you are listening to the child so there is no need for raised voices
- ▲ model good voice use. Demonstrate the way to care for a voice by doing the things listed yourself.

IF THE CHILD SPEAKS TOO LOUDLY

- ▲ Praise the child for using a quiet voice eg, "I really like it when you use that quiet voice".
- ▲ Give your full attention when the child is talking to you so that voices do not have to be raised.
- ▲ Encourage the child to come closer to the person s/he wants to speak to instead of calling out across a room. Praise the child for doing this.
- ▲ Reduce background noise (TV, radio, open window) when you are listening to the child so that voices do not have to be raised.
- ▲ Model a quiet voice.

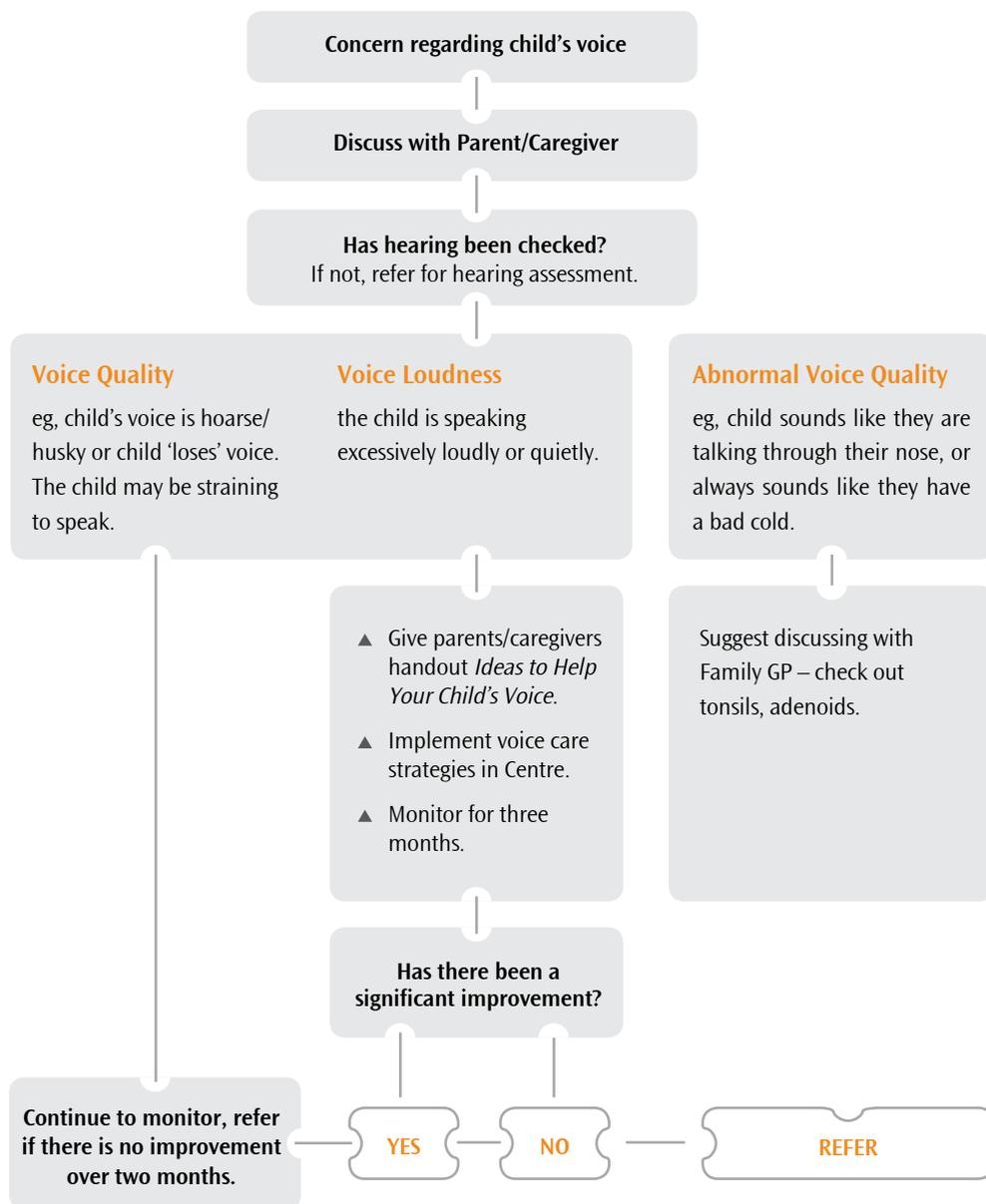
IF THE CHILD SPEAKS VERY QUIETLY

- ▲ Praise the child for using a louder voice eg, "I really like the way you used a bigger voice that time – it was really easy to hear what you were saying".
- ▲ Respond to the meaning of what the child is saying more than to how it is said.
- ▲ Encourage and praise the child for non-speaking activities – build his/her confidence as much as possible.

