

What to Do When You Have No Idea What a Child Just Said

*Kelly Goldberg; M.S., CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Early Intervention Specialist*



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DCEARLYEDX.ORG

Let's Get to Know Each Other

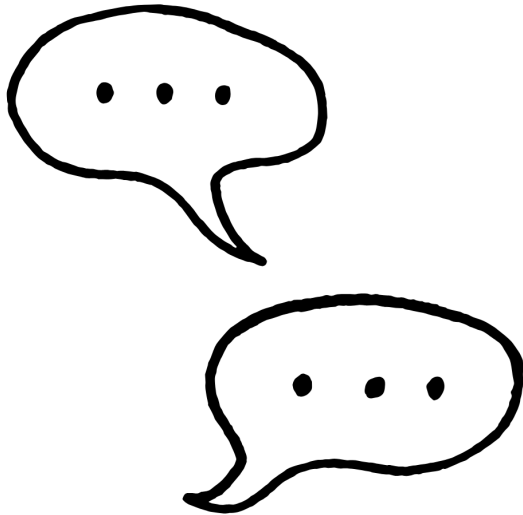
Kelly Goldberg; M.S., CCC-SLP

- Began my career in 2009
- Since 2014, I've specialized exclusively in working with children from birth to age five
- Owned and operated an in-home childcare program for five years before becoming a Speech-Language Pathologist
- Wife and proud mom of two girls
- In my free time, I enjoy fantasy novels, hiking, and wandering through model homes

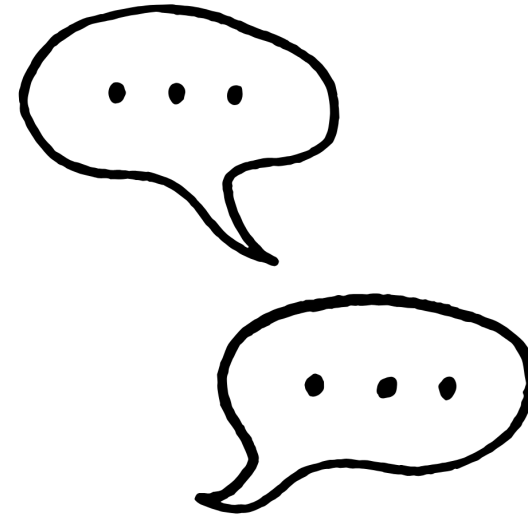
Before we get started....

Two Areas of Development

Speech



Language



Two Areas of Development

Speech

Requires coordination between:

- lips
- teeth
- tongue
- jaw
- palate (roof of your mouth)
- cheeks
- vocal cords
- lungs (breath control)

Language

Language the child understands and uses

Examples:

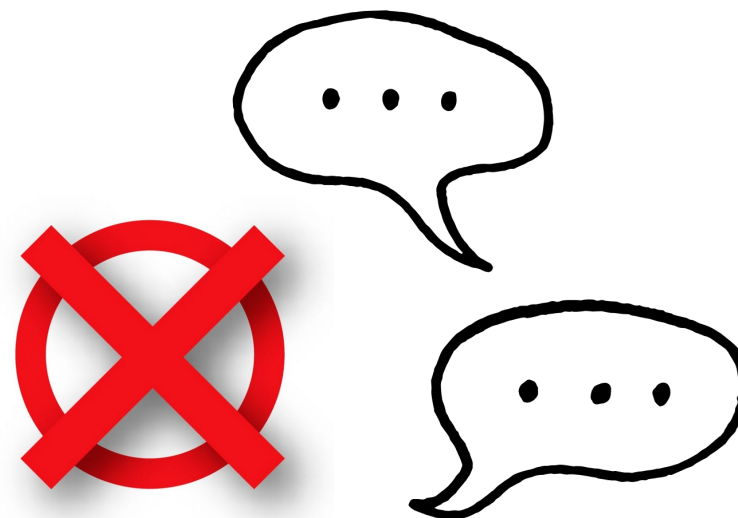
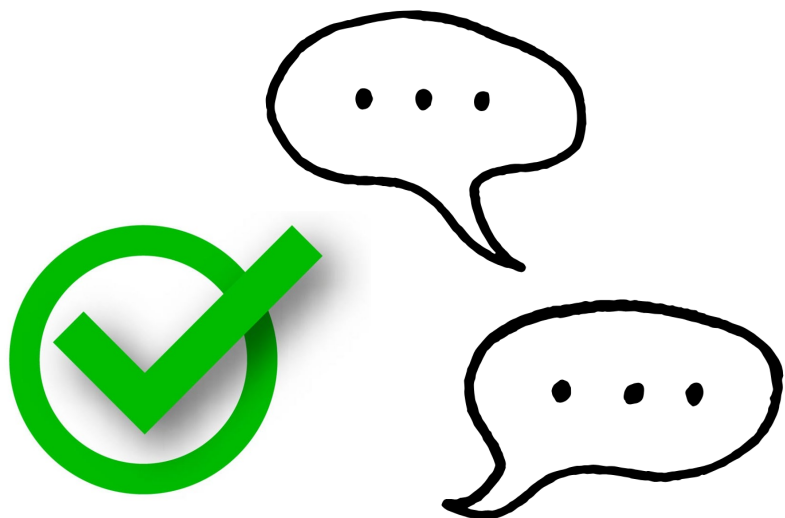
- Following directions
- Answering questions
- Using gestures and words to communicate

Which one are you concerned about?

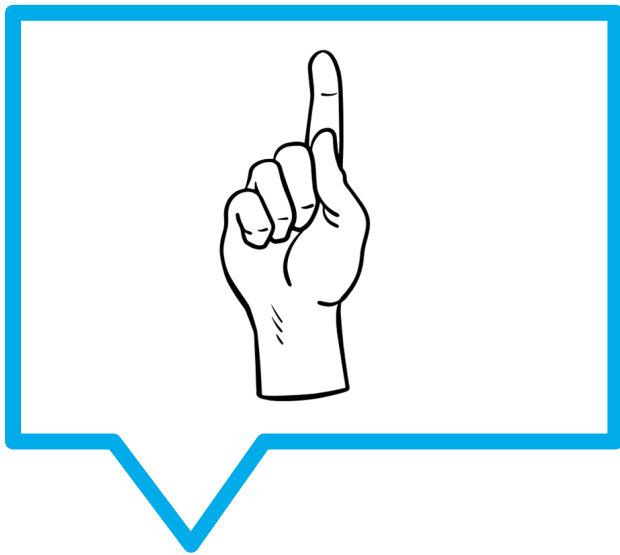
Two Areas of Development

Speech

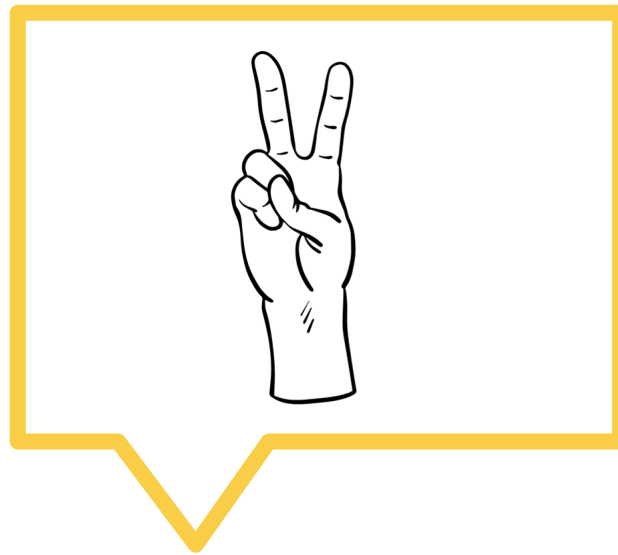
Language



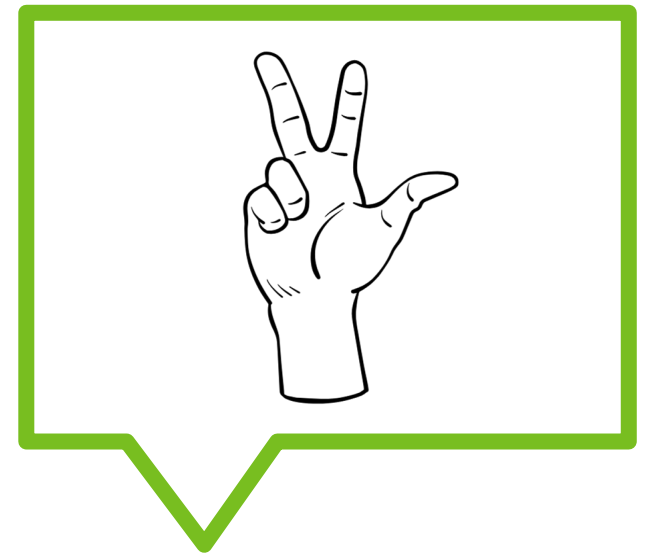
How much do you know about speech sound development?



"I know nothing"



