

# SPEAKABLE

A magazine with news and articles from our clinic about communication and confidence

#1 Issue | July-September 2020



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### **Welcome to our first issue!**

We are glad to release this new communication channel to strengthen our bonds with clients and followers. This first issue is the fulfilment of more than five years of hard work and continuous evolution.

We are constantly creating content to provide our followers with innovations in the areas of speech and language pathology, confidence coaching, communication and related areas. From now on, every school term will have an issue of Speakable Magazine, compiling articles, informing about news happening at Speakable and preparing parents and students for the next school term.

We hope that you enjoy our first issue! Please feel free to share your reading experience and to give your feedback for us to be better and better! We appreciate your ongoing support!

#### Binh Doan

Managing Editor and Executive Director of Speakable

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### NEWS: SPEAKABLE IN TELEHEALTH AND FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS



Communication knows no boundaries 🥞

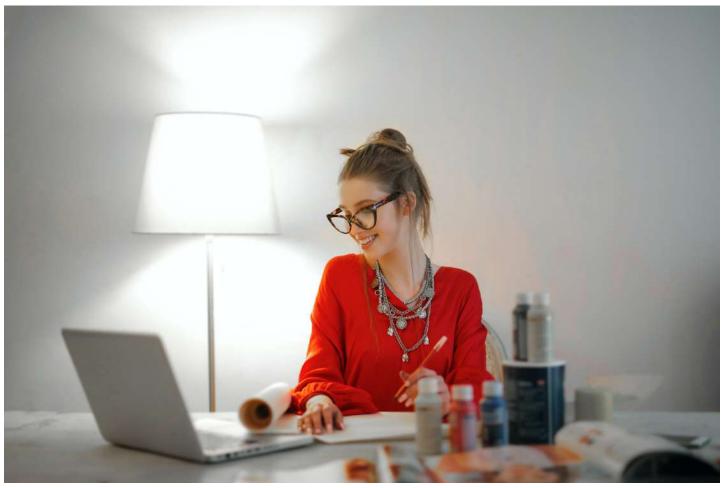
Thanks so much for your ongoing support. Our speech pathology services are now delivered via:

In-person sessions: Eastern & Northern Sydney

Online sessions: Australia & International

#speaking #reading #confidence #speakable

### TIPS FOR A PRODUCTIVE HOME OFFICE

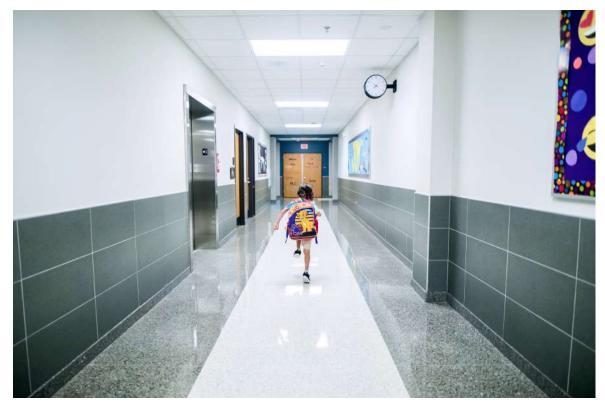


COVID-19 pandemics has affected the lives of the majority of population around the world, demanding from families, students and workers to adapt to different conditions while isolated in their homes. In order to make your work from home more comfortable and productive, Speakable has listed some useful tips below:

- Effective workspace. There is the temptation to simply work laying on your bed, we know, but it can affect your comfort and health. A desk and a chair are crucial for the body to rest while working. If necessary, a standing desk could be prepared for you to work standing up. Lighting, sound isolation, temperature and other environmental factors must be analysed for you to work completely comfortable.
- Ambience. Productivity is crucial, but comfort must follow the working time. Personal items such as photos, decorative objects and even natural or artificial plants to make a pleasant environment.
- Schedule self-control. When you are at home, there are many stimuli for pauses and distractions, as well as for working before or after your official working hours. You are working from home, but it is still your home. Avoid working extra hours (including lunch break) and keep focused during work hours.
- Boundaries. Be prepared for spouse, children, friends, neighbours and distant relatives trying to talk to you, play with you, eat and drink with you. Resist it, your home office is still a workspace and you're still within your working hours. Ensure they understand it, so they won't hinder your productivity.
- Health and safety. Use frequent pauses to stretch your body, rest your eyes, walk a little, eat your
  lunch or snacks. Pay attention to power cords, cups nearby electronic devices and any other
  hazard you might suffer. Eat healthy food, resist to the temptation of eating endless at home or
  eating too much unhealthy food.

Many supporting services can help you on a remote basis, such as Speakable with Speech and Language Pathology therapies. In addition, we can provide Accent Reduction sessions, Parental Coaching, Tutoring classes and other services. Get in contact with us in order to know how we can provide you support.

