

## Ealing speech and language therapy – indicators for referral

Deciding whether to refer a child to Speech and Language Therapy can be difficult, here are a few points to consider:

- No words being used by 18 months' old.
  - By 18 months we usually expect child to have at least 20 single words.
- Not appearing to understand what is being said by 18 months. This may look like:
  - Difficulties understanding simple words phrases, not following simple instructions (e.g. give me the ball, show me the cat).
- Using less than 50 words at 2 years (these can be in a mixture of languages).
- Not putting two words together at 2 ½ years old.
- Showing repetitive and restricted play behaviours, reduced awareness of other people and sensory differences. This may look like:
  - Play based around repetition, such as lining up toys
  - Sensory differences can include, but are not limited to: increased sensitivity to noise; dislike of certain food textures or sensations, such as feeling wet; increased sensitivity to physical touch; stimming behaviours, such as spinning, jumping, hand flapping.
- Not being easily understood by others when talking by 3 ½ years.
- Child's voice sounding hoarse or quiet or the child is unable to talk loudly.
- Child showing signs of swallowing difficulties (food/drink going down the wrong way). Difficulties eating or drinking can look like:
  - Coughing
  - Watery eyes
  - Repeated chest infections
  - Limited chewing

If you have concerns about your child or a child, you can refer to us - there is no need to wait and see!

If your child is under the age of 5, referrals can be made through your child's nursery or through your GP. Children aged 5 and up can be referred through school. Speak to your school Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) for more advice on referrals.

If you have questions about your child's speech, language and/or communication, you can contact our advice line and speak with a Speech and Language Therapist. Call or email us on: **07512 716 478** or [ealing.sl advice@nhs.net](mailto:ealing.sl advice@nhs.net) Monday-Friday from 1-4pm.