

What is Apraxia ?

An Explanation for Families and Caregivers

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- Apraxia is short for Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)
 - Childhood apraxia of speech is a motor speech disorder that makes it difficult for children to learn to talk
 - Concerns about apraxia typically arise when a toddler's first spoken words are not developing as expected
 - A speech-language pathologist (SLP) with specialized training in motor speech disorders assesses, diagnoses, and treats apraxia
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- Children with apraxia generally have a good understanding of language and know what they want to say
 - They have difficulty, however, planning and sequencing the complex movements necessary to produce intelligible speech (this is why CAS is referred to as a motor planning disorder)
 - CAS is a wiring problem; it's as though the brain says 'speak' but the mouth doesn't respond
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- There is no specific age when CAS can be diagnosed; it can be diagnosed when the child can attempt verbal imitation to participate in a dynamic motor speech evaluation; until then, a working diagnosis of suspected childhood apraxia of speech (sCAS) may be used by the speech-language pathologist
 - Apraxia is not something children outgrow
 - Speech therapy based on the principles of motor learning is necessary for children with apraxia to make progress

For more information, go to www.Apraxia-Kids.org