

Tracking progress for your child

Keep up not catch up

In 2023, we should have very high expectations for what children with hearing loss can achieve. Your child should be making at least 12 months progress in 12 months' time in all their domains: hearing, listening, speech, language, cognition and executive function and social skills. A child who is developing well will teach you what they need you to teach them... their thinking and play will guide you. This is known as Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' and can guide caregivers to model language and play at the level just above where the child is currently. Keeping up, not catching up, also allows children to take advantage of 'developmental synchrony' whereby their various skills are developing as they should, when they should.

[Mission Probable - Hearing First Resources - Hearing First - Hearing First](#)

When to discuss your concerns

Any concern that a caregiver has about their child's progress should be addressed immediately with their team. If therapists or other clinicians have concerns about progress of a child then this should be raised immediately with the caregivers. If a child with hearing loss is not progressing as expected, problems with the technology should always be suspected first, working on the 'from the outside in' principle. With child development, there is no time to lose.

[When Kids Have Poor Speech Production | Jane Madell | HearingHealthMatters.org/hearingandkids](#)

Developmental milestones and resources

Whilst there is variation in how each child moves through their developmental milestones, children's skills develop in a very predictable manner. Developmental milestones give us a clear yardstick against which to set expectations and set goals. A comprehensive guide to developmental milestones can be found here:

[Development Milestones Birth to 8 Years - Hearing First Resources - Hearing First - Hearing First](#)

For children with hearing loss we need to be vigilantly monitoring their access to sound and their listening skill development. To check their day to day access to sound and to ensure that their hearing technology is working, the 'Ling Sounds' (also known as the '6 Sounds' the '7 Sounds' or 'the REDDI' is a quick way to do this.

[The Ling Six Sound Test Explained - The MED-EL Blog \(medel.com\)](#)

Listening development is the foundation for spoken language development and supports cognitive and literacy development in children learning to listen and speak. **The Functional Listening Index – Paediatric**, tracks the progress of your child through their listening milestones and can guide intervention. A child who has delayed listening skills compared with their hearing peers at two is likely to have a language delay on school entry if nothing in their intervention is changed.

[Download the FLI™-P | The Shepherd Centre](#)

Signs of possible delay in speech and language

(From [Has my Three-Year-Old got a Speech Delay? - Hear and Say](#))

Speech	Language
<p>At two years old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your child found it difficult learning and saying their first words• They struggle to say 50 proper words• They don't understand simple directions and commands• They can't combine words to create two-word phrases such as "more food"• It affects their normal routine and time spent with other children• They rarely sing songs	<p>At two years old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not babbling at 15 months old• Not talking at two years old• Struggling to pronounce words• Leaving words out of sentences and not adding new words to their vocabulary• Not expressing themselves through language• Struggling to converse with other children of the same age because of their lack of communication skills
<p>At three years old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unable to say previously learned words• Having trouble imitating sounds• Preferring to point or use non-verbal cues instead of calling things or people by name• Strangers finding it hard to understand their pronunciation of words	<p>At three years old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Struggling to combine words into three- or four-word sentences• Showing little interest in books• Cannot follow simple verbal requests• Do not ask questions• Cannot tell a story or repeat a nursery rhyme

Joanna McAdam

Principal Listening and Spoken Language/ Principal Learning and Development

BA, MSLP, LSL Cert. AVT ®, CPSP

The Shepherd Centre - Giving Deaf Children a Voice!