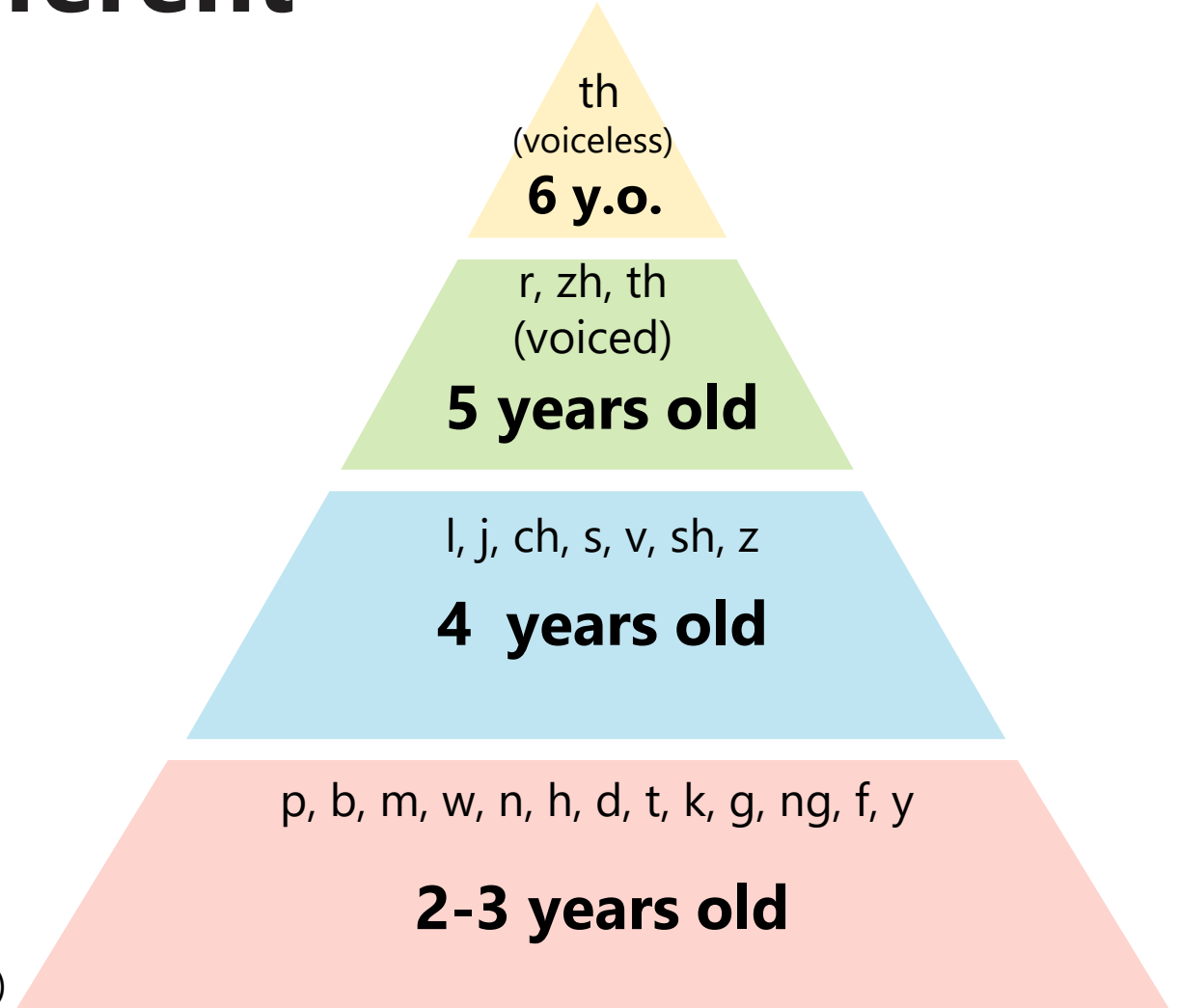
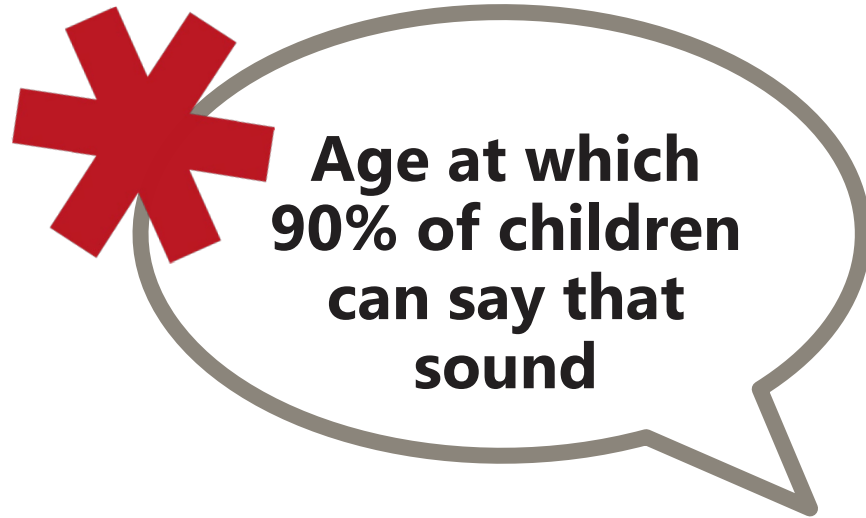
"I know a little bit"



"I know a lot"

My goal is to give you insights into speech sound development so you know what sounds to look for and when!

Sounds Develop at Different Ages



(McLeod & Crowe, 2018)

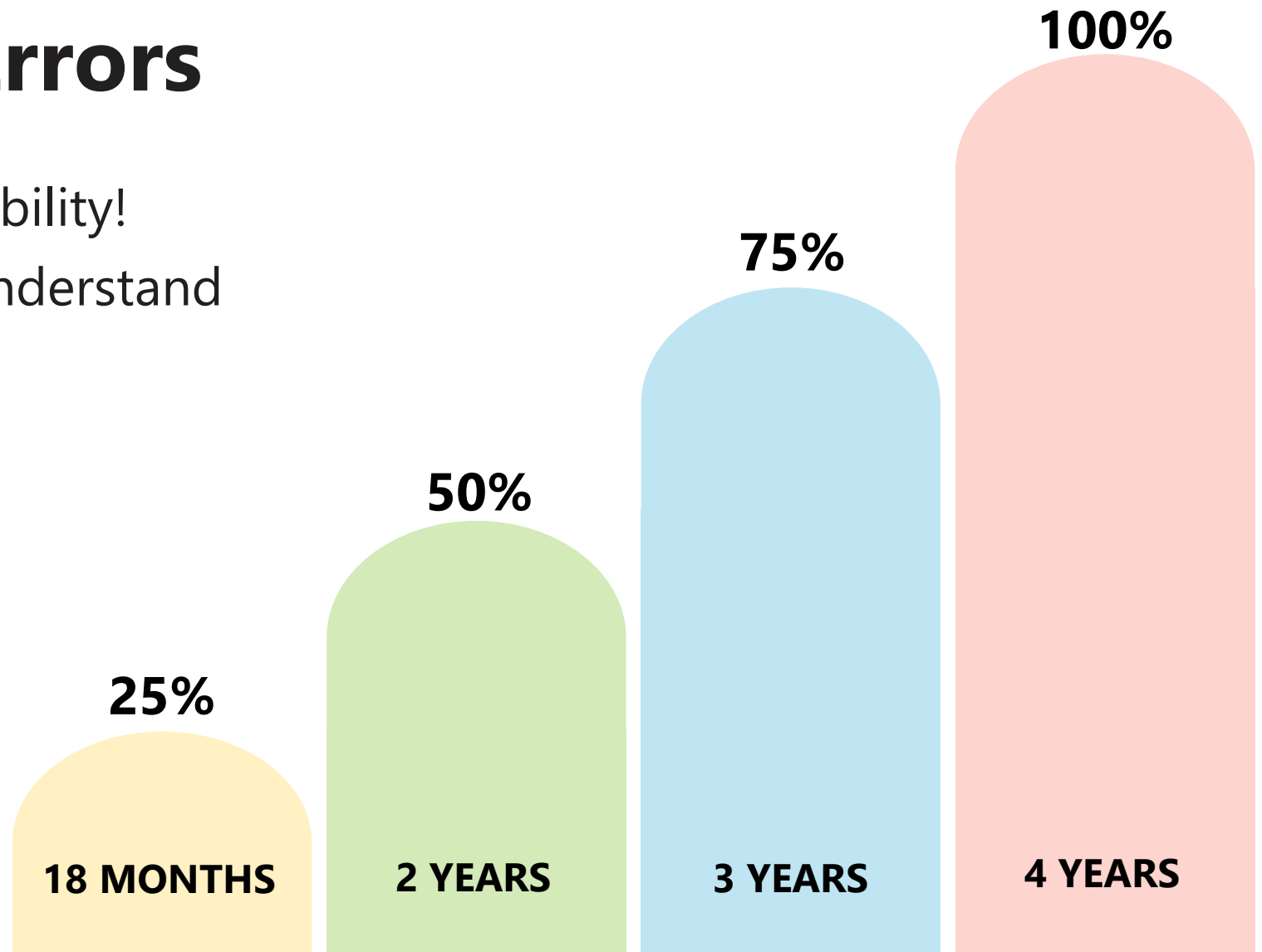
PROCESS	EXAMPLES	AGE IT DISAPPEARS
Final Consonant Deletion: Leave off ending sound	"do" for "dog" "mo" for "more"	3 years 3 months
Fronting: /t/ and /d/ for /k/ and /g/	"do" for "go" "tar" for "car"	3 years 6 months
Cluster Reduction: Leave off the one of the sounds in a blend	"nack" for "snack" "pin" for "spin"	4 years
Stopping: Air is stopped at the lips	"pish" for "fish" "tun" for "sun"	3 years to 3 years 6 months
Gliding: /w/ and /y/ for /r/ and /l/	"wed" for "red" "yion" for "lion"	5 years

PROCESS	EXAMPLES	REFER ASAP
Initial Consonant Deletion: Leave off beginning sound	"og" for "dog" "ut" for "cut"	NOT TYPICAL
Backing: /k/ and /g/ for any sounds made in the front of the mouth	"kea" for "pea" "kire" for "tire"	NOT TYPICAL
Glottal Stop: sound produced in back of the throat called a glottal stop is used for other sounds	"buh-ue" for "blue"	NOT TYPICAL

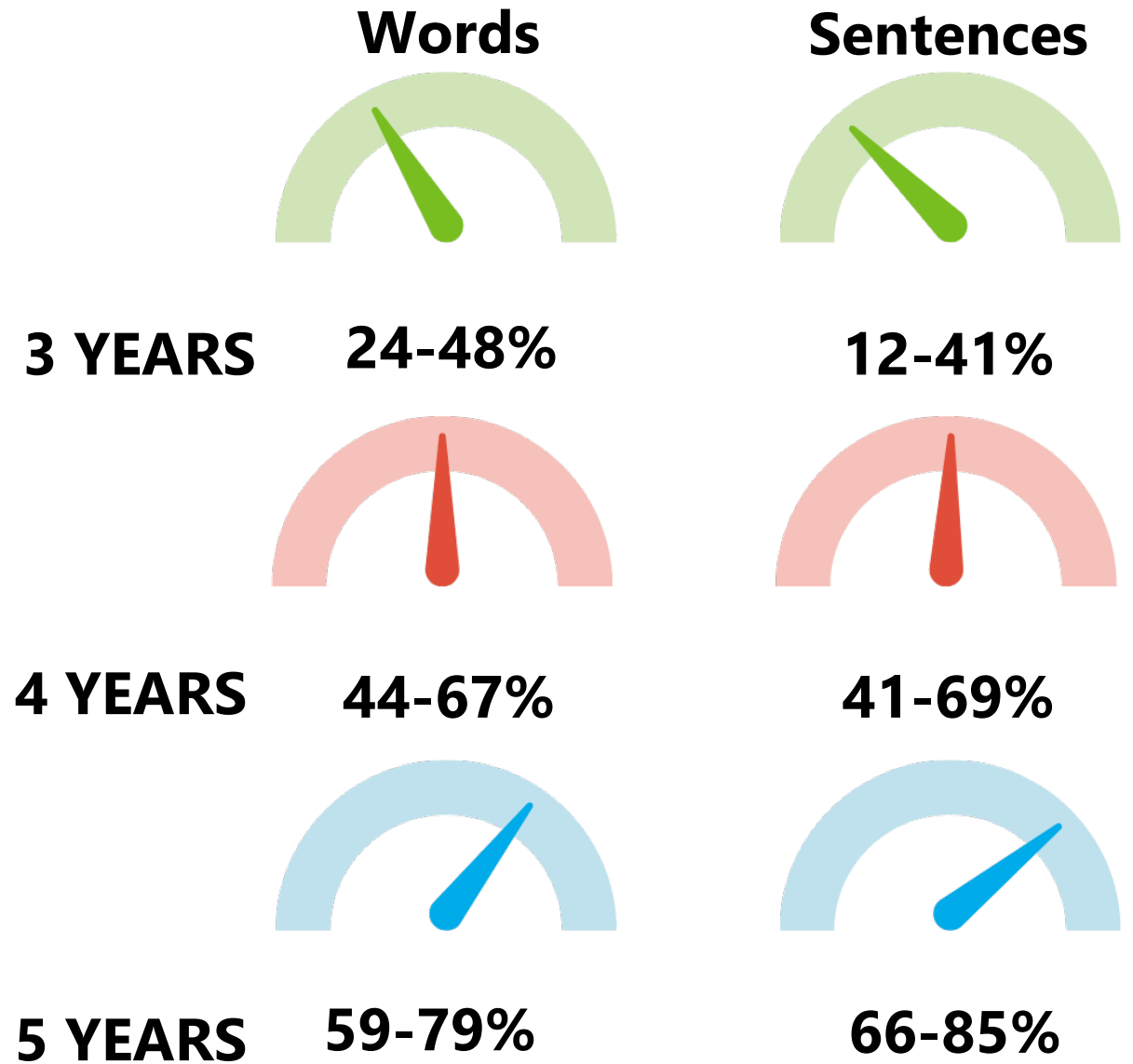
Speech Sound Errors

They impact speech intelligibility!
But how much should we understand
when little kids talk?

