

May is Better Speech and Hearing Month | CPD

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May is Better Speech and Hearing Month, and professionals at Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities say that early intervention is key to helping at-risk children develop vital communication skills.

The power of early intervention can be seen locally in the CPD's Up to 3 program, which provides early intervention services to children in Cache, Box Elder and Rich counties. This program is part of the federally mandated early intervention program and provide not only speech-language therapy, but also occupational and physical therapy, education, parent training, nutrition and care-coordination services.

"One aspect in which early intervention is extremely important is in the evaluation and diagnosis of children who have an autism spectrum disorder," said Vicki Simonsmeier, speech-language pathologist and URLEND faculty member. "Again, families are fortunate that here locally, these services can be obtained here at the CPD. Once a correct diagnosis is made, families can get the early intervention that is so necessary for their child to be able to reach their full academic and social potential."

Simonsmeier said if speech-language services are provided early, often children will not require services once they are enrolled in elementary school. If left untreated however, speech-language problems may have a negative impact on academic skills like reading, spelling, written language and social interactions. The goal of all early intervention is to alleviate or minimize the impact of these problems on a child's academic, home and social life.

For more information, visit <https://identifythesigns.org/>.