



OCTOBER 2009

## The ABC's of Speech and Language

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*"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world."  
~ Ludwig Wittgenstein*

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Speech and language challenges affect children of all ages and can exist by themselves or can be connected with other disabilities such as Autism and Learning Disabilities. Of the 13 categories that may qualify a child to receive special education services, Speech and Language is one of the most common. If you are wondering if a possible speech-language disorder is affecting your child's school performance read [Frequently Asked Questions regarding Speech and Language Disorders in the School Setting](#) or check out our new [Speech and Language Packet](#) for a more comprehensive look at the ABCs of speech and language. For a brief overview read on...

A common speech and language difficulty in young children is making sounds (articulation) and sound patterns (phonological processes) – this affects clear speech. As children develop and grow, their ability to make specific sounds develops as well. For a chart on the typical age when children master specific sounds [click here](#).

Another speech difficulty is Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) – this occurs when children have trouble saying sounds, syllables, and words because their brain has problems coordinating the movements of the jaw, lips, tongue, etc., needed for speech. These problems are not due to paralysis or muscle weakness and the child knows what he/she wants to say but has difficulty making the needed sounds. For more information on this visit [www.apraxia-kids.org/](http://www.apraxia-kids.org/).

With early intervention services speech and language difficulties or development delays can be remediated. If you have concerns about your child's development [click here](#) - remember, the sooner a concern is identified the sooner a child can get help. **Do not wait** if you think your child is not developing typically since there are [changes in California's Early Start program](#) that make it more difficult for children to receive services from 24 months to 36 months. For children age 36 months and older, the school is responsible for identifying and providing services to children who qualify for special education speech and language services. For an interactive checklist of developmental milestones for speech [click here](#).

As children move into elementary school and learn to read, it is not uncommon for children who had difficulty with language as preschoolers to face challenges once again as they begin to read, as reading *is* language. Reading disorders or [dyslexia](#) are the most common learning disabilities. With dyslexia, difficulties exist with word recognition, sounding out words, comprehension, vocabulary, reading fluency, and spelling.

Written language difficulties also can result from speech/language difficulties. For information on many of the writing or written expression disabilities visit [LD Online](#) or [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org).

It is possible that a child who has exited from special education may need it later in school as new learning demands reveal the disability again. If your child is now in elementary school or older and struggling in reading and/or writing, it might again be time to request an assessment for eligibility for special education under the category of specific learning disability. For information on assessing language based learning disabilities, read the article ["How to Detect Learning Problems in your Child."](#) You also can download the [Matrix Assessment Packet](#) to learn more about eligibility information and the assessment process.

Children and teens who have trouble using language in ways that are expected in social situations may have [language pragmatic difficulties](#). Standing too close to someone, not making eye contact, not understanding the back and forth of conversation, only talking about one's own interests in a tone of voice that is flat and almost robotic may be signs of language pragmatic issues. People who have one of the Autism Spectrum Disorders have difficulty using language in social interactions (for more detailed information on this see the [Matrix Autism packet](#) or visit [www.maapservices.org/](http://www.maapservices.org/)).

Depending on eligibility, children and teens can receive treatment for their speech/language difficulties through various means including: a medical referral and health insurance or private pay for speech therapy; through [California's Early Start program](#) for children ages birth to their 3rd birthday (visit [our website](#) for more information on Early Start); or through public school special education services (for ages 3-22). Working with your child at home on specific skills can also make a difference.

**Important to note:** If your student is already in special education under a category OTHER THAN speech and language and the IEP team feels your student would benefit from speech/language services, this service can be added to the IEP as a "related service". A student does NOT need to meet eligibility requirements of the speech/language category to receive services if he/she is already in special education as long as the service is needed to help him benefit from special education services.

As with many concerns, do not delay in getting professional advice and remediation. Although it is important to remember that children's language does develop over time, when you hear "She will grow out of it," keep in mind that if she doesn't, valuable time may have been lost.