(Pena-Brooks & Hedge, 2007)

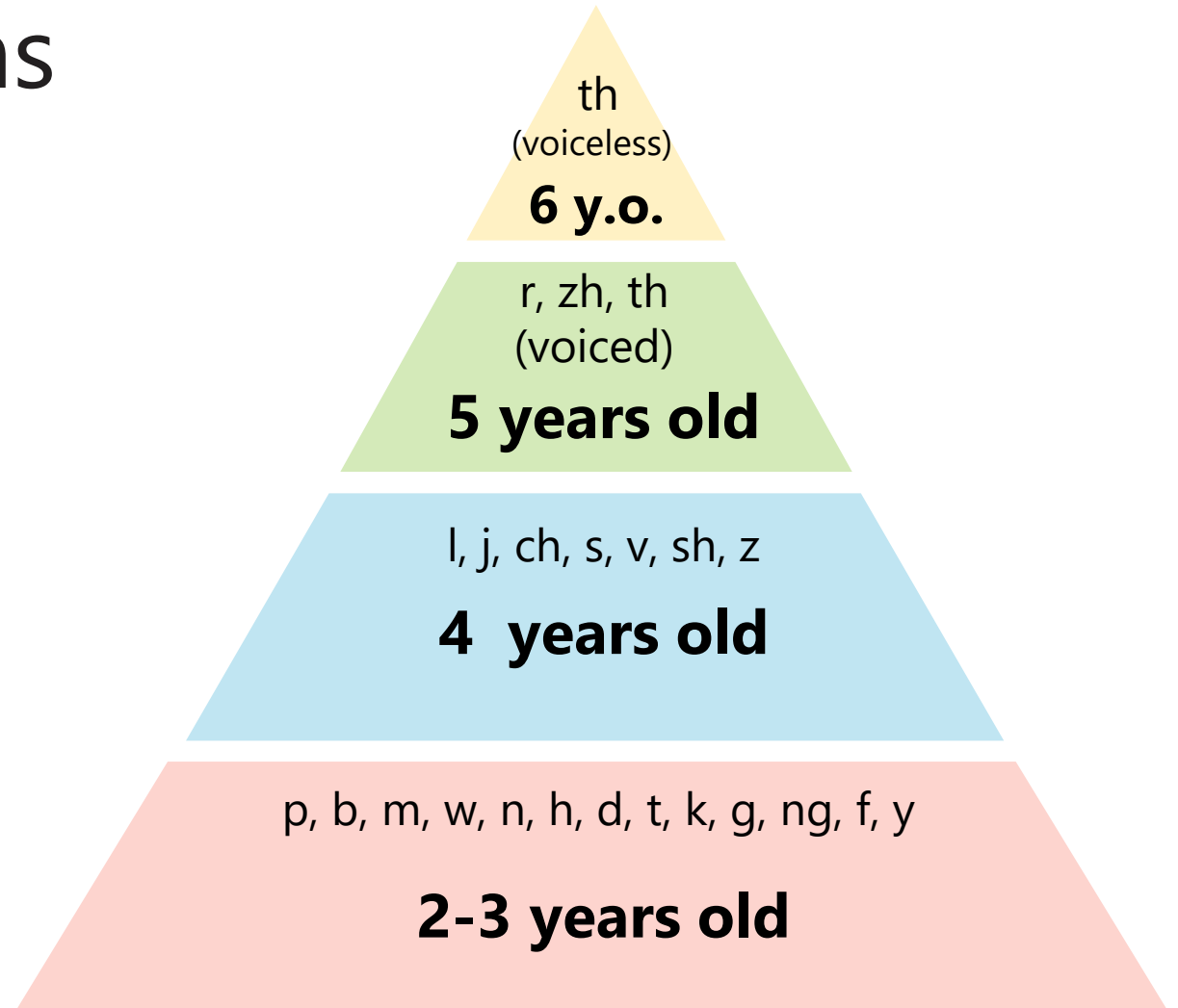


What about friends, family, teachers, and random people at the store?



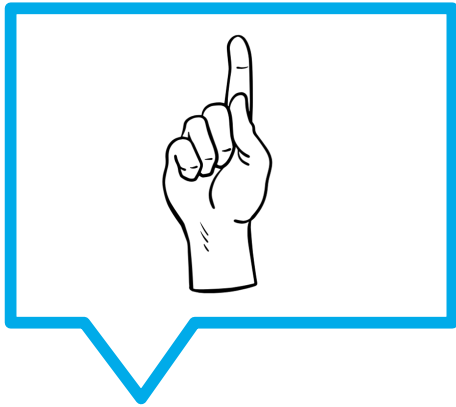
(Hustad et al., 2021)

Oakli - 2 Years 7 Months

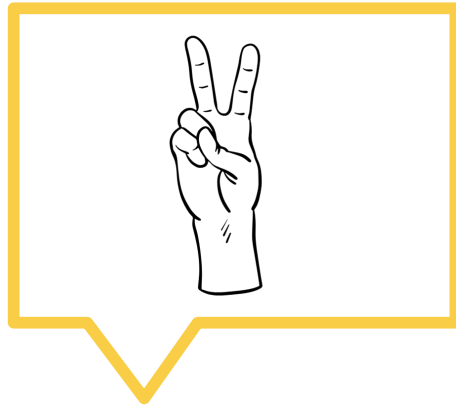


(McLeod & Crowe, 2018)

Oakli - 2 Years 7 Months

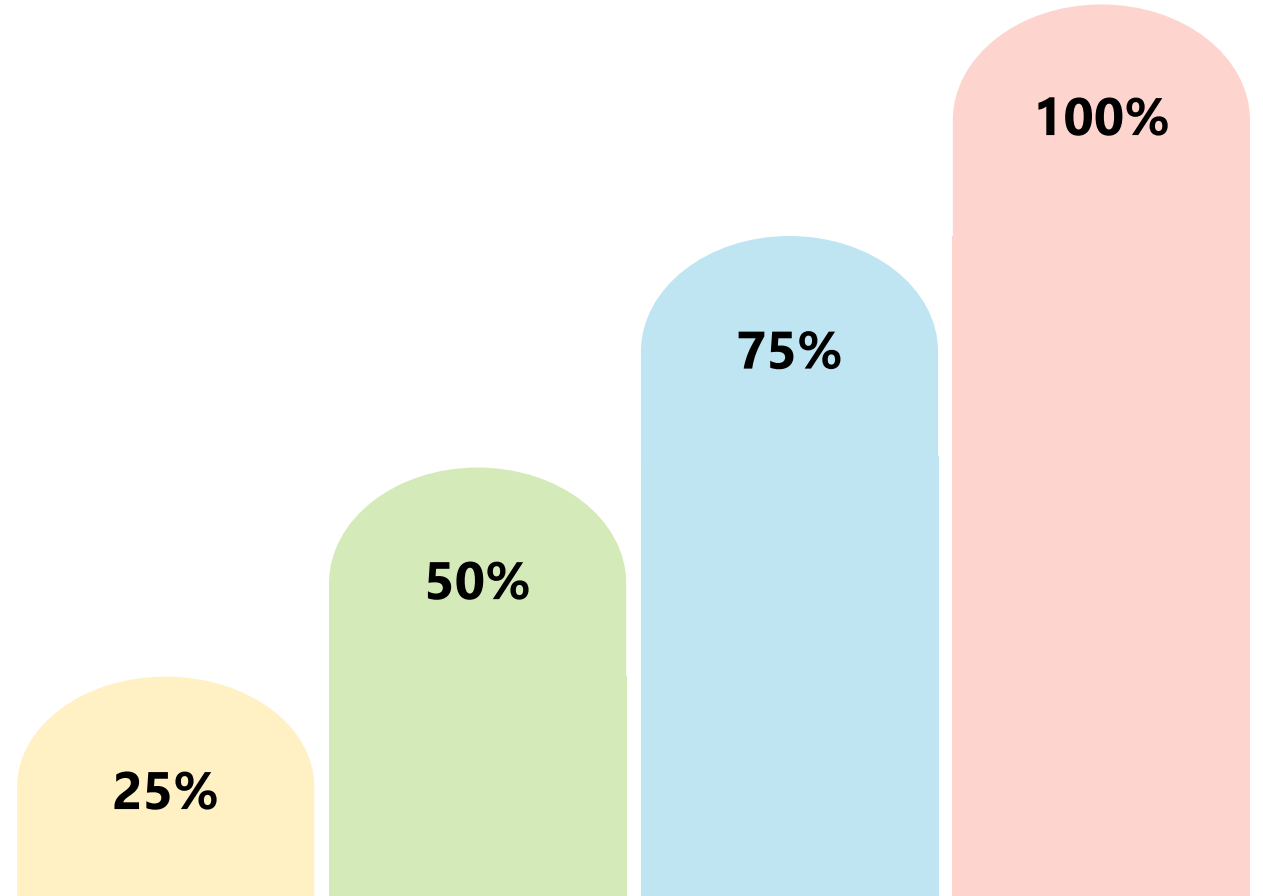


"This sounds pretty typical."



"I think there is a problem."

