

## ***Is Your Son a Boy of Few Words?***

The following three checklists reflect different spheres of communication that shape social development. These checklists are not a substitute for psychological tests and are intended only to help you sort out your concerns. For simplicity's sake, each checklist is limited to twelve questions. In general, if you find yourself checking more than a few items on any list, there is a strong likelihood that the boy in question could benefit from some family or school intervention to shore up his communication and related social skills.

### **Has Poor Communication Become a Liability for My Son's Social and Emotional Development?**

- Does he become uneasy when asked opinions or thought-provoking questions?
- Does he dread "opportunities" for self-expression?
- Does he use anger to deflect personal inquiries?
- Does he communicate noticeably less than peers during group interaction?
- Does he actively avoid having to speak in front of others?
- Does he speak so softly his voice is inaudible or sounds monotone?
- Is his nonverbal communication (i.e., gestures and expression) out of sync with his words?
- Is he embarrassed about his feelings, even within the safety of parent-child communication?
- Does he consistently opt for expressing himself physically vs. verbally?
- Does he avoid eye contact?
- Does he have to be in the right mood to communicate?
- Does he attribute his communication difficulties to being "stupid"?

## **Are My Son's Communication Challenges Adversely Affecting Family Life?**

- Are family gatherings punctuated by uncomfortable silences?
- Do sibling rivalries stem from miscommunication?
- Do you avoid bringing up some subjects you feel he "can't handle"?
- Does he consistently "miss the point"?
- Do you feel "tuned out" even when discussing something important?
- Are you intimidated by his anger?
- Are people comfortable being with each other only when the TV is on?
- Do you avoid asking important questions so you don't have to deal with the "grief"?
- Is he indifferent to the thoughts and feelings of other family members?
- Does he isolate himself from other family members?
- Is basic social conversation a struggle for him?
- Do family conversations unnecessarily become arguments?

## **Does He Lack the Communication Skills Needed to Succeed Socially and Academically in School?**

- Does he avoid answering questions in class?
- Does he have reading or comprehension difficulties?
- Does he isolate himself from other students?
- Does he ever act out aggressively to compensate for poor verbal problem-solving skills?
- Could untreated or undertreated ADHD be interfering with his learning and social interaction?
- Is he often ostracized by other students because he "doesn't get it"?
- Do his expressive language skills inadequately reflect his intelligence?
- Does he always seem out of synch with peers?
- Does he rarely say anything meaningful about his school day?
- Does he typically give short or one-word answers on oral or written assignments?
- Does he take hours to complete homework requiring expressive writing skills?
- Does he hesitate to assert himself even when he knows he should say something?