IF THE CHILD HAS A VERY UNUSUAL VOICE QUALITY

- ▲ Encourage the parents/caregivers to discuss the child's voice quality with their doctor.
- ▲ If you are unsure about the child's voice and whether you should refer, phone GSE and discuss whether referral is appropriate.

Voice – What to Do and When to Refer



Much *More* Than Words

Stuttering/Dysfluency

- ▲ What is Stuttering/Dysfluency
- ▲ Some Strategies to Help Fluency
- ▲ Stuttering/Dysfluency – What to Do and When to Refer

What is Stuttering/Dysfluency

Fluency refers to the way words flow easily and naturally. Dysfluency (stuttering) refers to speech disruptions such as:

- ▲ repetitions of sounds or syllables eg, pa..pa..pa..paper, super..super..super..supermarket
- ▲ prolongations of sounds eg, mmmmy...
- ▲ periods during which speech production is blocked with no sound coming out – the words seem to get stuck.

During a dysfluent moment some children may make face or body movements such as: grimacing, eye-rolling, blinking or foot stamping. Some dysfluent children will use a lot of extra filler words like 'you' and 'ah'.

NOTE – that the terms 'stuttering', 'stammering' and 'dysfluency' refer to the same thing.

WHEN TO BE CONCERNED?

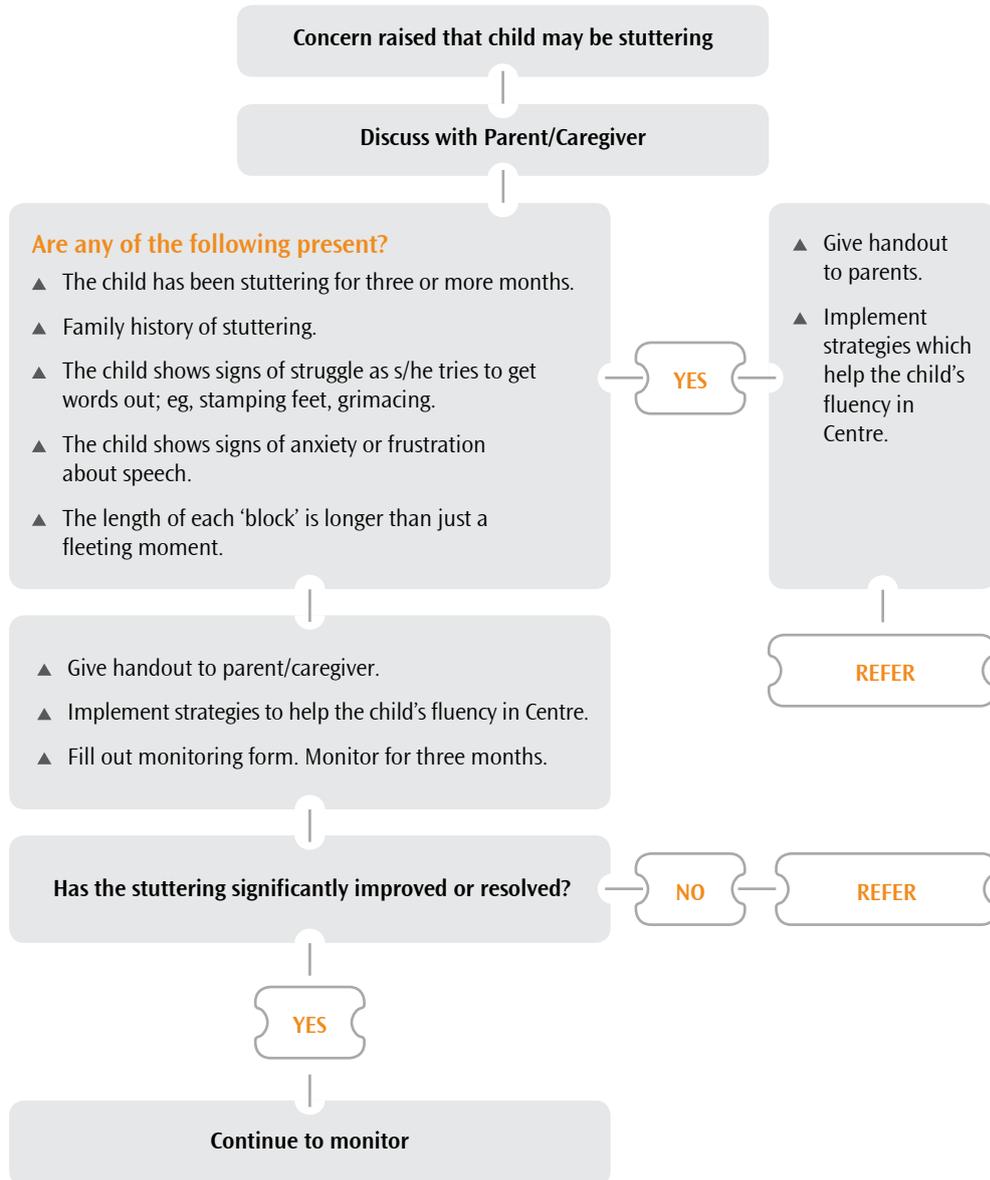
Many children go through a period of what is known as 'normal nonfluency'. This often occurs when their language is rapidly developing and they have a lot to say. They are beginning to talk more like an adult but are not quite ready to do so. This results in repetitions, hesitations and reformulations. 'Normal non-fluency' is a stage that most children will move through without any cause for concern. However, referral is appropriate if:

