

# WHEN TO REFER TO A SPEECH PATHOLOGIST

## SPEECH

- Limited speech for their age
- Speech that is hard to understand compared to peers

## LANGUAGE

- Difficulty following instructions
- Difficulty understanding questions
- Limited vocabulary for their age
- Short or incomplete sentences
- Difficulty telling stories or describing events
- Regression or loss of speech/language skills

## SOCIAL SKILLS

- Limited interest in interaction or play
- Difficulties sharing attention
- Challenges with turn-taking
- Difficulty understanding social cues
- Problems playing with others or making friends



## FLUENCY

- Stuttering - interruptions to the rhythm and flow of speech

## OROFACIAL MYOFUNCTIONAL RED FLAGS

- Ongoing noxious habits such as use of a dummy or thumb-sucking
- Mouth-breathing or open mouth posture at rest
- Presence of a tongue thrust when swallowing or speaking

## FEEDING

- Gagging, coughing or choking frequently during meals
- Shows distress or anxiety during mealtimes
- Consuming a limited range of food
- Fussy eating habits causing parental stress

## VOICE

- Persistent hoarseness or loss of voice

## CONCERNED?

- Early identification leads to better outcomes.
- Trust your instincts — if you're unsure, it's always OK to seek advice.
- A referral for assessment can provide peace of mind or early support if needed.



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