

TOPIC: RECEPTIVE / EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE DELAY

DEFINITION: *Receptive language* is understanding what one hears. It is how well one makes sense of vocabulary, grammar, concepts and how well one carries out directions he/she has heard. *Expressive language* is taking all that understanding and formulating grammatically correct sentences with age appropriate vocabulary and incorporating concepts and descriptors. A child can have a receptive language delay and/or an expressive language delay or a combination of both. One's receptive language is typically higher than his/ her expressive language. Simply put, we usually understand more than we can express. Think how often you may say, "I know it or I understand it but I can't explain it." If a child's expressive language tests higher than receptive language, many times this is co-existing with other diagnoses such as ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder), ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), or sometimes ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) just to name a few.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Receptive Language: Children with receptive language delays typically struggle with following directions- simple and/ or complex, multi-step directions. Toddlers with receptive language delay may struggle with understanding basic concepts such as: one, many, some, all, in, out, on, behind, etc... As language develops, other concepts that may be difficult include: before, after, first, last, etc..

Expressive Language: Children with Expressive language delay typically struggle with formulating lengthier messages, using vocabulary expected for his/ her age, and using 'rich' language such as using adjectives. He / she may also struggle with grammar or sequencing events.

RECOMMENDATION FOR SERVICES:

- Have your child screened/ tested by a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist if you think your child is not understanding what you say or if they are not formulating messages as their peers do. Early detection and intervention is the best prevention for your child's language skills to NOT negatively impact their academics.

WHAT TO DO AT HOME:

- Read aloud to your child to expose them to a language rich environment and expose them to vocabulary.
- Once your child is talking (and no longer needs "baby talk"), build upon what your child says. For example if you child says, "I go park", You would say, "yes, we can go TO the park. Where are we going? TO the park!"
- Encourage your child to follow instructions- make it a game if you want! (remember the "I will time you" game our parents played with us!) Start off with simple instructions and build to multi-step directions. Examples: Put the shoes by the door in the coat closet. Go to your room and bring your (pink) pillow to the family room. Depending on your child's age and language you can make this as simple or complex as it needs to be.