

## Speech Sound Development

Speech Pathology notes by Louise Tyquin

In the last edition of Women and Child we discussed a young boy called Jason who was having difficulties with reading and spelling at school.

Today we will be discussing Hayden, who is 5 years old and his mother has noticed that people are having difficulty understanding him when he talks.

### Mum's Concern:

Hayden's mum is able to understand his speech, however she has noticed that friends and strangers are having difficulty understanding what he is saying. She also reported that he was becoming frustrated when others did not understand him. His mother reported that he had frequent ear infection when he was younger, and his hearing has recently been assessed as within normal limits.

### Assessment:

Hayden's speech and oromotor skills were assessed. Hayden was able to use his lips, tongue, jaw and soft palate adequately, however it was revealed that Hayden had difficulty producing a number of speech sounds correctly. He was diagnosed as having an articulation delay.

### The Problem:

Children should acquire certain sound at certain ages. All sounds should be mastered by 7 years, and most should be acquired by 5 years of age. An assessment revealed that Hayden had not developed all of the sounds expected for a child his age. Therapy was commenced, focusing on sound development. At the conclusion of therapy Hayden was using all of the speech sounds expected for his age in conversation and was easily understood by his parents, friends and strangers.

Concerned about your child's speech sound development?

The following table shows the ages that around 75% of children are correctly producing their sounds Kilminster & Laird (1983).

AGE	SOUNDS ACQUIRED
3 years	b, p, m, w, h, ng, n, t, d, g, y
3 1/2 years	k and f
4 years	l, sh, ch
4 1/2 years	s, z, j
5 years	r
6 years	v
7 years	th

If your child is still having difficulty producing these sounds beyond the age indicated in the table, it is unlikely they will 'grow out of it' without therapy. It is best to treat children as early as possible. Speech Pathologists are trained to assess, diagnose and treat child's speech sound development.

What to look for:

- Difficulty understanding your child
- Other adults finding it hard to understand your child

If you want to know MORE about your child's speech or language – give us a call at TYQUIN GROUP SPEECH PATHOLOGY. Phone 3399 8028