- ▲ there is a family history of stuttering
- ▲ the child shows signs of struggle when trying to get the words out eg, stamping feet, grimacing
- ▲ the period of non-fluency persists for longer than three months
- ▲ the child shows signs of anxiety or frustration about speech
- ▲ the length of each block, hesitation or repetition is more than just a fleeting moment.

Some Strategies to Help Fluency

- ▲ Follow the child's lead in play and conversation.
- ▲ Speak more slowly yourself.
- ▲ Increase pauses – give the child time to respond.
- ▲ Try not to ask the child too many questions.
- ▲ Use short, simple sentences.
- ▲ Maintain eye contact.
- ▲ Do not interrupt the child or finish sentences for him/her.
- ▲ Discourage others from teasing or laughing at the child.
- ▲ Praise the child for fluent speech eg, "Wow, that was really smooth talking – well done!"

Stuttering/Dysfluency – What to Do and When to Refer



Much *More* Than Words

Monitoring and Referral Procedures

- ▲ Monitoring Communication Checklist
- ▲ Accessing GSE – Making a Referral

Monitoring Communication Checklist

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Date of Enrolment: _____ Date: _____

Name of Centre: _____

Staff member completing form: _____

CONCERN RAISED WITH REGARD TO:	CONCERN RAISED BY:
<input type="checkbox"/> Voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Centre staff
<input type="checkbox"/> Stuttering	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/caregiver
<input type="checkbox"/> Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech sounds	

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE CONCERN:

ACTION TAKEN:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech sample taken (attach)	<input type="checkbox"/> Referred for hearing assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Handout given to parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Language sample taken (attach)
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication observation completed (attach)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

PLAN:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor for weeks/months	<input type="checkbox"/> No further action
<input type="checkbox"/> Review date / /	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to GSE
<input type="checkbox"/> Diaried	

PLANNED STRATEGIES TO HELP DURING MONITORING PERIOD:

OUTCOME OF REVIEW:

Signed by (Staff member): _____ Date: _____

Signed by (Parent/caregiver): _____ Date: _____

Accessing GSE – Making a Referral

Please ensure that you have parent/caregiver permission before referring to GSE.

