

Why Speech Therapy Matters for Speech Sound Delays

Every Child Communicates Differently.

Some children take longer to develop certain speech sounds, and that's OK!

Communication is a journey, not a race. When speech sound delays impact how your child is understood, it can affect confidence, friendships, school participation, and their ability to express ideas. Speech therapy supports communication by removing barriers.

Why Start Now? Early Support Leads to Reduced Barriers. Early Speech Therapy can help your child:

- Develop clearer, more automatic speech patterns
- Build expressive language with less effort
- Feel confident around peers
- Prevent future literacy (reading and writing) challenges or identify any additional supports needed early. Early identification and support makes an immense difference in a child's outcomes and self-confidence.
- Experience smoother daily communication.

Consonant Sound Acquisition by age

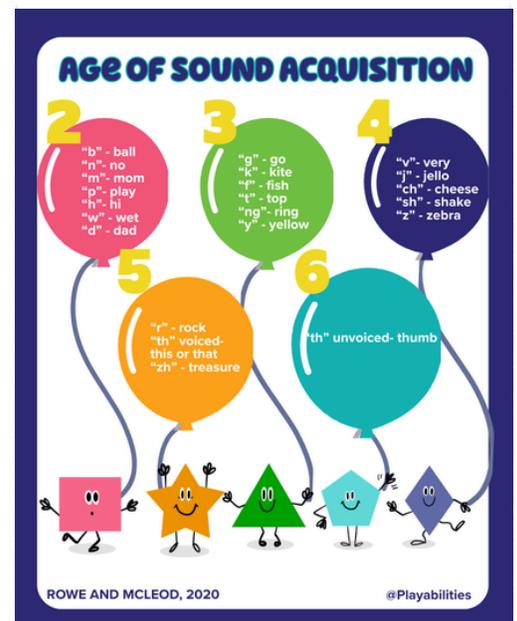
Below is a guide to understanding the research behind expected speech sound acquisition for consonants. In a Study completed by Crowe and McLeod in 2020, consonant sound acquisition was assessed across a cohort of 18,907 children.

- Most consonant sounds were acquired by 5:0 (years:months).
- The sounds "b", "n", "m", "p", "h", "w", "d" were acquired by 2:0-2:11.
- The sounds "g" as in "go", "k", "f", "t", "ng" as in "ring", and "y" as in "yellow" were acquired by 3:0-3:11.
- The sounds "v", "j", "ch", "l", "sh", and "z" were acquired by 4:0-4:11.
- The sounds "r" and voiced "th" as in "this and that" and "zh" sound as in "treasure or garage" were acquired by 5:0-5:11.
- The sound unvoiced "th" sound as in "thumb" was acquired by 6:0-6:11.

Typical consonant acquisition or developmental norms are a common benchmark used by speech-language pathology assessments to consider eligibility for services.

Early Speech Therapy makes a difference.

Choosing speech therapy is an act of support and love. Speech Therapists can help your child communicate in ways that feel natural, joyful, and confident. If you have concerns about your child's speech development, please reach out!



Crowe, K., & McLeod, S. (2020). Children's English consonant acquisition in the United States: A review. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 29(4), 2155–2169. Adapted from: *American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2024). Communication milestones.* <https://www.asha.org/public/developmental-milestones/communication-milestones>