

# When to Refer?

## Articulation

- **18 months:** Use of vowels primarily or only a few consonants
- **3 years:** Leaving out consonants or unclear speech
- **4 years:** Distorted speech that is often hard to understand
- **6 years:** No production of some speech sounds

## Language Disorder

- **12 months:** Difficulty understanding speech or following simple directions
- **16-18 months:** No words, or a limited vocabulary
- **3 years:** Echoes in words or phrases or many errors in sentences
- **3-4 years:** Lack of ability to retell stories or talk about past events
- **6 years:** Trouble with attention, memorization of facts, learning or reading

## Fluency/Stuttering

- Involuntary repetitions, hesitations, prolongations, blocks or disruptions during speaking
- Abnormal movements such as jerking or forceful eye blinking
- Refusal to talk to strangers due to fear of stuttering

## Swallowing

- Difficulty swallowing liquids or solids
- Avoidance of certain types of foods or certain food textures
- Gagging, choking or coughing during feeding

## Social Language/Pragmatics

- **1-2 years:** Does not greet others ("Hi" / "Bye") or try to imitate any adult actions
- **2-3 years:** Trouble 'repairing' the conversation if not understood
- **3-4 years:** Difficulty with turn taking
- **4-5 years:** Reluctance to play with others
- **5-6 years:** Difficulty playing cooperatively with others and making group decisions

## Adults

- Motor speech disorder affecting verbal expression
- Loss of language due to brain injury such as stroke
- Cognitive physical/behavioral consequences due to traumatic brain injury
- An accent that impedes understanding by others in the person's daily life