



Developmental Language Disorder: A Parent's Guide



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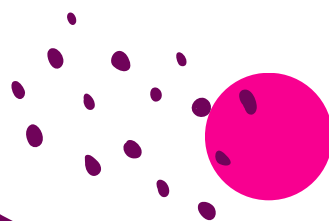
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What is Language?

Language refers to the words we use and understand and how we use these words to share ideas and get what we want.

This can be broken into '**receptive language**' (listening and understanding) and '**expressive language**' (sharing thoughts, ideas, needs and wants). It also includes:

- What words mean
- How we make new words
- How we put words together
- How we communicate across situations and people (social language or 'pragmatics')





What is Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)?

Some children will have language disorders associated with a known condition e.g., Autism Spectrum Disorder, hearing loss, Intellectual Disability, Cerebral Palsy, brain injury.

Other children will have language difficulties that are not due to another condition. These children will therefore have a **“Developmental Language Disorder”**.

This means the child presents with language difficulties that are persistent and can have a significant impact on their everyday life including social interactions and achievement at school.

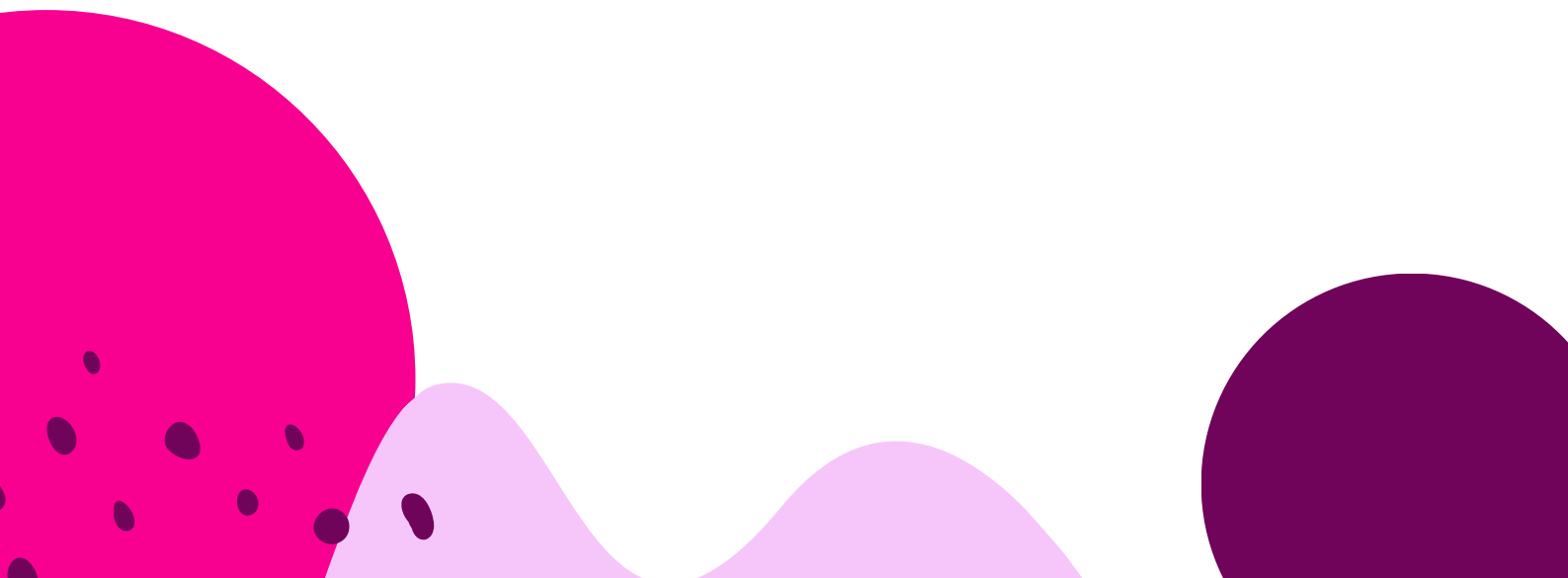


Developmental Language Disorder Facts:

Developmental Language Disorder can be present in children, adolescents and adults.

