

“WHY WON’T THE OTHER KIDS PLAY WITH ME, MUMMY?”

As a parent, your child may ask you ‘Why won’t the other kids play with me?’. This is a difficult question for any parent to be faced with and indicates that your child is feeling isolated. Children may have difficulties interacting socially with their peers due to a number of reasons, including difficulty pronouncing words. If a child cannot make himself understood within one or two attempts, his friends may simply stop listening, wander off or stop playing with him. To flourish, all children should be given the opportunity to express themselves clearly and be understood.

Children learn and develop the correct way of making speech sounds over their first few years of life. The typical ages at which speech sounds are developed is listed in the table below:

AGE	SOUNDS ACQUIRED
3 years	b, p, m, w, h, ng, n, t, d, g, y
3 ½ years	k and f
4 years	l, sh and ch
4 ½ years	s, z and j
5 years	r
6 years	v
7 years	th

If your child is not producing these sounds correctly by the ages listed, it is highly unlikely that they will ‘grow out of it’. Professional help from a Speech Pathologist is recommended.

Children can also demonstrate difficulty with whole patterns of speech sounds. These difficulties are called phonological processes. One or more phonological processes results in speech that is hard to understand for other children, teachers or even parents themselves. These phonological processes are expected to be corrected by three to three and a half years of age. If your child is still making these errors beyond the ages listed below, specific programs of speech therapy will be required.

Is your child saying things like . . .	Incorrect sound pattern used	Description of incorrect sound pattern

AFTER 3 YEARS?		
<input type="checkbox"/> 'du' for 'duck'	Final consonant deletion	This process involves leaving off the end sounds of words
<input type="checkbox"/> 'lellow' for 'yellow'	Assimilation	This process involves changing a sound in a word to match another sound in the word
<input type="checkbox"/> 'tar' for 'car'	Fronting	This process involves sounds that we would normally make in the back of our mouth being made in the front instead
<input type="checkbox"/> 'dap' for 'tap'	Voicing	This process involves making the quiet (voiceless) sounds into noisy (voiced) sounds
AFTER 3 YEARS, 6 MONTHS?		
<input type="checkbox"/> 'poon' for 'spoon' or 'bush' for 'brush'	Consonant cluster reduction	This process involves simplifying a blend such as /sp/ or /br/
<input type="checkbox"/> 'buttfly' for 'butterfly'	Weak syllable deletion	This process involves leaving out the softest part of the word
<input type="checkbox"/> 'bish' for 'fish'	Stopping	This process involves making the long sounds in English into short sounds
AFTER 5 YEARS?		
<input type="checkbox"/> 'wing' for 'ring'	Gliding	This process involves changing the /r/ sound to a /w/ sound
AT ANY AGE?		
<input type="checkbox"/> 'bu-on' for 'button'	Medial consonant deletion	This process involves leaving out the middle sounds of words
<input type="checkbox"/> 'up' for 'cup'	Initial consonant deletion	This process involves leaving off the first sound of words
<input type="checkbox"/> 'gog' for 'dog'	Backing	This process involves sounds that we would normally make in the front of our mouth being made in the back of our mouth
<input type="checkbox"/> 'pig' for 'big'	Devoicing	This process involves making the noisy (voiced) sounds into quiet (voiceless) sounds

Beyond affecting peer relationships, speech difficulties can make children appear younger than they are, feel self-conscious or restrict the amount they talk and may lead to problems learning to read and/or spell. To give your child the best opportunities to make friends and learn, it is vital that speech difficulties are



assessed and treated by a Speech Pathologist as early as possible.

If you have any concerns about your child's speech or communication development, please do not hesitate to contact Tyquin Group Speech Pathology on 3399 8028.

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