

Delays & Disorders Explained – Early Language Delay –



A GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS

WHAT IS EARLY LANGUAGE DELAY?

Early language delay refers to a situation where a child's development of language skills is slower or less advanced compared to their peers.

It can be a source of concern for both the child and their parents.

WHAT ARE THE COMMON SIGNS?

For parents, it is important to recognize that language development can vary widely among children. Signs of early language delay in a child may include:

- A limited vocabulary.
- Difficulty forming sentences or expressing ideas.
- Struggling to understand and follow verbal instructions.
- Grammar and word order errors.

Parents may notice that their child is not meeting typical language milestones for their age, such as saying their first words or using simple sentences. They might also observe that their child has trouble engaging in conversations or interacting with others effectively.

Early intervention is key in addressing language delays. Parents can seek the help of **Speech-Language Pathologists** who have specific skills in working with children. These professionals will assess the child's language abilities and provide appropriate therapy recommendations and goals to advance both expressive and receptive language skills.

WHAT DOES THERAPY FOR EARLY LANGUAGE DELAY INVOLVE?

Therapy for Early Language Delay often involves:

- Play-based activities.
- Exercises that are tailored to the child's age and interests.
- Turn taking and social interactions.

WHAT CAN BE PRACTICED AT HOME?

Parents can play an essential role by practicing these exercises at home and creating a language-rich environment. Modeling language in every day routines can enhance language skills.

It is important for parents to be **patient** and **supportive**, as progress in language development may take time. **Celebrating small achievements** and maintaining **consistency** in therapy and at home can be very encouraging for the child.

Remember that every child is unique, and language development can be influenced by various factors. Seeking professional evaluation and intervention early can make a significant difference in helping a child catch up with their peers and develop strong communication skills. Parents should trust their instincts and seek guidance if they have concerns about their child's language development.