“Developmental” is used as it tells us that the difficulties started during childhood, or early development, rather than being acquired.

Developmental Language Disorder is very common. This hidden disability affects approximately two children in every classroom.





Checklist for Parents: Characteristics of — Language Delay/Disorder

Use this checklist to identify potential signs of language delay/disorder in your child, drawing from common characteristics associated with these conditions:

- ✓ Limited vocabulary
- ✓ Delayed speech sound development
- ✓ Difficulty forming sentences or using proper grammar
- ✓ Struggles in understanding complex instructions
- ✓ Challenges in social interactions and making friends
- ✓ Frustration due to communication difficulties
- ✓ Delayed speech sound development
- ✓ Difficulty understanding what they've read
- ✓ Difficulty organising thoughts or ideas when writing



How is Developmental Language Disorder Diagnosed?

A diagnosis typically involves:

Speech Pathology Evaluation: Conducted by a Speech Pathologist.

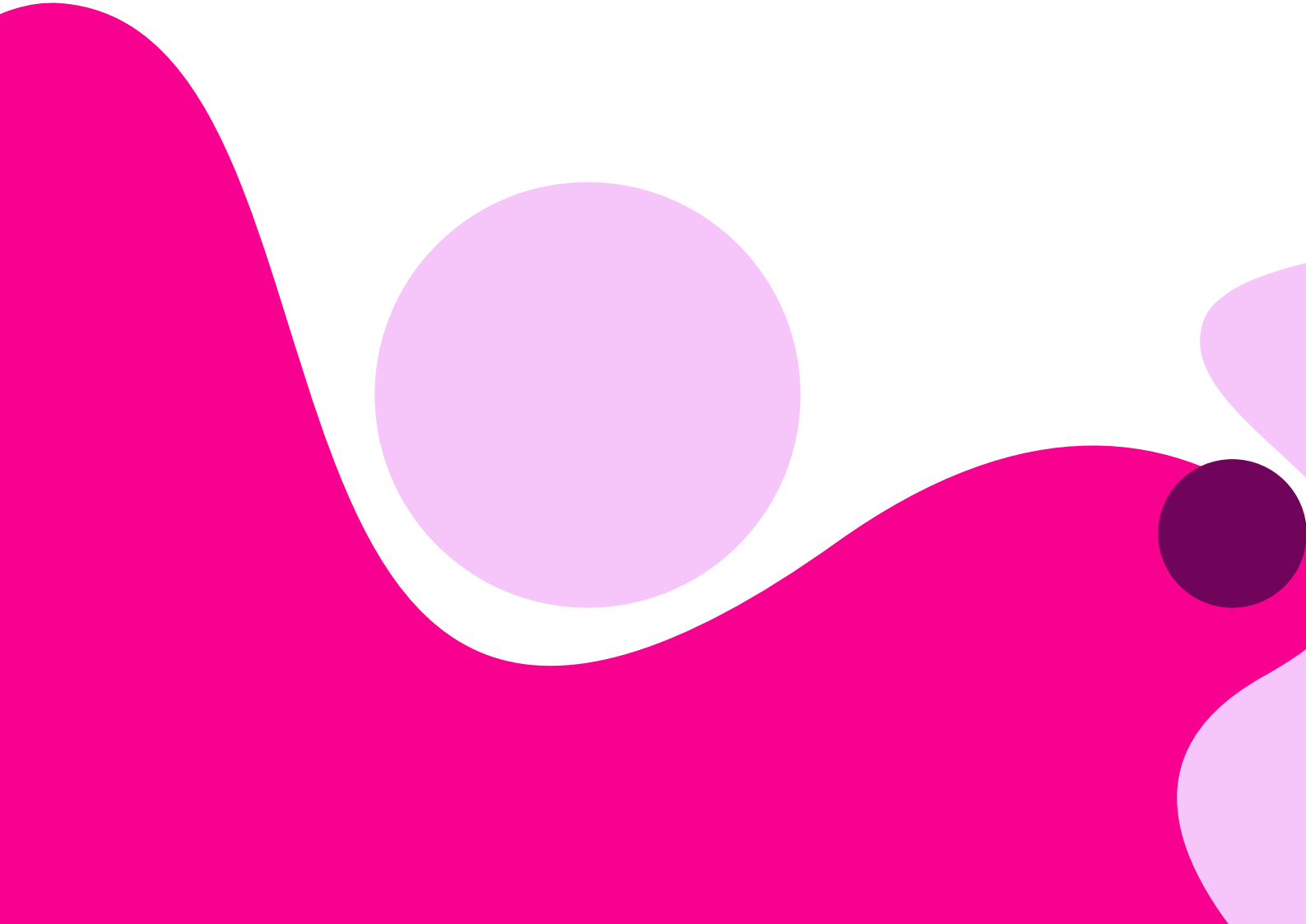
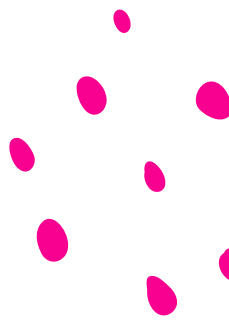
Developmental Assessments: Performed by Paediatricians, Psychologists, or multidisciplinary teams.