(Pena-Brooks & Hedge, 2007)



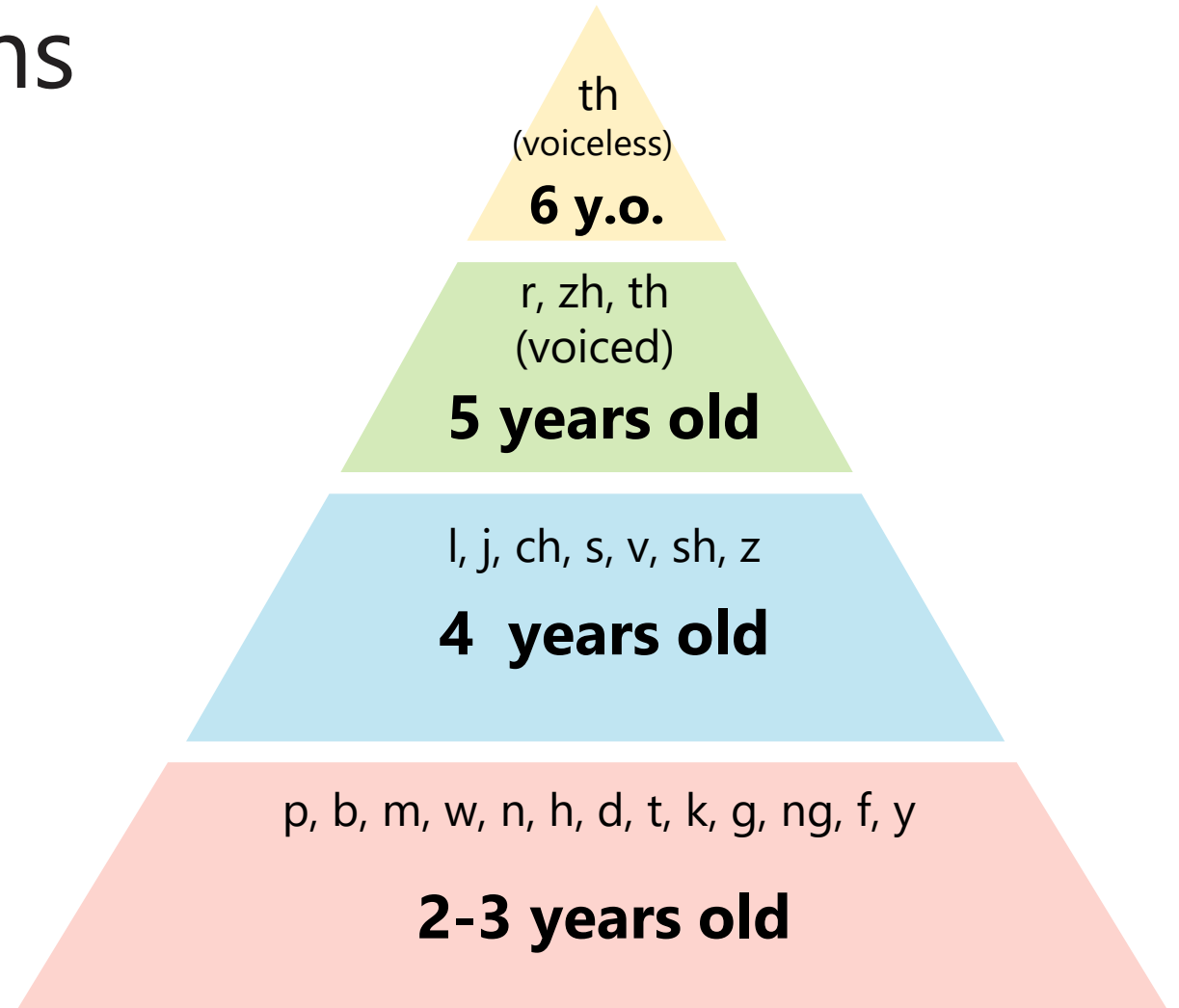
18 MONTHS

2 YEARS

3 YEARS

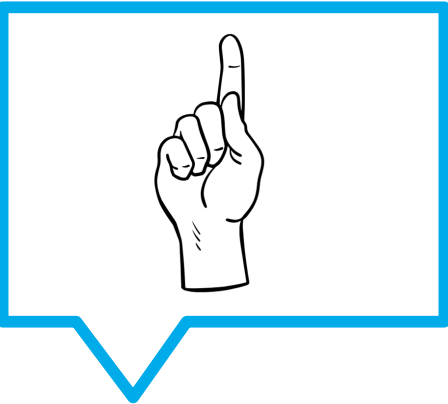
4 YEARS

Frank - 2 Years 7 Months

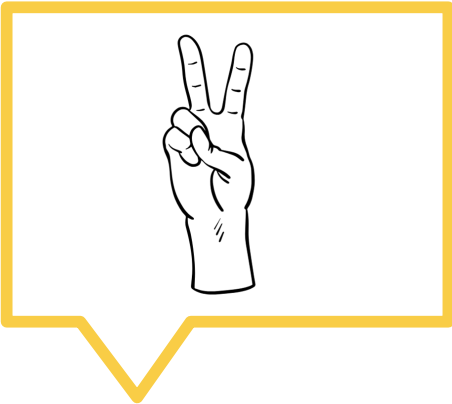


(McLeod & Crowe, 2018)

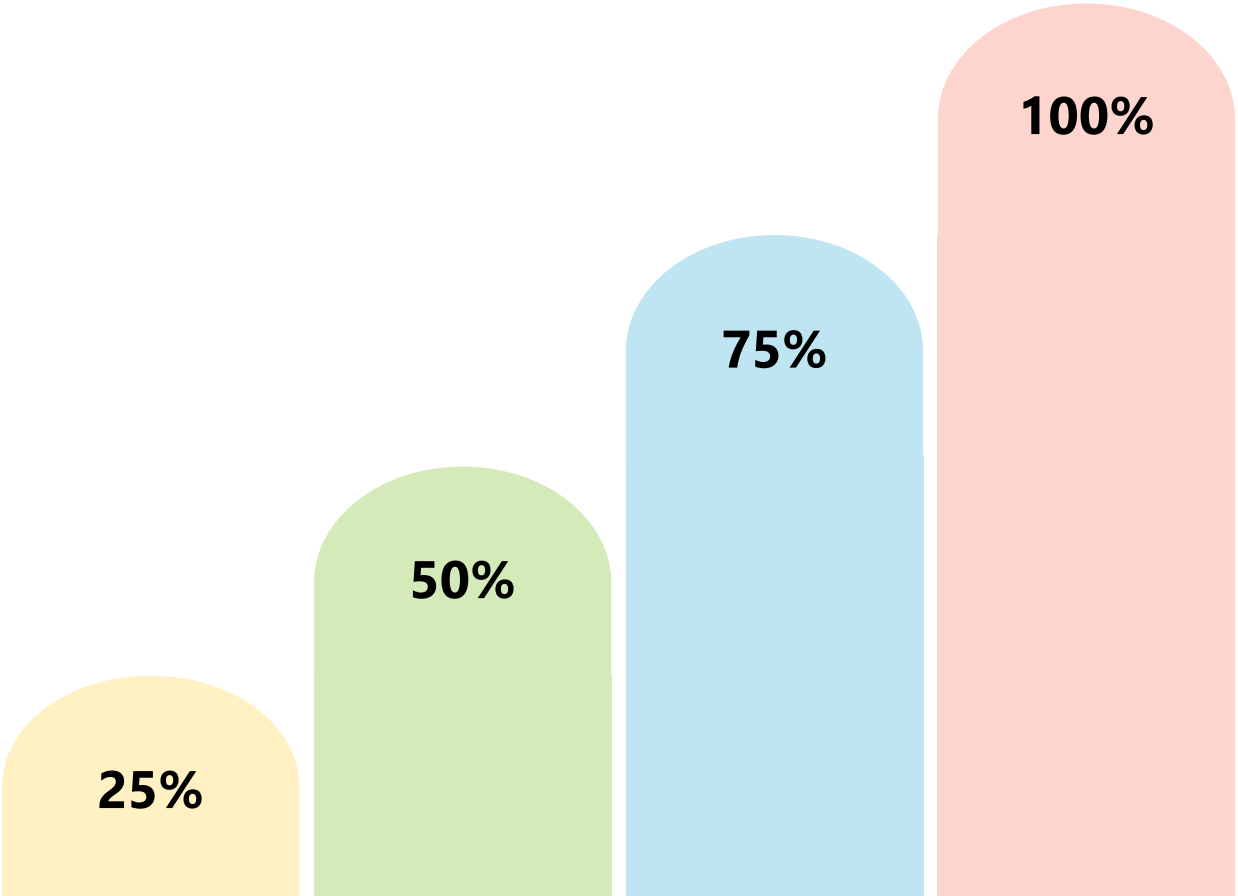
Frank - 2 Years 7 Months



"This sounds pretty typical."



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(Pena-Brooks & Hedge, 2007)

