

TOPIC: PHONOLOGICAL DISORDER

DEFINITION: A phonological disorder is a speech sound production disorder that affects whole classes of speech sounds, rather than just a single sound; the error is based on place of production, manner of airflow used in production, and/or use of voicing to produce sounds. Individuals with phonological disorders use phonological processes--patterns of errors affecting whole classes of speech sounds--as ways to simplify the production of mature speech for which they cannot yet produce.

CHARACTERISTICS:

- Speech intelligibility is affected; the number of processes, and the type of processes used, affects the severity (i.e. use of multiple processes, especially omission processes, results in poorer intelligibility of speech)
- Types of developmental (typical of normal speech and language development) processes include:
 - Omission processes, such as:
 - Final consonant deletion: leaving off ending sounds of words, like “sea” for “seat” or “key” for “keep”
 - Cluster simplification: not producing all sounds in a consonant cluster/blend, like “boo” for “blue” or “nake” for “snake”
 - Weak syllable deletion: not producing the least stressed syllable in words (typically with three or more syllables), like “nana” for “banana” or “epahnt” for “elephant”
 - Substitution processes, such as:
 - Stopping fricatives: substituting “quick” sounds that stop airflow (like /b/, /t/, /g/) in place of “blowing” sounds with airflow what can be continuous (like /s/, /f/, “sh”), like “dit” for “fish” or “tun” for “sun”
 - Velar fronting: substituting sounds made in the front of the mouth (/t/, /d/) for sounds made in the back of the mouth (/k/, /g/), like “dod” for “dog” or “tate” for “cake”
- Idiosyncratic (i.e. non-developmental; atypical) processes may be present as well, including:
 - Initial consonant deletion: deleting the beginning sound in words, like “ot” for “hot” or “iss” for “kiss”
 - Glottal replacement: stopping airflow within the larynx, resulting in a sound omission (often a middle consonant sound in a word), such as “fi’in” for “fishing” or “la’uh” for “ladder”

RECOMMENDATION FOR SERVICES:

- Have your child screened/ tested by a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist if you think your child is not speaking clearly and/or not producing the sounds that he/she should for his/ her age.

WHAT TO DO AT HOME:

- Provide corrective feedback for your child
 - In an unobtrusive way (i.e. if your child requests a drink by saying “Me wa dippy dup”, you can state back to them “Oh, you want a drink in your sippy cup?”)
 - Being sure to exaggerate the intended sounds that your child produced in error (i.e. the /nt/ in want, the /s/ in sippy, and the /k/ in cup).
- Recording your child, and playing it back to them, can help them to become more aware of their own errors.
 - Often, children with phonological process disorders can hear errors when others imitate their speech, but cannot hear it in their own speech