Hearing Screening: To rule out hearing problems.



Who Diagnoses Developmental Language Disorder?

Speech Pathologists, Paediatricians, and multidisciplinary teams are typically involved in diagnosing Developmental Language Disorder.





Steps to Take If You Suspect Developmental Language Disorder:

Consult a Professional: Contact your Paediatrician or a Speech Pathologist for an assessment.


Keep Records: Maintain a journal of your child's speech and language development.

Seek Early Intervention: Early intervention can have a significant impact on language development.



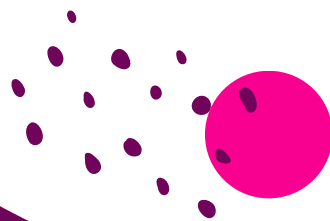
Strategies to Support a Child with Language Delay/Disorder

- **Speech Therapy:** Consult a Speech Pathologist for individualised therapy.
- **Home Practice:** Practice given exercises and engage in language-rich activities at home.
- **Consistency:** Maintain a consistent and patient approach.
- **Encourage Communication:** Praise your child's efforts to communicate.
- **Social Interaction:** Encourage playdates and social interactions.
- **Visual Aids:** Use visual aids like pictures and flashcards.
- **Read Aloud:** Read books together regularly.
- **Limit Screen Time:** Minimise screen time to encourage real-life interactions.
- **Simplify Language:** Use simple and clear language.
- **Model Correct Language:** Repeat and model correct use of language.

- **Narrate Activities:** Describe daily activities as you do them.
 - **Sing Songs:** Singing can help with language development.
 - **Expand Vocabulary:** Introduce new words and concepts.
 - **Listen Actively:** Pay close attention to your child's attempts at communication.
 - **Set Realistic Goals:** Set achievable language goals.
 - **Patience:** Be patient and understanding.
 - **Celebrate Progress:** Celebrate milestones and progress.
 - **Support at School:** Communicate with teachers about your child's needs.
 - **Join Support Groups:** Connect with other parents facing similar challenges.
 - **Stay Informed:** Stay informed about the latest research and strategies.
- 



Remember, every child is unique, and progress varies. With early intervention and consistent support, many children with Developmental Language Disorder can improve their communication skills and thrive. Please reach out to Inspire Allied Health and Education Group to find out how our Speech Pathologists can support your child and family.





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