National Office

4th Floor St Pauls Square Bldg
45-47 Pipitea Street
Thorndon
Wellington, 6011
Ph: 04 463 8910
Fax: 04 463 8254

Waikato District Office

Ken Browne Drive
PO Box 774
Hamilton, 3240
Ph: 07 850 8880
Fax: 07 850 8998

Taranaki District Office

Level 4, Tasman Towers
52-58 Gill Street
PO Box 8158
New Plymouth, 4342
Ph: 06 758 7858
Fax: 06 758 4135

Otago District Office

Public Trust Building
414 Moray Place
PO Box 5147
Dunedin, 9058
Ph: 03 471 5200
Fax: 03 479 0541

Tai Tokerau District Office

10 Awaroa River Road
PO Box 911
Whangarei, 0140
Ph: 09 436 8900
Fax: 09 436 8902

Bay of Plenty East District Office

Level 3, Regency House
1 Elizabeth Street
Tauranga, 3110
Ph: 07 571 7800
Fax: 07 571 7864

Central District Office

Cnr Fitzherbert Ave &
Ferguson Street
PO Box 758
Palmerston North, 4440
Ph: 06 358 3026
Fax: 06 358 9590

Southland District Office

190 Forth Street
PO Box 887
Invercargill, 9840
Ph: 03 218 2442
Fax: 03 218 2171

Northwest District Office

129-155 Hurstmere Road
PO Box 33 137
Takapuna
Auckland, 0740
Ph: 09 487 1100
Fax: 09 487 1187

Bay of Plenty West District Office

Level 3, 1144 Pukaki Street
PO Box 701
Rotorua, 3040
Ph: 07 348 5145
Fax: 07 349 2560

Greater Wellington District Office

Level 2, 19 Market Grove
PO Box 30 177
Lower Hutt, 5040
Ph: 04 439 4600
Fax: 04 570 3667

Manukau District Office

492 Great South Road
PO Box 22 420
Otahuhu
Auckland, 1640
Ph: 09 270 4489
Fax: 09 270 2531

Gisborne District Office

2nd Floor Tower Building
Cnr Gladstone Road &
Grey Street
PO Box 658
Gisborne, 4040
Ph: 06 868 0120
Fax: 06 868 0121

Marlborough/Nelson/West Coast District Office

Level 3, Aon House
241 Hardy Street
PO Box 282
Nelson, 7040
Ph: 03 546 3470
Fax: 03 539 1501

Auckland City District Office

Eden 5 Building
12-18 Normanby Road
Mt Eden
Private Bag 92 644
Symonds Street
Auckland, 1150
Ph: 09 632 9400
Fax: 09 632 9401

Hawke's Bay District Office

Heretaunga House
Cnr Warren Street &
Lyndon Road
PO Box 1248
Hastings, 4156
Ph: 06 870 9750
Fax: 06 870 9789

Canterbury District Office

39 Princess Street
Addington
PO Box 2522
Christchurch, 8140
Ph: 03 378 7300
Fax: 03 378 7302

Free information line: 0800 622 222
Email: special.education@minedu.govt.nz
Website: www.minedu.govt.nz

Much *More* Than Words

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Some Ideas to Help with Listening

- ▲ Make sure that you have your child's attention. Remove distractions; eg, radio, TV, dishwasher, electronic games, particularly when your child needs to concentrate on what you are saying.
- ▲ Establish eye contact and stand or sit close to your child when you speak.
- ▲ Slow down your rate of speech. Pause to give your child time to think before responding.
- ▲ Repeat or rephrase your message when your child does not understand.
- ▲ Speak clearly. Use gestures, pauses and inflection to emphasise the message.
- ▲ Have your child repeat or rephrase what you have said to check that they have understood.
- ▲ Model good listening behaviours. Take the time to listen. If possible stop what you are doing. Give your full attention as you listen. Set aside specific times for sharing conversation and interacting with your child.
- ▲ Simplify the language of your message. Use clear and concise vocabulary and sentences.

Ideas to Help with Speech Sounds...

- ▲ Remember that learning to use speech sounds takes time and there is a natural sequence of development. A child who is making speech sound errors is not being naughty or lazy.
- ▲ You can correct the child's sounds quite naturally within a conversation. When you hear an error, repeat the word correctly within the conversation, so that the child can compare his/her pronunciation with yours.

eg, Child: "I see a bish!"

Adult: "Wow – what a big fish!"

You can emphasise the error sound if you like; eg, 'fish' but the child is not required to repeat the word or produce the sound correctly. You are simply giving him/her a good speech model.

- ▲ Remember, responding to what the child is saying is more important than responding to how it is said.
- ▲ Have fun playing with sounds.

