



## Advice for Parents: Children with Delayed Speech

Children with delayed speech can benefit from parents and caregivers using specific strategies to help support them while in the process of developing speech and language skills. Here are some tips for parents of children with delayed speech:

- Help your child to believe he is a terrific speaker by giving *specific* praise, (e.g., “I like the way you said that,” “I understand what you said.”)
- When you don't understand your child, ask for one repetition. If you still don't understand him, ask him to *show* you what he means.
- Take responsibility for communication breakdown rather than let your child feel badly for delivering an unclear message. Let him off the hook by saying that you were not a ready listener.
- Set up contexts for successful communication by introducing topics to which your child can contribute (e.g. their favorite toy, a fun activity you did together like going to the park). This is especially useful in conversations which include a third person, especially a stranger who is not familiar with the child's speech.
- Rather than correct your child's mispronunciations, model the correct production in your immediate response (e.g. If your child said, “Mama, I see a *guk*,” you can say, “You’re right, that is a *duck*.”).