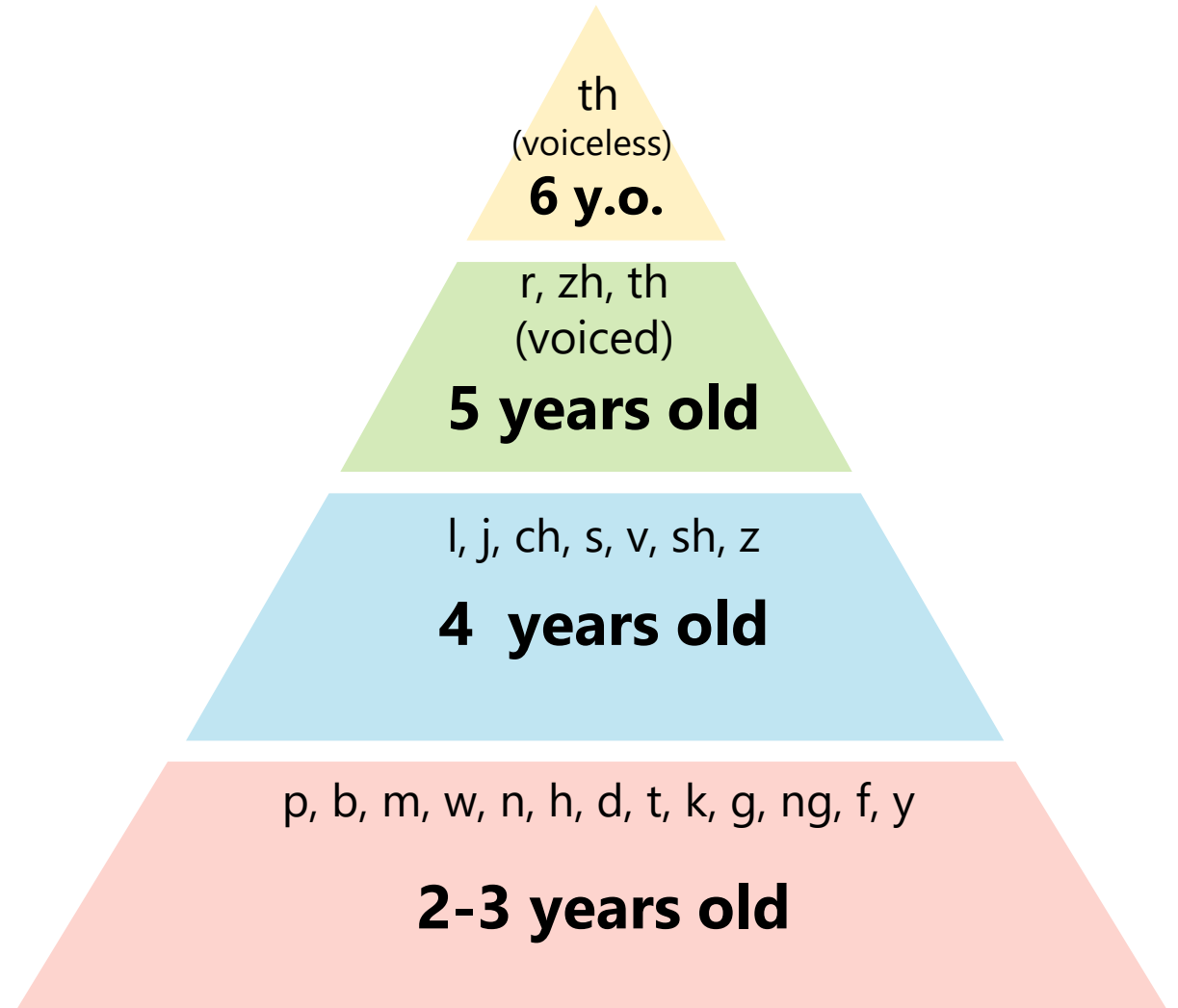
18 MONTHS

2 YEARS

3 YEARS

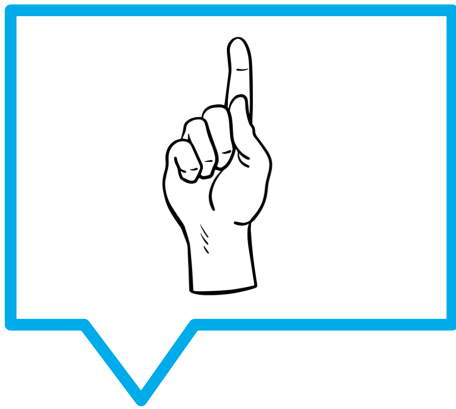
4 YEARS

Jack - 4 Years 1 Month

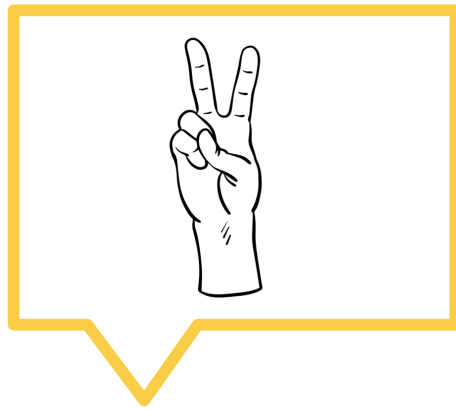


(McLeod & Crowe, 2018)

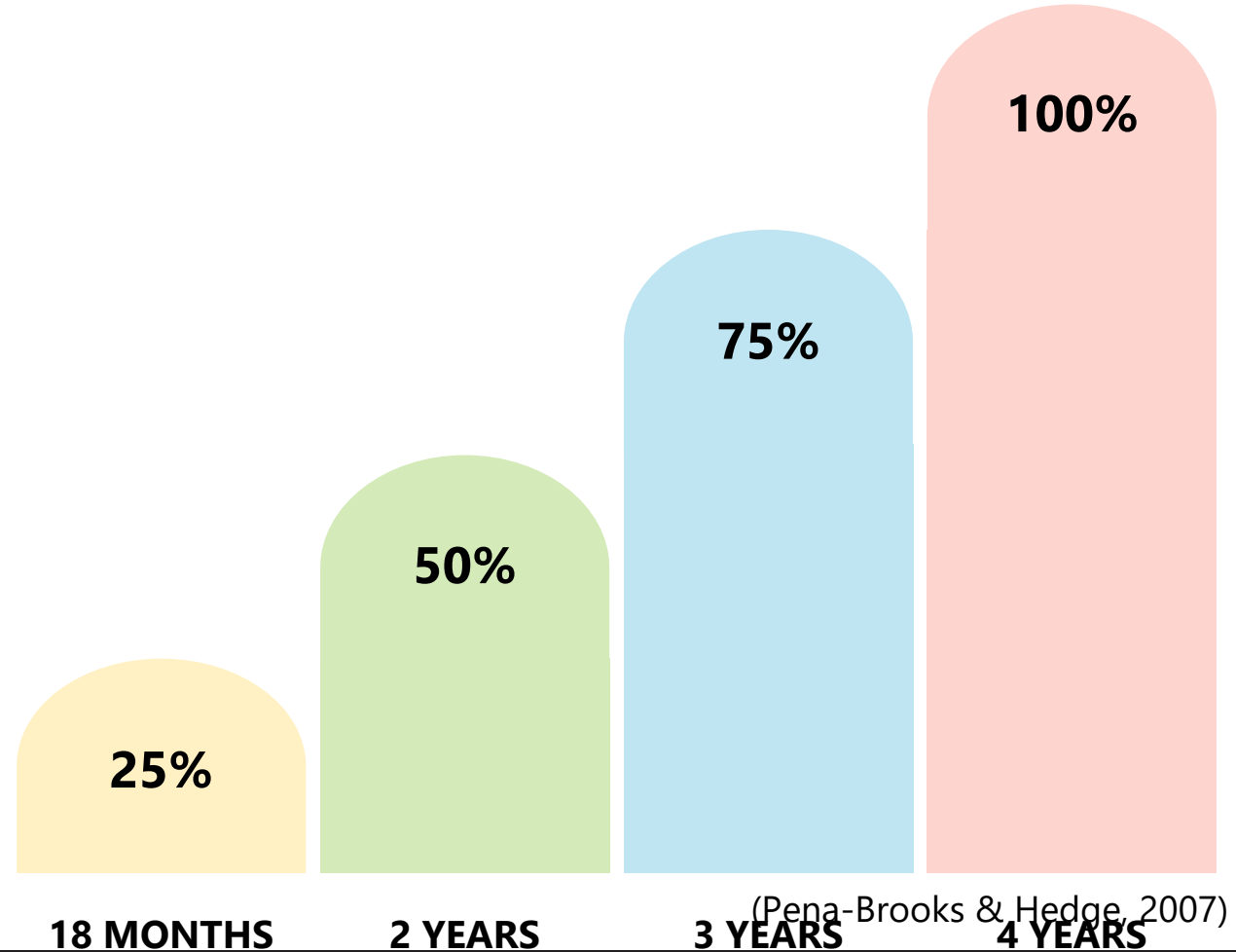
Jack - 4 Years 1 Month



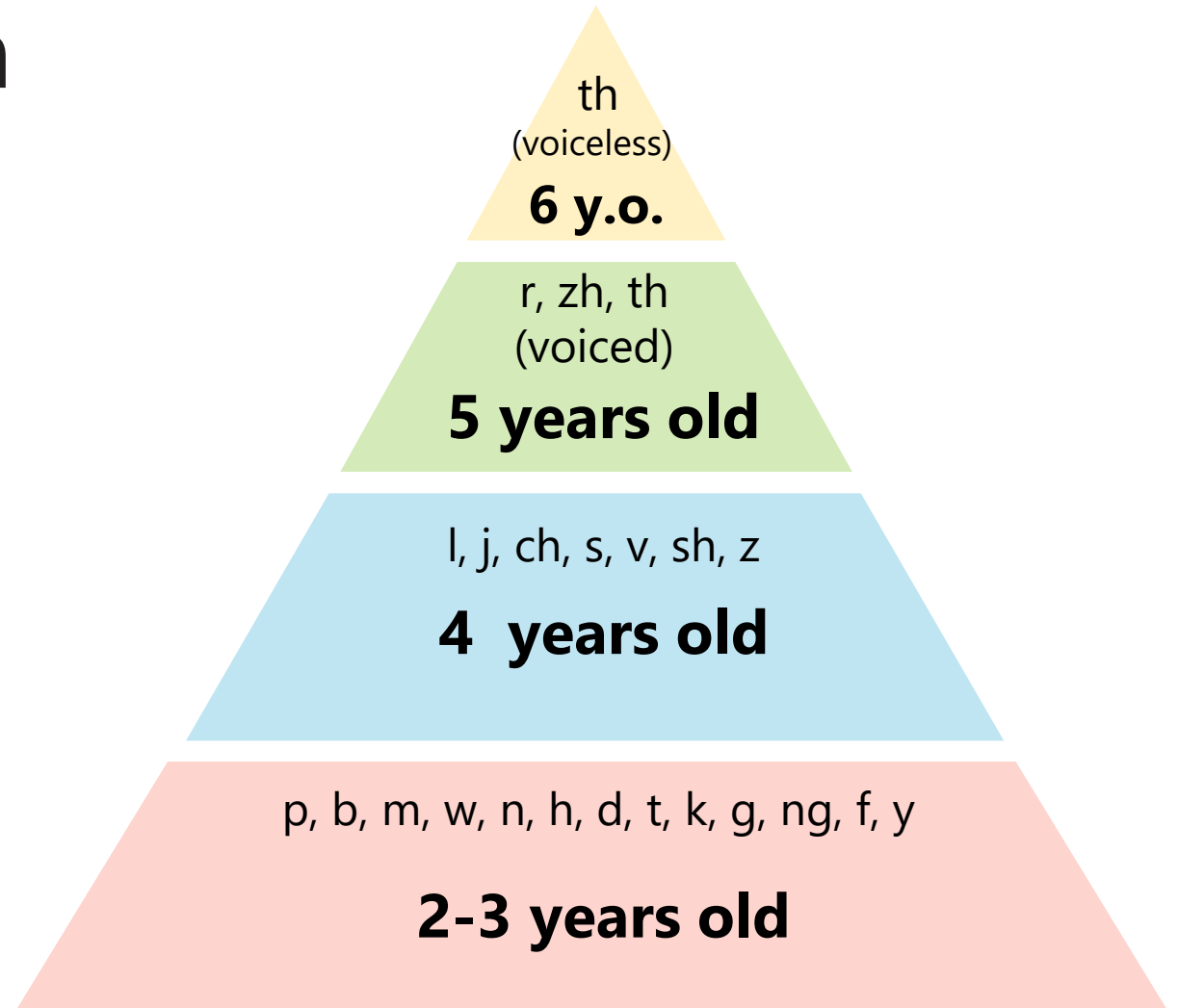
"This sounds pretty typical."



"I think there is a problem."

