CHILDREN’S ARTICULATION AND SPEECH SOUND DEVELOPMENT

This chart shows acquisition for speech sounds based on the ages when 90% of English speaking children produce single sounds. Some sound differences may be part of a child’s regional or community dialect or accent. In order to qualify for services under IDEA, children must meet all eligibility criteria. The standard deviation for the Crowe and McLeod* normative data is 6 months to 18 months depending on the specific speech sound.

EARLY DEVELOPING SOUNDS
Generally Ages: 2 yrs. - 3 yrs. & 11 mo.
/b/ /k/
/n/ /l/
/m/ /t/
/p/ /ŋ/ ng as in wing
/h/ /j/ y as in yellow
/w/ /d/
/d/ /g/
/k/ /f/
/t/ /tʃ/ ch as in teacher
/ŋ/ ng as in wing

If children can’t produce a sound by the ages listed, it doesn’t mean they have a disability. Some children develop sounds a little later and some just need extra practice.

MIDDLE DEVELOPING SOUNDS
Generally Ages: 4 yrs. - 4 yrs. & 11 mo.
/v/ /dʒ/ dg as in fudge
/dʒ/ dg as in fudge
/s/ /ʃ/ sh as in show
/tʃ/ ch as in teacher
/f/ /l/ /ʃ/ sh as in show
/z/

If children cannot be understood by others, feel frustrated or sad about their speech, or have trouble with reading and spelling, they may qualify for services as a child with a disability under IDEA.

LATER DEVELOPING SOUNDS
Generally Ages: 5 yrs. - 6 yrs. & 11 mo.
/ð/ voiced th as in this
/ʒ/ voiced zh as in equation
/θ/ voiceless th as in thin
/r/

If you suspect a child has a disability, contact your local school to discuss your concerns and a possible referral for special education evaluation.

SLI ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA IN VIRGINIA

- There is documentation of a significant discrepancy from typical communication skills.
- The student does not demonstrate Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and/or is not a speaker of a sociocultural dialect that is the primary reason for the speech-language impairment.
- There is documentation of an adverse effect on educational performance due to one or more documented characteristics of Speech-Language Impairment.
- Due to the identified Speech-Language Impairment, the student needs specially designed instruction.