

BabyGym[®] and speech development

Submitted by Charlotte Gouws

Zachary Burt our blessing from Christ started speaking later than other kids in his crèche' and we were concerned as my father stuttered till the age of 18 and my younger brother still stutters till this day, he is now 23 years of age.

Zachary started speaking but his vocabulary was not good and he struggled to express himself. This frustrated him and at times caused tantrums because we could not understand him. Over the months he was making progress, albeit rather slowly.

My mother in law knew Charlotte Gouws, BabyGym Instructor in Durbanville Hills, and she advised that we approach Charlotte to discuss Zachary's speech delay. Zachary was at ease with Charlotte from the very first session and so the journey began. She taught us fun games and exercises that wake up the parts of the brain and muscles, which are needed for clear speech.

Charlotte explained how important repetition is and so we played the games, practiced the sounds, and exercised the muscles. Every week we followed the same routine with new exercises and games.

We continued our sessions with Charlotte and BabyGym and Zachary's speech improved considerably. We are now able to have conversations with Zachary and he is becoming wittier by the day. On our way to school one morning I asked him to do Charlotte's exercises as she requested and he replied: "I am not by Charlotte now". I could only laugh and thank God and BabyGym that Zachary's speech had improved so much.

Our time at BabyGym was very insightful and helpful to both Zachary and us as parents. We are still committed to developing his speech further with the help of a speech therapist at Zachary's crèche. The speech therapist has remarked that his speech muscles are developed well and that only small tweaks are necessary for good articulation and pronunciations.

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We are thankful that we enrolled Zachary and invested our time in BabyGym as it has not only developed Zachary's speech but it has also benefitted our bond and relationship with him.

Love the Burt Family