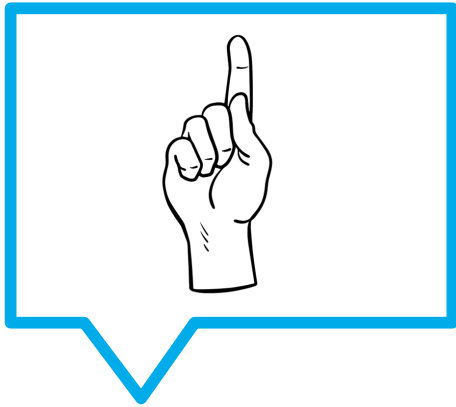


Oakli - 4 Years 1 Month

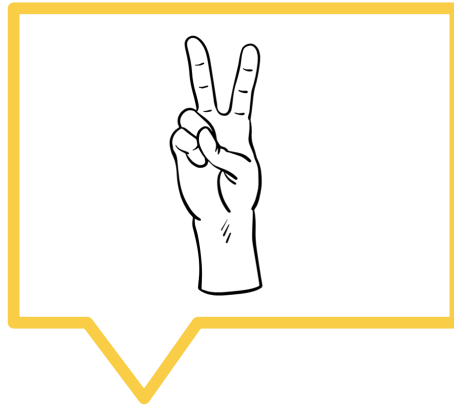


(McLeod & Crowe, 2018)

Oakli - 4 Years 1 Month

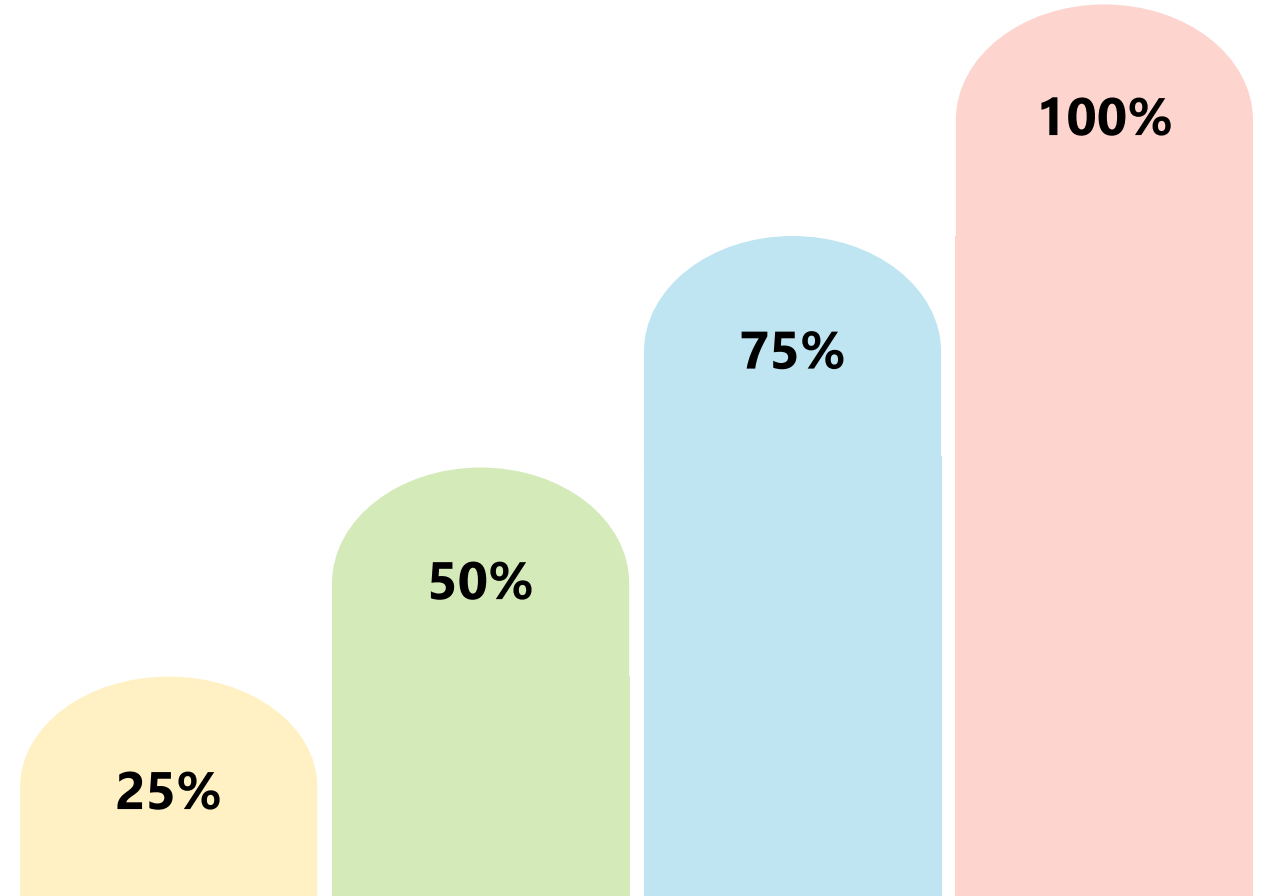


"This sounds pretty typical."



"I think there is a problem."

(Pena-Brooks & Hedge, 2007)



18 MONTHS

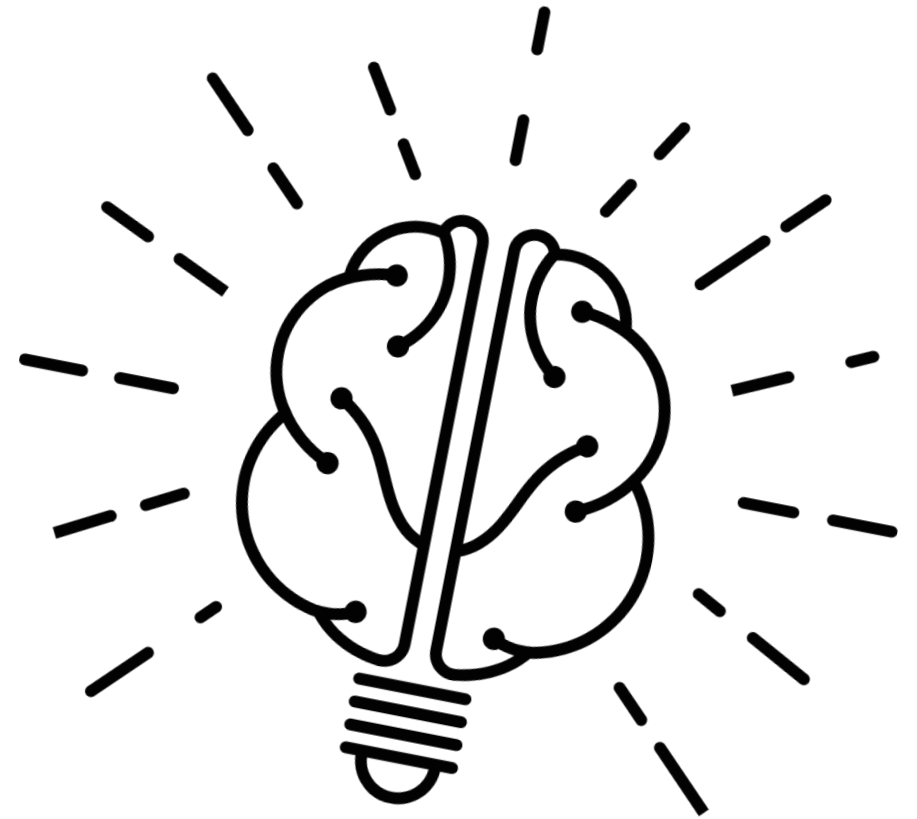
2 YEARS

3 YEARS

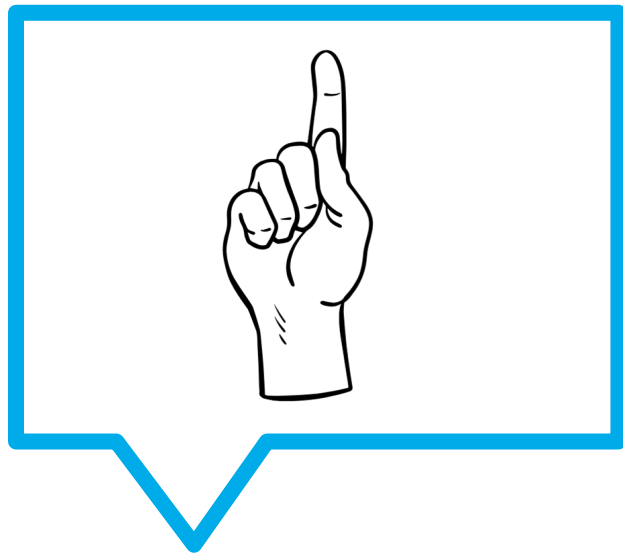
4 YEARS

It is never too early to correctly model a word or provide age-appropriate guidance for how to pronounce a sound but...

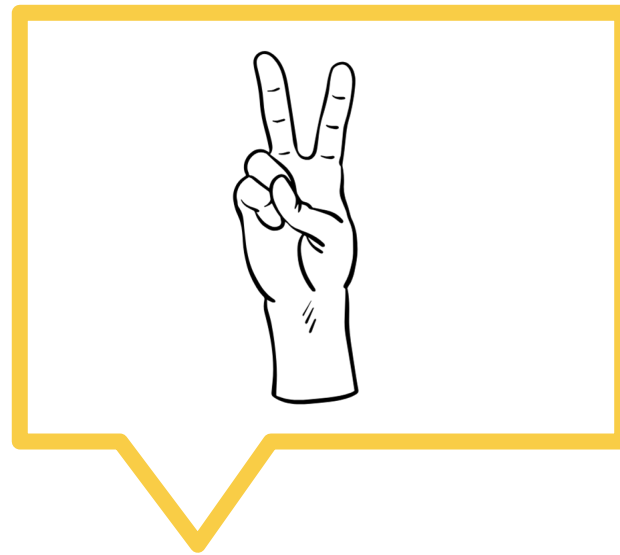
WHAT a child is trying to say is much, much, much more important than ***HOW*** they say it!



How much do you know about how to respond when your child makes a sound error?



"I know nothing"



"I know a little bit"



"I know a lot"

My goal is to ensure you respond to sound errors in ways that foster correct productions later.

DON'TS

When your child says a word with the **wrong sound...**

Don't over exaggerate or isolate the sound.

Don't have them repeat you. Don't say, *"Now you say!"*



Don't over
exaggerate
or isolate the
sound.

A common mistake I see people make is isolating and exaggerating the sound that was said wrong.

EXAMPLE:

Child says: "A *pish!*" for "A *fish!*"

You respond: "No. *It's a fah fah fah fah fish*"



Don't have them
repeat you.
Don't say, "*Now
you say!*"

When you respond: "Now you say it." It's pretty much a guarantee that the child is going to say the word the wrong way again.

This reinforces the sound error and undoes all the good modeling you provided right before you asked them to repeat you.



DO'S

When your child says a word with the **wrong sound**

Get eye level with the child so they see your mouth.

Provide auditory bombardment.
Use the word 10+ times in a sentence.



Get eye level with the child so they see your mouth.

Little ones will observe how our mouth/lips/tongue move in order to imitate those sounds.

Getting eye level draws attention to your mouth as you repeat the word.

If the child is labeling something you are able to hold, place it next to your mouth and repeat what they said with the correct sound.



Provide auditory bombardment.
Use the word 10+ times in a sentence.

Example:

Child says: *"Wets do outside!"*
for *"Let's go outside!"*

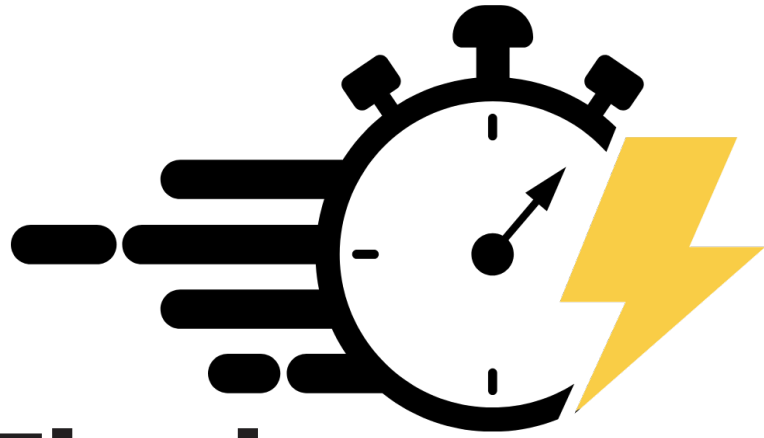
You say: *"Let's go outside. Let's go. It's time to go go go. Let's go outside. First shoes, then we can go outside. I love to go go go outside. Let's go friends!"*

AND THEN MOVE ON!



