

## [The Early Word Lets You Learn](#)

[June 21, 2016](#)

As parents of a young child, particularly if its your first, it can be difficult to know whether your child's skills and behaviours are 'typical' for her age group. Do you trust statistics from parenting books, comments from friends like "Oh, he'll grow out of it," or your family's opinion that you should seek help because "his cousin was writing essays when he was three"?

It's undeniably cute when your child says "wabbit" for 'rabbit', and you're likely to get swept up in her excitement as she tells you that "and then, and then, and then, a fairy came" to her friend's birthday party. While difficulties with speech sounds and 'bumpy' sentences are completely normal at certain ages and times, it's best to seek advice early if you have concerns or issues persist. There's no shame in visiting a professional such as a speech pathologist, who is trained in child speech and language development, for an assessment. If your child's communication skills are outside the normal range, the "speechie" can assist you to work out an action plan. If your child's skills are developing as expected, you can breathe a sigh of relief and continue to monitor her communication as she grows!

Below are some excellent resources from the UK to help you understand more about early communication:

**The Importance of Communication video** – This video encourages you to consider how effective communication is the gateway to just about every opportunity in life, and the far-reaching negative impacts of communication difficulties.

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/parents/communication-vital/imagine-if-you-couldnt-communicate>

**Small Talk booklet** – This easy-to-read booklet guides you through how children learn to talk and listen between 0-5 years.

[http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/sites/talkingpoint.org.uk/files/Small\\_Talk\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/sites/talkingpoint.org.uk/files/Small_Talk_FINAL.pdf)

**Talk Together booklet** – Ideas to encourage talking in babies and young children.

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/sites/talkingpoint.org.uk/files/Talk%20together%202010.pdf>

**Progress Checker** – A quick questionnaire to determine whether your child is on track.

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/progress-checker>

**Real-life story** – You know your child best, and having the courage to request a second or third opinion can have a huge impact when seeking help for your child.

Anna <http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/parents/real-life-stories/anna>

**English as an Additional Language** – Suggestions for families who speak more than one language.

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/parents/speech-and-language/english-additional-language>

**Finding the Right School** – What to look for when choosing a childcare centre or school for a child with communication difficulties.

- **Primary School Checklist**

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/parents/finding-right-school/primary-school-checklist>

- **Primary School Questions**

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/parents/finding-right-school/primary-school-questions>

- **Scenario 1: Jack is 7**

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/parents/finding-right-school/scenario-1-jack-7>



Image from: <http://nanniesheartland.blogspot.com.au/2012/09/communication-styles-start-early.html>

[Call Box Hill Speech Pathology Clinic on 9899 5494](http://www.callboxhill.com.au) if you have any concerns about your child's speech and language development.

**By Nicola Anglin (Speech Pathologist)**