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## MATRIX NEWS

**Solano SELPA Parent Academy:** *Saturday October 17, 2009, 8:15 AM to 12:45 PM, Country High School - 100 McClellan St., Vacaville, Cost – FREE.* In addition to other topics, presenters, and discussions, Kerry Pilley, Matrix Parent Advisor, will be presenting, "**Now What? How to Make Sense of and Organize Your IEP Papers.**" See [Flyer](#) for a complete list of presenters and topics and registration details. Space is limited so register today!

**IEP Training in Spanish – Abogando Para El I.E.P. De Sus Hijos.** *Sabádo, October 17, 2009, 10 AM to Noon, Donde: Canal Alliance, #3.* Aprenda a abogar a preguntar las preguntas correctas en el I.E.P. de su hijo.

**New Support Groups in Solano:** Two new support groups for families of children with Autism - one for Spanish-speaking families and one for English speakers - will begin meeting this month. For the English-speaking group contact Chris at 707-423-2545 ext. 101 - [Flyer](#) - and for the Spanish-speaking group contact Ana at 415-475-2129 – [Flyer](#). For more information on Matrix support groups in all 4 counties please visit [our website](#).

**Fall Issue of the Networker now available online!** [Click here](#) to read the newest issue of the Matrix print newsletter - the Fall 2009 issue highlights Resources. Help Matrix Go Green by choosing to stop receiving the printed version. If you would like to do so, please send an email to [colleenr@matrixparents.org](mailto:colleenr@matrixparents.org) to let us know that this is your preference. Be sure to give your current information, including an active email address.

**Fall Online Auction:** Our Fall Auction, beginning Thanksgiving Day, offers you a chance to buy holiday gifts the easy way – and have them delivered to your door! Donate or secure a donation worth at least \$100 and you'll get a \$10 credit towards your own auction purchases. Want to help Matrix client & supporter Debbie Ward assure that you'll have spectacular gift choices? Call Brenda at 415-475-2118 e-mail [brendagm@matrixparents.org](mailto:brendagm@matrixparents.org).

**Save the Date:** Extraordinary observer, teacher, speaker, and author **TEMPLE GRANDIN** will speak at our 3rd Annual Author Luncheon on *Monday, April 19, 2010* to benefit Matrix. For more information or to be involved in planning, please contact Brenda at 415-475-2118 or [brendagm@matrixparents.org](mailto:brendagm@matrixparents.org)

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## MORE USEFUL INFORMATION

**H1N1 Information:** Children with chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, metabolic conditions, neurologic and neuromuscular disorders, are at higher risk of having complications from flu. See [Action Steps for Parents of Children at High Risk for Flu Complications](#) to learn more.

**Golden Gate Regional Center Marin County Service Provider Fair,** co-sponsored by the Marin Autism Collaborative – *Wednesday, October 28th, 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Hollis Hall – 1111 Las Gallinas, San Rafael.* Persons supported, family members, Marin Service Providers, Special Education Teachers, and Community Resources are all invited! See [Flyer](#) for more details. [\(En Español\)](#). This fair will also feature an **IEP Transition Planning Workshop**. For more information on this workshop [click here](#).

**Disability Community Seminar: Accessing the World through International Exchange:** Discuss the 'Who, What, Where and Why' of international exchange, including overseas cultural, educational, professional and volunteer programs, for U.S. students, teachers, professionals and others with disabilities. Friday, October 30, 2009, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., UC Berkeley, Clark Kerr Campus, Garden Room Dining Center – Building 10, 2601 Warring Street, Berkeley, CA. Registration Deadline: October 16, 2009. [Click here](#) to register.

**Raising Healthy Teens: Overcoming the Mental Health Challenges of the Transition to Adulthood:** *Saturday, November 7, 2009 at the Marin Center (10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael) from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.* This conference on mental health issues relevant to teens for families, other consumers, educators, and mental health professionals will include two separate programs, one for the lay

public ([see Flyer](#)) and one for professionals ([see Flyer](#)). Admission is free to the public (a donation of \$10 is suggested). Fees for professionals \$75 or \$95 after October 23) include Continuing Education Units. Pre-registration is required. For more complete program information or to register, visit [www.cipmarin.org](http://www.cipmarin.org) or call (415) 459-5999 x101.

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Matrix serves families in 4 counties: Marin, Napa, Solano and Sonoma, with offices in Novato and Fairfield.

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