Fun Activities to Improve Sound Production

All sounds that we use in English can be practised in play. The more these sounds are practised, the clearer they will become in speech. Exaggerate the sounds and your facial expression to give a clear model for your child to imitate. When these sounds are produced in play situations your child is more likely to imitate them.

B

- ▲ a boat that goes bbb as it chugs along
- ▲ a ball that bounces bbb
- ▲ try peek-a-boo or something that says 'boo'

P

- ▲ making a paper person bend over by whispering a 'p' sound
- ▲ blowing out candles
- ▲ blowing bubbles

M

- ▲ a car or trolley that goes mmmm
- ▲ things that taste yummy – mmm

T

- ▲ tapping a hammer on anything
- ▲ a dripping tap goes ttt
- ▲ a ticking clock

D

- ▲ pretend to be banging a drum ddd

F

- ▲ imitate a rabbit's teeth fff
- ▲ a sky rocket as it fizzes up fff

V

- ▲ a noisy plane, truck or car goes
v v v v v

CH

- ▲ the train goes ch ch ch toot toot

SH

- ▲ tell people to be quiet
- ▲ look the baby's sleeping – sh

S

- ▲ a snake sound
- ▲ the sound of air coming out of a tyre
- ▲ filling up a car with petrol

Z

- ▲ bees or other flying insects can go zzz

G

- ▲ a noisy drinker goes ggg
- ▲ give dolls a drink or pretend to drink from a cup going ggg

K

- ▲ the click of a camera as a photo is taken

Other sound sequences can be used to practise vowel sounds and assist younger children to gain control over their lips and tongue.

- ▲ animal noises
- ▲ phone ringing – brring brring
- ▲ exaggerated laughing – ho ho hee he ha ha
- ▲ exaggerated crying – boo hoo
- ▲ something's wrong or broken – uh oh, oh no
- ▲ big smiles – eee
- ▲ fish face, hooting like an owl ooo
- ▲ blowing kisses

Ideas to Help with Language Development

▲ Use meaningful language and activities

Always follow your child's lead and comment about the activities or topic he/she is focusing on at the time. Language is learned best when it is interesting and relevant.

▲ Be aware of background noise and distractions

Children's ability to 'tune in', to something is reduced when there are other things competing for their attention.

▲ Gain their attention before speaking

This can be by speaking their name or when culturally appropriate a touch or establishing eye contact.

▲ Keep it short and simple

Use language at the appropriate level of complexity; eg, if your child is only speaking in single words, your utterances should be at the same level or slightly longer, two words. Eg, 'car' or 'red car'.

▲ Use specific vocabulary

Keep your utterances clear and succinct. A child is more likely to respond appropriately if you tell them, "put your cup on the bench", rather than "put it over there".

▲ Create the need to talk

Ensure that talking is necessary for the child. While we are often able to anticipate or identify the child's need, wait until an attempt to verbalise the problem is made, before responding.

▲ Allow time to respond

Pause for longer than usual. Give the child an opportunity to reply to you.

▲ Give positive reinforcement

Always reward communication attempts by responding to your child's intended meaning even if the form of communication is not correct.

▲ Repeat, repeat, repeat

Children need to hear the same language many times before they will remember it or use it themselves.

▲ Reduce the number of questions

Try to keep the number of questions you ask your child to a minimum, especially those requiring just one word answers such as "What's this?". Instead, focus on feeding in language by making comments about what you and/or the child are doing.

Ideas to Help Your Child's Voice

IF YOUR CHILD HAS A HOARSE VOICE

Sometimes our voices can become hoarse even if we're not sick. Often this is a result of doing things which hurt our vocal cords. Vocal cords are two bands of muscles in the throat which bang together to produce the voice. There are some things we do which can put strain on the vocal cords. These include yelling, screaming, singing too much or at a pitch which is difficult to reach, making 'growly' noises, excessive coughing or throat clearing. Here are some ways children can be helped to take care of their voices.

- ▲ Encourage your child to take regular drinks of water. This helps to 'oil' the vocal cords and assists them to work together smoothly.
- ▲ Discourage your child from making a lot of animal or 'growly' noises, such as roaring like a lion, making machine noises, high pitched squeaking etc. This type of voice use can strain the vocal cords.
- ▲ Discourage your child from yelling or screaming during play. Suggest alternative activities which do not involve the use of a loud voice.
- ▲ Instead of calling out across a room, encourage your child to come closer to someone s/he wants to speak to. Praise your child for doing this.
- ▲ Second hand smoke is not good for vocal cords.
- ▲ Try to reduce background noise; for example the TV and radio, when you are listening to your child so that s/he doesn't need a raised voice.
- ▲ Praise your child for using a quiet voice.
- ▲ Model good voice use to your child. Demonstrate the way to care for a voice by doing the things listed here.