**DO NOT HAVE THE
CHILD REPEAT YOU!**

**The goal is just to
provide a correct
model!**



**The key to using
these strategies is
to BE QUICK!**

**MODEL ⇒ MOVE
ON**

/k/ and /g/ **Songs/Fingerplays**



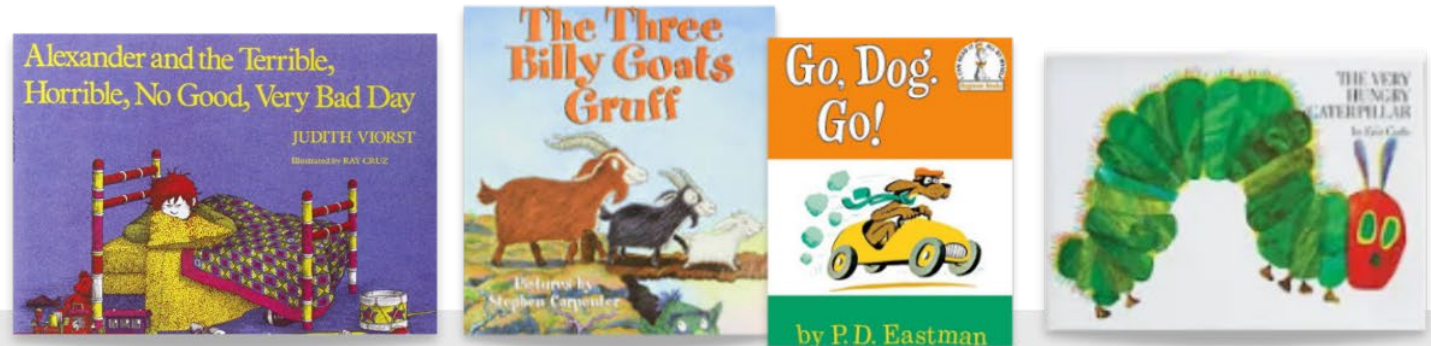
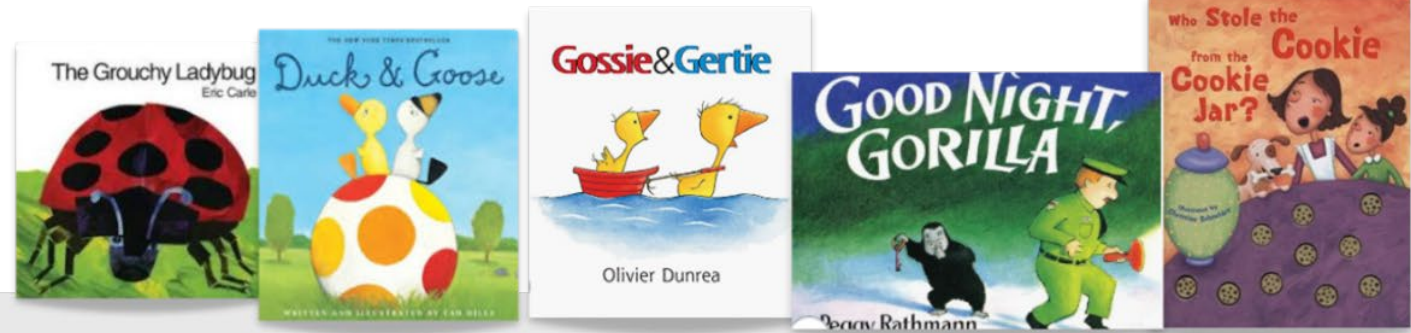
Provide auditory bombardment.
Use the word 10+ times in a sentence.

- **We're going on a bear hunt**
- **The ants go marching**
- **The more we get together**
- **Duck duck goose**
- **Hickory dickory dock**
- **Pat-a-cake**
- **5 little monkeys jumping on the bed**

/k/ and /g/ Books



Provide auditory bombardment.
Use the word 10+ times in a sentence.



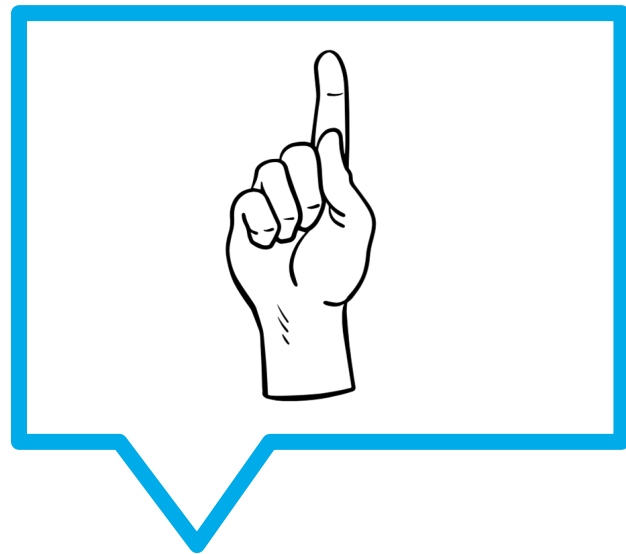
/k/ and /g/ Toys & Games



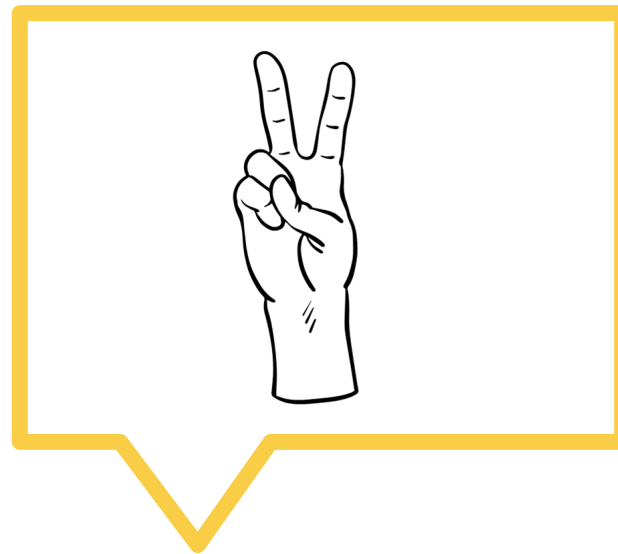
Provide auditory bombardment.
Use the word 10+ times in a sentence.



How much do you know about how to respond when you have no clue what your child just said?



"I know nothing"



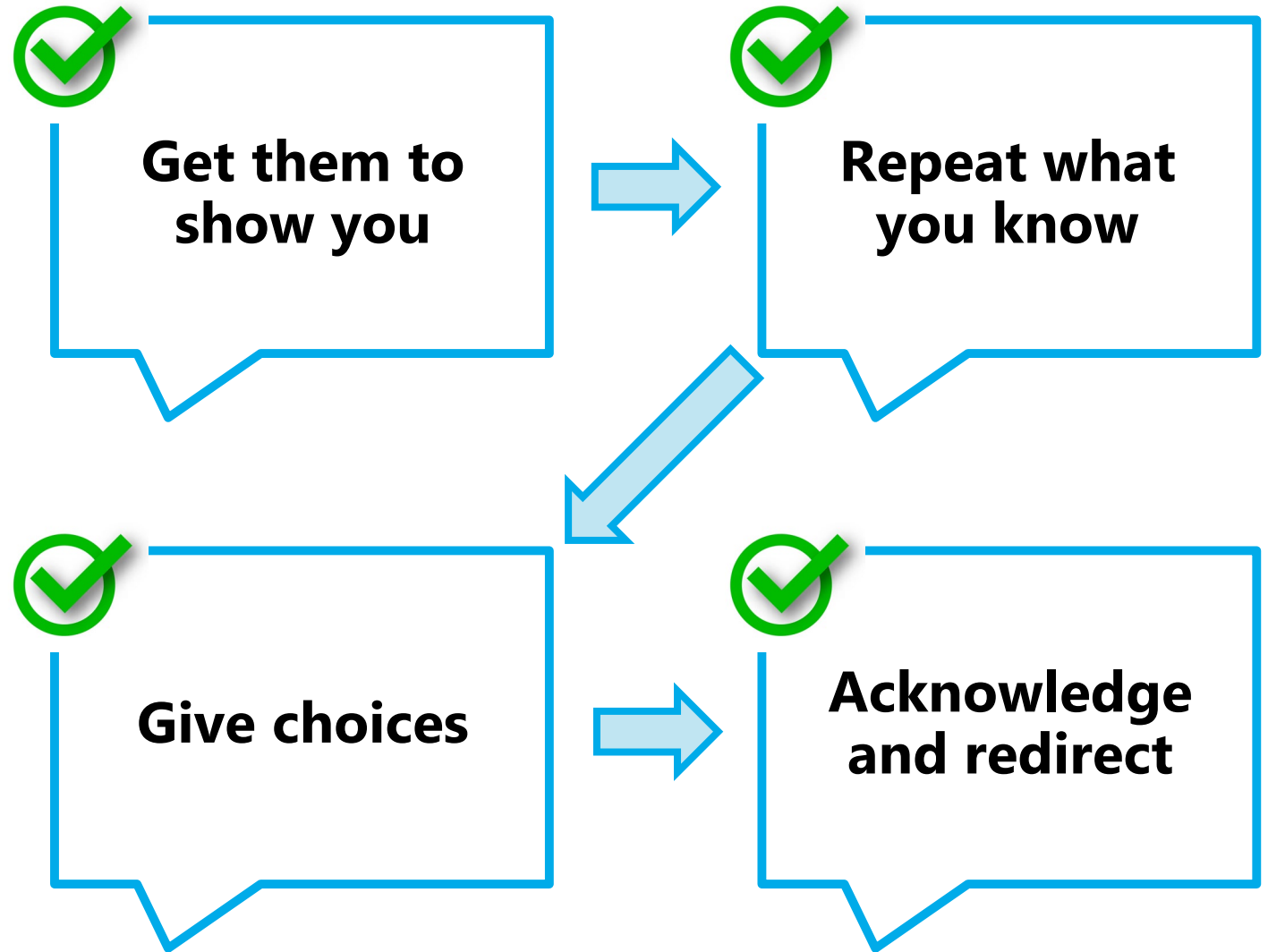
"I know a little bit"



"I know a lot"

My goal is to provide you with strategies to apply when you have no idea what a child just said and reduce both your frustrations!

How to Respond When You Have No Idea What a Child Just Said.





