



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Family Choice Home Care
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Communication Disorders Among the Most Common Childhood Disabilities

Speech, language, and hearing disorders often go undetected and untreated for too long.

Central Kentucky parents are encouraged to learn the warning signs and seek help early during “May Is Better Hearing & Speech Month.”

(Richmond, KY – May 4, 2018) With [11% of children ages 3–6](#) having a speech, language, voice, or swallowing disorder—and almost [15% of school-age children](#) experiencing some degree of hearing loss—communication disorders are among the most common disabilities in children nationwide. During May, which is Better Hearing & Speech Month, Richmond-based speech-language pathologist Linda Gregory urges families to learn the early signs of these disorders and seek an assessment if they have concerns.

“Communication disorders are treatable, yet all too often, we find parents are waiting longer than we’d like to bring their child in for an evaluation,” said Linda. “Timely intervention is important, as untreated speech/language and hearing disorders can lead to problems with reading and writing, academic success, social interactions, behavioral problems, and more. These disorders are highly treatable and, in some cases, can be reversed or even prevented. So, our message to parents is: If you have any concern, don’t wait and see if there is a change. Trust your instincts, and get it checked out.”

Hearing loss is evaluated and treated by audiologists. Speech and language disorders are evaluated and treated by speech-language pathologists. [Warning signs](#) of these disorders are listed below.

Language Disorders

- Does not smile or interact with others (birth and older)
- Does not babble (4–7 months)
- Makes only a few sounds or gestures, like pointing (7–12 months)
- Does not understand what others say (7 months–2 years)
- Says only a few words (12–18 months)
- Words are not easily understood (18 months–2 years)
- Does not put words together to make sentences (1.5–3 years)
- Has trouble playing and talking with other children (2–3 years)

- Has trouble with early reading and writing skills (2½–3 years)

Speech Sound Disorders

- Says *p*, *b*, *m*, *h*, and *w* incorrectly in words (1–2 years)
- Says *k*, *g*, *f*, *t*, *d*, and *n* incorrectly in words (2–3 years)
- Produces speech that is unclear, even to familiar people (2–3 years)

Stuttering

- Repeats first sounds of words—“b-b-b-ball” for “ball”
- Speech breaks while trying to say a word—“-----boy” for “boy”
- Stretches sounds out—“ffffff-farm” for “farm”
- Shows frustration when trying to get words out

Voice Disorders

- Uses a hoarse or breathy voice
- Uses a nasal-sounding voice

Hearing Loss

- Shows a lack of attention to sounds (birth–1 year)
- Does not respond when you call their name (7 months–1 year)
- Does not follow simple directions (1–2 years)
- Shows delays in speech and language development (birth–3 years)
- Pulls or scratches at their ears
- Has difficulty achieving academically, especially in reading and math
- Is socially isolated and unhappy at school
- Has persistent ear discomfort after exposure to loud noise (regular and constant listening to electronics at high volumes)

Families can learn more about these signs, get tips for helping their child, and find a searchable database of the professionals who treat communication disorders at <http://IdentifytheSigns.org>. Central Kentucky residents who want to schedule an assessment may contact Family Choice Home Care at **859-333-8147** or <http://familychoicecare.com>

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