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## DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER

By Lisa Archibald

### What do we mean by language?

Language refers to our spoken or written method of communicating with one another. Language includes the words we know, how we put words into sentences, and the ways we use language to communicate.

### What is Developmental Language Disorder?

Developmental Language Disorder is a life-long condition characterized by difficulties with understanding and/or using spoken language. DLD leads to difficulty with socializing and learning at school.

### Symptoms of DLD:

- Difficulties with listening, attention, memory, and language processing especially when there is lots of information
- Trouble following instructions, understanding questions, and comprehending stories
- Knowing and using fewer words
- Difficulties expressing what they want to say including thinking of the words they want to use, putting words in sentences, and connecting sentences in sequences
- Trouble with using language socially such as in conversations
- Challenges using language to express thoughts and feelings

### Other terms for DLD:

The use of the term Developmental Language Disorder was chosen by a group of experts in 2017. Other terms that have been used for DLD include Specific Language Impairment. Many children with a Specific Learning Disability could also have DLD.

### Strategies for helping someone with DLD:

- Be sure you have the child's attention before you speak.
- Use short, simple sentences when talking.
- Use gestures and visual cues to help your child understand.

- Slow your speech rate and pause before important points.
- Repeat or rephrase when appropriate.
- Talk to your child about words that share similar meanings
- Make interesting comments about topics (instead of asking lots of questions).
- Give choices and use words to describe each choice. Encourage your child to use the same words when making their choice.
- Repeat back your child's sentences correcting any grammar and adding 1 or 2 words.
- Check that your child has understood by asking them to repeat back what they need to do.

### **Where to look for more help:**

- [RADLD.org](http://RADLD.org)
- [DLDandMe.org](http://DLDandMe.org)

**NOTE:** OAFCCD recommends that you seek the advice of a Speech - Language Pathologist to get further information and advice that is specific to your child.