Get them to show you

- Let the child finish what they are saying. Don't cut them off.
- Then respond: "*Hmmmm, show me.*" (You can extend your hand so they can take you over to what they are talking about.)
- "*Point to it.*" or "*I wonder if you can go get it.*"



**Repeat what
you know**

It does not matter what the word is- if there were any words at all that you were able to understand, start by repeating those words and pause.

- This gives the child an opportunity to simplify what they were saying and expand on only the word you understand.
- This helps give context which makes speech easier to understand.



Let's Practice



**Repeat what
you know**



**How could
you respond?**



Give choices

Acknowledge this is hard and provide two choices of what you **think** they are talking about.

- *"Let's figure this out together, do you want ____ or ____?"*



Let's Practice



Give choices



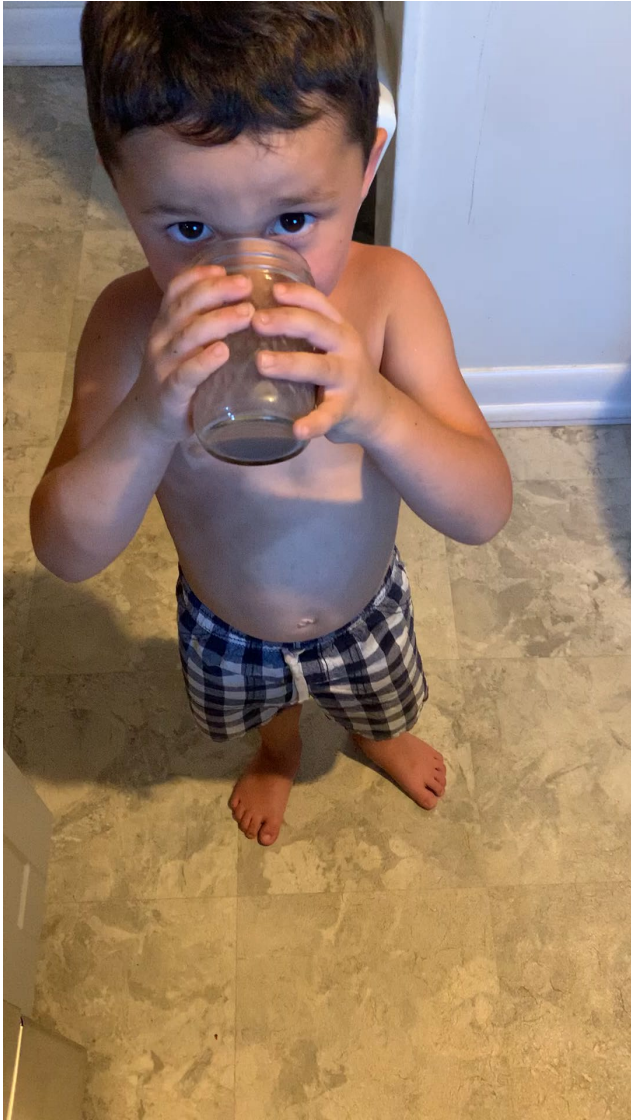
**How could
you respond?**



Acknowledge and redirect

When all else fails, acknowledge this is hard for both of you.

- Respond: *"I'm not sure what you are telling me. I'm sorry. I hope we can figure it out soon. Let's get snack ready together."*



Let's Practice



**Acknowledge
and redirect**



**How could
you respond?**

DON'TS

When you have **no clue what a child just said...**

Keep asking them to repeat themselves the same way: "*What?*"
"*What?*" "*What?*"
"*What?*"

Pretend you understand and just move on



Keep asking them
to repeat
themselves the
same way: "What?"
"What?" "What?"
"What?"

Chances are, they are just going to keep repeating themselves, getting you no closer to understanding them than you were before.

This will increase frustration.

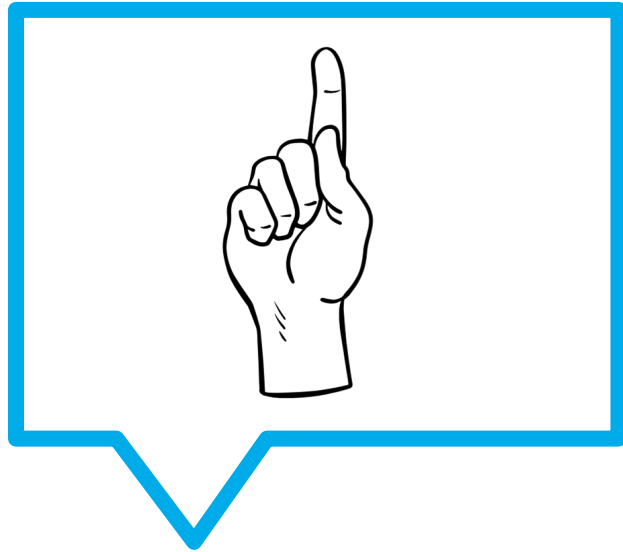


Pretend you understand and just move on

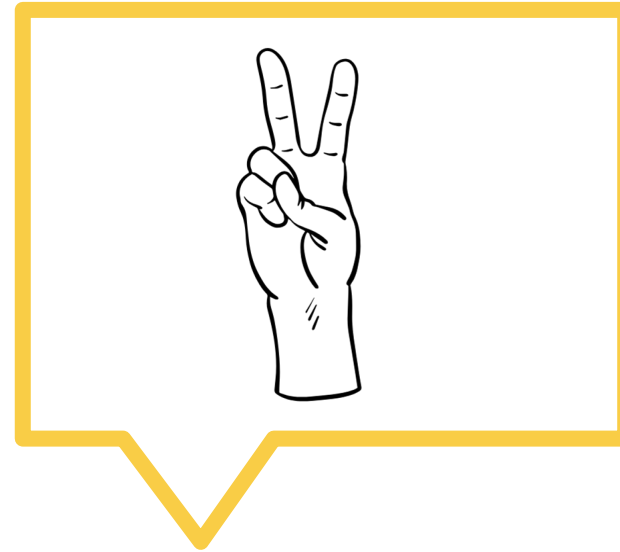
The child says, "ugdakibflkndkjd" and we say, *"Yep, yep, that's right, I know."*

They are saying something. We could be agreeing with something we don't really want to agree to.

Do Researchers Know What Causes a Speech Sound Disorder?



***"As early as
2 years old"***



***"Can't have concerns
until after 4"***

Not really....

Organic Speech Sound Disorders

- Hearing loss
- Motor planning disorder
- Muscle weakness
- Cleft palate or other structural differences

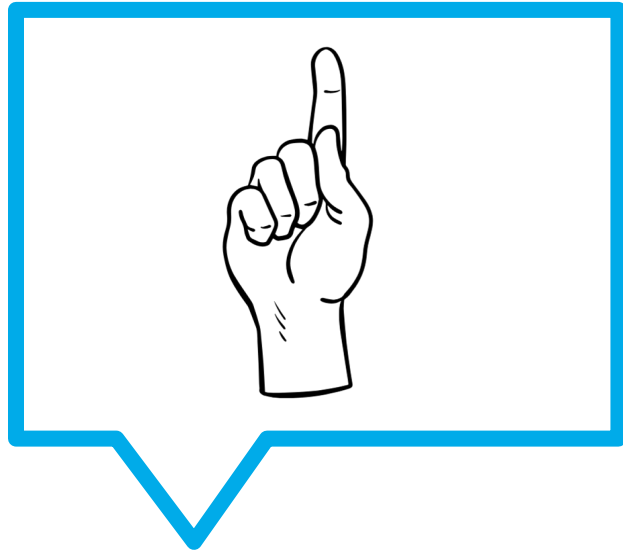
Functional Speech Sound Disorders

- No known cause

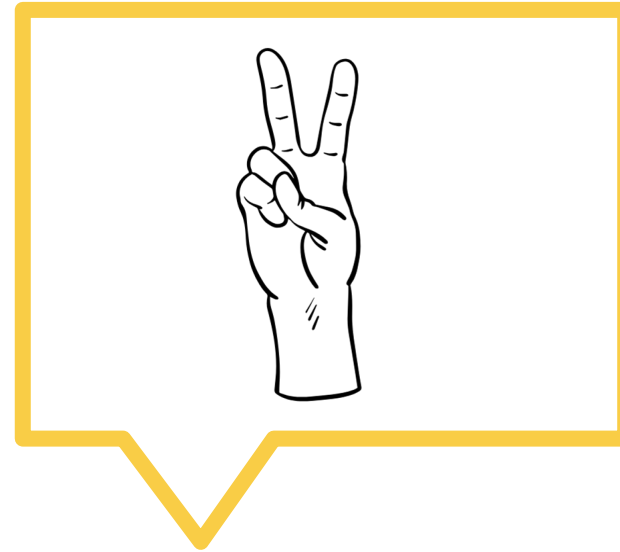
(Most common but there are risk factors)



When Should I be Concerned About my Child's **Speech**?



"YES"



"NO"

2 YEARS OLD

- Not saying /m, p, b, h, w/ correctly in most words most of the time
- Initial sounds are omitted
- You don't understand them pretty much at all

3 YEARS OLD

- Not saying /k, g, f, t, d, n/ correctly in most words most of the time
- Final sounds left off
- You only understand half of what they say

4 YEARS OLD

- Not saying /k/ and /g/, /s/ or /s/ blends correctly in most words most of the time
- Any sounds with air coming out is stopped
- Only understanding little more than half of what they say

You Don't Have to Wait and See

REFER AND SEE!

Local Infants & Toddlers Programs: Single Point of Entry

The earlier the better.

When an infant or toddler is suspected of having a developmental delay, exhibits atypical behavior, or has been diagnosed with a special health care need, he or she may be referred to the local Infants and Toddlers Program by a parent, health or education provider, child care or social service provider, or a staff person from the NICU or hospital, just to name a few. Referrals to the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program can be made for children ages birth to 36 months who reside in Maryland.

Submit a referral [online](#).

Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program

- Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program (birth to 3) Overview

Directory List

- Local Infants & Toddlers Programs: Single Point of Entry
- Local Infants & Toddlers Program Directors
- Local Preschool Special Education Coordinators

THANK YOU!



Included with your training

Bridging Child Development's
Handbook for Early Educators:
**Empowering
Voices**
Supporting Children
with Speech Delays

Kelly Goldberg, M.S., CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Early Intervention Specialist

The image shows the cover of the 'Empowering Voices' handbook and several resource cards. One card is titled 'SPEECH SOUND DEVELOPMENT BY AGE' and lists sounds for ages 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Another card is titled 'How Much Should I Understand?' and discusses the importance of context in understanding speech. A third card is titled '2 Simplify' and offers strategies for simplifying language for children with speech delays. A 'Pro Tip' card suggests using objects to help with sound production.

AGE	SOUNDS A CHILD SHOULD USE
2 years old	p b m n h d
3 years old	p b m n h d
4 years old	p b m n h d
5 years old	p b m n h d
6 years old	p b m n h d

30+ pages of resources at your fingertips, forever!

BCD's Teacher Tea Weekly



Week 1: Upcoming Trainings

Week 2: Hot Take

Week 3: Steal This Strategy

Week 4: Teachers Ask, I Answer

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