### RETURNING TO SCHOOL IN TERM 3 AMIDST THE PANDEMICS



Australian Education is about to begin its Term 3, even facing the menace of COVID-19. However, contagion rates are presenting optimistic figures which inspire the Australian population to get prepared for a gradual return to regular activities. While it doesn't happen, each Australian state is managing their schools with different strategies. For example, NSW schools are expected to remain open, but each child would be requested to attend only one day a week, on a specific day in order to avoid crowding the schools.

When sending your child to school for this specific day, don't forget to remind your child about hygiene practices and other ways to combat contagion potential:

- Teach and practice hand washing. Children might not be patient to wash their hands the proper way, but times like this demand special attention. Use fun videos and songs to engage them, if necessary, such as this one.
- Explain the effectiveness of hand sanitisers but outline the higher effectiveness of hand washing.
- Many children are caring and love shaking hands, hugging and kissing. It might be frustrating for them to receive less caring demonstrations than the usual, so it's the parents' responsibility to make them understand the need to avoid it for a while.
- Now it's even more important to instruct children to leave shoes and bags by the door. These
  objects have more contact to the ground and have increased potential of bringing germs inside
  home.
- As well as leaving shoes and bags by the door, it's highly preferable for children to change
  clothes, removing their uniforms which might have touched an infected surface. If possible, these
  uniforms should be put immediately to be washed, so germs are automatically removed from
  home.
- Remember the groups of risk. Grandparents and relatives with respiratory issues or other health
  conditions must be kept away from the touch of children. As mentioned before, children are very
  fond of physical demonstrations of care such as hugging and kissing, but they might be carrying
  viruses without knowing it. For the health of beloved ones, children must be cautious.
- Make them spend energy outdoors. Put them to play in the backyard, to ride bikes and scooters,
  or make walks with parents in a specific moment of the day. Exercising the body increases
  children's immune systems and collaborate to their mental health. However, avoid highlytrafficked places.
- Keep the house clean, especially entrances and areas of heavy use.
- Masks are for infected people. It avoids coughs, sneezes and yawns from infected people to spread the virus in the air. Excessive demand for masks might make people who really need them be without it due to unnecessary shortage of product.

In case you want to know more about Term 3 at schools, search in your state's Secretary of Education. Here in New South Wales, you can see more information by clicking here. Speech and language pathology therapies can be maintained through telepractice, just click here to know how Speakable can continue its service to your children.

And while your children are at home studying, click over this checklist that Speakable made to help you.

HOMESCHOOLING CHECKLISTS®		Speakable Because you can. Speaking • Reading • Confidence					
HOMESCHOOL SUPPLIES	STUDY STATION	ASSIGNM	ENT CHART				
3-Ring Binders Coloured Pencils Construction Paper Copy Paper Craft Supplies Crayons Dry Erase Markers Erase Toppers File Folders Glue Markers Note Cards Paintbrushes Pens Pencils Post-It Notes Rulers Scissors Sharpies Sketch Books Spiral Notebooks Staples Stickers Tape Watercolour Paints	Use backrest of chair Chair allows clearance behind knees Hips and knees at 90-degree or greater angle Feet flat on floor or on footrest Arms relaxed at sides Monitor about an arm's length away Top of monitor screen at or below eye level Forearms, wrists and hands in straight line Mouse and keyboard at same height Elbows close to body Ample clearance for knees and legs Reduced glare and shadows Use adjustable document holder if necessary Soft touch when keying and holding mouse Change body posture frequently Take frequent breaks Stretch periodically Give eyes a visual break	Chore for the Family  Language Artes Independent Reading Writing Workshop Reading Writing Workshop Spelling Granneur Vocabulary Handwriting Practice (2x a week) Typing Practice (2x a week) Math  Human Sciences Australian History Reading History Video Anckent, Mediesal and Modern Ages (seegraphy Science	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri

### COMMUNICATION AS A STRATEGY TO COMBAT SOCIAL ISOLATION



Children worldwide are facing an unexpected phenomenon which is restructuring everyone's perspectives about life, work, studies, science and faith. According to a study named "Children's voices in the time of COVID-19", produced by World Vision organisation (which you can read and download by clicking here), children are anxious and fearful because of an invisible presence which is threatening their family and friends. However, they feel stronger while supported by parents and determined to fight this menace with their available resources and capabilities. It's crucial for parents to strengthen their bonds with children in order to prevent negative feelings and keep them busy with activities which might make them forget about being isolated.

