

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICE

SPEECH SOUND DEVELOPMENT

SOUND	Sound is usually established	
	In 50% children	In 90% of children
	by:	
Common Vowels	1 ½ to 2 years	3 years
p b m t d n w	1 ½ to 2 years	3 years
k g f h y	2½ to 3 years	4 years
ng s	2½ to 3 years	5 years
l	3 to 3½ years	6 years
sh ch j z v	3½ to 4½ years	6 years
r	4½ to 5 years	7 years
th as in "thin"	4½ to 5 years	7 years
th as in "the"	4½ to 5 years	7 years
z as in "treasure"	4½ to 5 years	7 years

Consonants are first used by themselves at the beginning of a word and later at the end or in the middle of words, for example "n" would usually appear first at the beginning of words like "no", later at the end of words like "gone" and finally in the middle of words like "dinner". Some children can make sounds much earlier than in the table above but there is no need to worry unless the child is having difficulty beyond the ages shown.

Once the use of single consonants is well established and used confidently, children begin to put them into groups (blends or clusters) at the beginning of words, e.g. blue, cry, frog. It will take longer for these sounds to appear at the ends of words or in the middle. The use of blends may begin as early as 3½ but it may be another 3 or 4 years before all possible blends are used accurately.

The Development of Consonant Blends

Sound Blends	Sound is usually established	
	In 50% children	In 90% of children
	by:	
Used at the beginning of words		
bl cl fl gl pl kw br cr dr fr gr pr tr	4 to 4½ years	7 to 7½ years
Used at the end of words		
ks ls ms ps ts vs	4 to 4½ years	7 to 7½ years
Used at the beginning or end of words		
sp sm sn sk sl sw st	5 years	8 years
Used at beginning or in middle of words		
str skr spl thr shr	5½ years plus	8 ½ years