**Referral Criteria for Pediatric Speech-Language Evaluation**

4 Year Old

Speech, language, and communication play a critical role in children’s school readiness skills and ability to achieve their potential in school. Research shows that children with poor language and literacy skills at a young age have lower education achievement by the age of seven. With an increase in language demands in school, it is important that the months and years leading up to the start of school lay the foundation for future success. Contact a speech-language pathologist if your child is having difficulties with articulation, language, social communication, literacy, and/or troubled behaviors.

**At age 4, your child should…**

* Use 4-5-word sentences
* Combine sentences with “and” (e.g., I went to the park and I went to the zoo)
* Ask Wh- questions, mainly “who” and “why”
* Talk about activities at school or a friend’s house
* Begin telling stories with a major theme and some organization of events
* Understand time concepts
* Be 90-100% intelligible in their speech
* Produce age-appropriate sounds /p, b, m, t, d, n, k, g, f, v, s, z, l, ch, sh, y, h, w/
* Point to basic shapes and colors when named
* Use “feeling” words

**Contact a speech-language pathologist if your child does not exhibit the following skills by 4 years old:**

* Speech is clear and able to be understood by others
* Uses 3-4-word phrases and sentences
* Use a variety of verbs and adjectives
* Answers Wh- questions (e.g., who, what, where, when, why)

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