IF YOUR CHILD SPEAKS TOO LOUDLY

- ▲ Praise your child when s/he uses a quiet voice. For example, "I really like it when you use that quiet voice".
- ▲ When your child is talking to you, try to give your full attention so that s/he doesn't feel like s/he needs to shout to be heard.
- ▲ Instead of calling out across a room, encourage your child to come closer. Praise your child for doing this.
- ▲ Try to reduce background noise; for example, the TV and radio, when you are listening to your child so that s/he doesn't need to raise his/her voice to be heard.
- ▲ Model good voice use to your child. Demonstrate the way to care for a voice by doing the things listed here.

IF YOUR CHILD SPEAKS VERY QUIETLY

- ▲ Praise your child when s/he uses a louder voice eg, "I really like the way you used a bigger voice that time – it was really easy to hear what you were saying".
- ▲ Respond to the meaning of what your child is saying more than to how they are speaking.
- ▲ Encourage and praise your child for non-speaking activities – build his/her confidence as much as possible.

Are you Concerned that Your Child may be Stuttering?

'Fluency' refers to the way our words flow easily and naturally. Dysfluency (stuttering) refers to speech disruptions, such as repetitions of sounds or syllables, extension of sounds or periods during which speech production is 'blocked'. Many children go through a period of what is known as 'normal nonfluency'. This often occurs when their language is going through a period of rapid development and they have a lot to say. They are beginning to talk like an adult but are not quite ready to do so resulting in the repetition of some words and some hesitation and reformulation of what they are trying to say.

For most children, this type of 'stuttering' does not usually last longer than about three months. If your child stutters for longer than this time or at any time shows anxiety about his/her speech, contact a Speech-language Therapist.

YOU CAN ASSIST YOUR CHILD'S FLUENCY BY DOING THE FOLLOWING

- ▲ **Listen** to what your child has to say. What your child has to say is more important than how they say it.
- ▲ Ask the adults in the family to **slow down** their speech.
- ▲ **Reduce** the number of questions you ask and give your child time to answer.
- ▲ **Take turns** with talking. Be sure your child has time to talk without interruption and that your child allows others to have their turn too.
- ▲ Keep easy **eye contact** when you are talking to your child especially when they are dysfluent.
- ▲ Allow your child to **finish**, don't finish a word or sentence for him/her.
- ▲ **Pause** for a second before responding to allow your child to take his/her time with talking.
- ▲ **Praise** your child for fluent speech; eg, "That was great smooth talking!"
- ▲ **Praise** your child for the things s/he does well to encourage self-confidence.
- ▲ Try to arrange a special time together with your child; for example, at bed-time when s/he is relaxed.

Communication Observation Sample Record Sheet

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Date: _____

RECORD OBSERVATIONS HERE

PARENT/CAREGIVER COMMENTS

HOW DOES THIS CHILD'S COMMUNICATION COMPARE WITH THE NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR HIS/HER AGE AND CULTURE?

Observations made by: _____

Monitoring Communication Checklist

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Date of Enrolment: _____ Date: _____

Name of Centre: _____

Staff member completing form: _____

CONCERN RAISED WITH REGARD TO:		CONCERN RAISED BY:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Centre staff	
<input type="checkbox"/> Stuttering	<input type="checkbox"/> Speech sounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/caregiver	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE CONCERN:

ACTION TAKEN:

<input type="checkbox"/> Speech sample taken (attach)	<input type="checkbox"/> Referred for hearing assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Handout given to parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Language sample taken (attach)
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication observation completed (attach)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

PLAN:

<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor for _____ weeks/months	<input type="checkbox"/> No further action	<input type="checkbox"/> Review date / /
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to GSE	<input type="checkbox"/> Diaried	

PLANNED STRATEGIES TO HELP DURING MONITORING PERIOD

OUTCOME OF REVIEW

Signed by (Staff member): _____ Date: _____

Signed by (Parent/caregiver): _____ Date: _____

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