My Child has Trouble Understanding: A Receptive Language Disorder

- **What is a “Receptive Language” Disorder?**
  - This means your child has trouble understanding what is said to him.
  - It is also called a “central auditory processing disorder” or “auditory comprehension deficit”.
  - In most cases, a child with a receptive language problem also has an expressive language disorder, which means he has trouble using spoken language.
  - It is estimated that 3-5% of children have trouble understanding or expressing themselves, or both.
  - The cause is unexplained in most cases.

- **What is “Understanding”?**
  - Understanding involves listening to someone talk and attaching meaning to what you hear.
  - Listening and understanding are critical for success with learning, reading, writing, and speaking well.
  - Being able to listen and understand are skills that develops gradually but there are things we can do to help the process.

- **Warning signs that your child may have trouble understanding include:**
  - Not answering when spoken to.
  - Being easily distracted.
  - Being over-active/high activity level.
  - Being confused.
  - Being "shy.”
  - Having trouble following directions in the proper order or only finishing part of what you asked him to do. Following routine, repetitive directions may be fine.
  - Repeating back words or sentences right away or at a later time.
  - Inappropriate or off-topic answers to questions.
  - Repeating a question back first and then answering it.
  - Using “memorized” sentences (e.g., “To infinite and beyond!”)

- **When your child is having difficulty understanding, you need to get his hearing checked. This can be done by an Audiologist or an Ear, Nose, and Throat Doctor (ENT).**

Reference: