What are Expressive Language Skills?

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What are Expressive Language skills? Expressive language skills can be defined as the skills necessary to form thoughts and express them using appropriate word and grammar combinations. This may also include gesturing and facial expressions, especially in early childhood. Children who experience difficulty with expressive language skills may be delayed in speaking, avoid speaking in long sentences, and have a smaller vocabulary than other children their age. In conversation, a child with expressive language difficulties may struggle to recall certain words that they want to use and use an ambiguous term, like "stuff" or "thing", instead of a specific word or phrase.

At school, a child with expressive language difficulties may appear as though he or she does not understand class content due to difficulties in communicating the material. It is important to remember that children with expressive language deficits do not necessarily have difficulty with comprehension, but do struggle with organizing their thoughts into complex sentences.

Research indicates that a large number of young children who struggle with expressive language do not spontaneously improve with time. For this reason, there are a few interventions geared toward young children who experience difficulty with expressive language (e.g., Parent based language intervention for 2-year-old children with specific expressive language delay: a randomised controlled trial).

Assessing expressive language skills is often done using tests like the [Expressive Vocabulary Test-Second Edition](#) (EVT-2), the [Oral Expression test within the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – Third Edition](#) (WIAT-3), and the [Picture Naming test within the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence – Fourth Edition](#) (WPPSI-IV). These particular tests require the child to label pictures with an appropriate word after being provided with a prompt by the tester. Additional tests of expressive language skill include the tests of verbal comprehension within the [Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Fourth Edition](#) (WISC-IV) and the [Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Fourth Edition](#) (WAIS-IV). These tests require the child to explain relationships between words or vocabulary definitions in response to specific questions or prompts. Speech and language evaluations conducted by speech therapists are often informative about expressive language concerns and may be requested as a result of psychological testing.

For More Information on Expressive Language, Please Visit the Following Websites:

[Spoken Language Disorders](#): This website provides a plethora of information regarding spoken language disorders. It has a detailed overview of different types of language disorders, signs/symptoms, causes, and explains screening and comprehensive assessments for children with spoken language disorders.

[10 Activities to Develop Expressive Language](#): This website discusses ten different activities a parent can do with their child to elicit expressive language, and help them talk more.

[Learning Disabilities in Expressive Language](): This website explains the characteristics of Expressive Language Disorder, treatment options, myths about the disorder, and assessments for analyzing the disorder.

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