

# KNOW THE SIGNS of Communication Delays

Parents and caregivers might know right away if a child has a physical disability, but the **most common developmental delays are around communication and language.**

These delays can be less obvious and parents often miss the signs. For example, if a parent knows what her

child is saying, but others have trouble understanding, it could indicate a communication delay. The good news is **all kids with developmental delays, disabilities and autism can make significant progress if they get support early in life.**

## What Can Parents Do?

The best thing for parents to do is continually monitor their child's development and get a developmental screening. Screening should be conducted for all children, not just for kids who seem like there might be something amiss.

That's why Easter Seals is encouraging parents and caregivers to answer age-specific questions through *The Ages and Stages Questionnaires*®. You can access this screening for free on **MakeTheFirstFiveCount.org**. The results will help you see if your child's developmental progress is on schedule and alert you to concerns that you can discuss with your health care provider.



MAKE THE  
**FIRST FIVE  
COUNT**®

# FIVE important MILESTONES

## Before Five Years Your Child Should ...

1. **Respond to simple requests**, imitate simple sounds, recognize words for common items, and say 1-2 words by 12 months
2. **Say more words every month**, with 5-20 words by 18 months
3. **Use 2 word sentences**, understand "no," identify body parts around age 2
4. **Use short sentences**, know big and little, begin to "tell a story" around age 3
5. **Use sentences of 4-5 words**, have a vocabulary of 1,000 words, be able to say several nursery rhymes around age 4

## SOME THINGS TO KNOW

### About Language and Literacy

Language development provides the base for literacy skills.

Reading books aloud, singing and talking – all help young children build their language skills and learn to become readers.

Books are good from the beginning. No child is too young to enjoy reading activities. Big, chunky cardboard books or soft cloth books are great for the very young.



## TALKING AND HEARING

Kids develop communication skills before they say their first word. Any speech or language delay affects many other areas of life. For example, a child who has trouble hearing may also have a difficult time making friends and in school. He or she may act out because of frustration.

But the earlier a child receives speech and language intervention, the better the chance he or she will be successful in school, and in life.

For more information, visit the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's website <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/chart.html>.

**MakeTheFirstFiveCount.org**