

Handy Tips from the Child Development Service- Speech Pathologist

Topic: What is normal speech sound development and what can parents do to help?

- Learning to speak is a crucial part of a child’s development and the most intensive period of speech and language development happens in the first three years of life
- ‘Speech’ describes how a child uses their lips, tongue, teeth and voicebox.

Age range	Sounds that develop	General clarity
0-2 years	m,b,p,w,n,t,d	25-50% can be understood by an adult at 2 years of age
2-4 years	h,y,ch,g,k,f,l,sh,ng(as in king)	50-75% can be understood by an adult at 3 years of age
4-6 years	j,s,z,r,v	75-100% can be understood by an adult at 6 years of age
6-8 years	th	100% can be understood by an adult at 8 years of age

If a child does not meet these milestones then a referral may be indicated to a Speech Pathologist.

Typical things that happen in speech development

- Changing one sound for another eg. ‘v’ for ‘b’ as in ‘bacuum’ for ‘vacuum’; ‘t’ for ‘k’ as in ‘tar’ for ‘car’
- Simplifies difficult sound combinations eg. ‘side’ instead of ‘slide’
- Shortening of words eg. ‘nana’ for ‘banana’