



Understanding and speaking “between the flags”



Children learn to communicate by interacting with carers, early childhood educators, and their peers.

A child’s communication development is everyone’s responsibility. Speech pathologists can support children (and those who care for them) to build communication, and make sure children are developing “between the flags.”

We can work together to:

- find out which children are understanding and speaking “between the flags”
- create communication-supporting learning spaces
- help children with a range of communication needs.

Speech pathologists can also provide therapy to help children with:

- understanding and using pictures, symbols, signs, gestures, speech sounds, words and sentences
- taking turns and making eye contact
- building skills for later reading and spelling
- stuttering, voice and feeding difficulties.



Don’t “wait and see”

Please speak to parents about their child’s communication as soon as you have any concerns. Get advice from Speech Pathology Australia by phoning **1300 368 835**.

Work together with a speech pathologist in your area.

You can contact speech pathologists:

- through local community health centres and not-for-profit organisations
- by calling or emailing private practices.

Try searching for speech pathology services online, or at

www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au (click on ‘Find a Speech Pathologist’).

Language and cultural differences

Children from different backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, may use words differently when learning English. This may not be a problem. Always encourage families to use the language(s) at home that they are comfortable speaking.

Regardless of whether English is a child’s first language, ALL children need meaningful language experiences through stories, music, nursery rhymes, play, and LOTS of repetition. If you’re unsure about their responses, talk to a speech pathologist.



 **Speech Pathology Australia**

www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au