



# Speech and Language

As a parent, there are lots of things that you can do at home to help your child develop his language skills and even improve the quality of his speech. For example, asking “WH” questions like “what did you do today” will elicit a more complex answer than “what color is this apple?” Asking fun, stimulating questions at the dinner table is another way to get kids learn to express their thoughts. Some ideas to get you started would be:

- “Would you rather be invisible or be able to fly? Why?”
- “If you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would you like to be? Why?”
- “What’s the best thing you ever ate?”

Providing opportunities for your child to make choices and explain those choices teaches them that language has the power to change things for the better. Being an attentive and active listener is the best positive feedback that you can provide.

Knowing what's "normal" and what's not in speech and language development can help you figure out if you should be concerned or if your child is right on schedule. We have provided a Language Development Chart to provide some perspective on when certain skills develop. When it comes to receiving speech services at school, it is important to know what actually qualifies a child for education-based speech therapy.

A student is eligible for speech-language pathology services through IDEA 2004 when she or he exhibits a speech or language impairment that has an adverse effect on educational performance to the degree that specially designed instruction or related services and supports are needed to help the student make progress in the general education curriculum. Determination of eligibility for special education services is a multistage process that should answer three questions:

- **Stage One:** Is there a disability?
- **Stage Two:** If so, is there an adverse effect on educational performance resulting from the disability?
- **Stage Three:** If so, are specially designed instruction and/or related services and supports needed to help the student make progress in the general education curriculum?