One cute and emotional initiative is the return of pen pal practice, having one or more friends to send handwritten letters talking about their days, feelings and expectations. Children can keep practising their writing skills by making those letters, so even Grammar and Vocabulary can become a practical activity while making the letters. In aged care facilities across Australia, some elders have become pen pals of children, receiving letters full of caring and cuteness, so they can dedicate part of the day reading about children's daily activities and can even have some nostalgic memories from their own childhood. Children also practice their reading skills by receiving letters from their elder pen pals.

Another use of communication as a way to fight the feeling of loneliness is by playing Scattergories, or homebrewed adaptions of the official game. The game is very engaging and can be played by distance if the players are connected in a chatroom such as Skype, Zoom, Google Hangouts and other options. This game is primarily a powerful tool for improving vocabulary, quick thinking and writing, but specific school subjects could be addressed with some small changes. Watch this video to understand how easy it is to be played, and search for more examples of people playing Scattergories in YouTube, the playing sessions can be hilarious!

### GAMING AND COMMUNICATING DURING SOCIAL ISOLATION



With more time at home, many people are trying to have fun by playing videogames. Parents should be aware of the negative effects of the excessive use of electronic games over children, but actually online games can be very important tools for communication and socialisation, with touching stories in the internet about strong friendships formed from these online games.

By offering new social environments for players to handle, their social skills are stimulated because they need to form alliances, negotiate and persuade, while the real world sometimes puts these players in positions where they are not comfortable expressing themselves. There are times when people with disabilities can overcome physical and communication barriers in MMORPG environments to become memorable people, such as the remarkable story of Mats, who in the World of Warcraft was Lord Ibelin Redmoore, able to run and talk even with very limiting conditions in real live. You can read about his story by clicking here.

There are many games which can help people communicate and socialise, overcoming the sometimes-annoying conditions from the social isolation. We have separated some good ideas for children and adults to engage in with family and friends:

- Minecraft: An breakthrough in online gaming, Minecraft has become the second most played
  game in Australia and allows its players to build structures in almost any shape then can imagine,
  complete varied missions and interact with other characters in the game. It is a powerful tool for
  the development of imagination and organisation skills.
- League of Legends, Overwatch, World of Warcraft: These games are based on forming groups
  and alliances to complete missions and defeat evil enemies to keep peace in chaotic worlds. Not
  only communication and strategy are necessary to survive in those games, but also social skills
  and ethical principles.
- Kahoot!: This platform is extremely flexible to be used in a classroom, a therapy session and among relatives and friends. Many different approaches can be made to explore this game's functionalities for several rules and needs from players.
- Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes: This game is highly engaging and thrilling, where two players have access to different sets of information but, together, they must deactivate a bomb within the time. One player can interact with the virtual bomb, while the other one has the access to the bomb deactivating manual. One player provides instructions to deactivate each module of the bomb, while the other player must interpret, follow instructions and describe the bomb's characteristics. Watch a funny session of friends playing this game to understand how it works in this video.

As parents, you have many opportunities to enter your children's worlds and have fun with them while you keep them practising communication and social skills. The more you engage in their interests, the more trust and transparency the family emanates among its members.

### NEWS: SPEAKABLE EXPANDS ITS SERVICES TO THE NORTH SHORE



With consolidated services provided in the Eastern Suburbs, Speakable is now expandind its services to Sydney's Northern Shore. We will keep working children aged 02-18 years, their parents and teachers in helping them with: Articulation, Language comprehension, Language expression, Dyslexia, ADHD, Autism, Memory, Reading, Spelling, Writing, Learning difficulties, COGMED Working Memory Training, and Coaching for Parents.

If you or someone you know is in need of any of these services, we can help solve them, just get in contact with us!

# WINTER ACTIVITIES TO STIMULATE COMMUNICATION



This week Australia started its Winter season, with low temperatures, snow in some places and many themed activities to conduct with children regarding speech and language! We have curated some great ideas for you as an SLP, educator, parent or carer to plan with your children and have much fun while stimulates children's speech and language!

- Speech Igloos: An igloo is drawn in a large paper, then the children cut some rectangular pieces of paper and write words related to themes selected by the conductor (as examples, we can mention adjectives, animals, words with double 'o' etc.). Then, the 'paper blocks' are glued over the igloo. For children, it's a lot of fun to compare their igloos among one another to identify different words and learn by the difference. This great idea was created by from Crazy Speech World.
- Snowman Description: Snowmen are very common images to depict winter, so why not explore it for the fun of kids? At first, children are instructed to draw their snowmen and decorate them with anything they like to draw (carrot nose, scarf, gloves at the end of sticks etc.). Then, children should write all words which are related to their snowmen, both generic things such as 'cold' and 'big' and the ones which show their customisations ('blue scarf', 'tongue out' etc.). Speech Time Fun has given this awesome idea!
- Winter Bucket List: Bucket lists are always a great tool to engage children on discussing and
  giving ideas. There are many activities to avoid the cold of winter, or at least to take advantage of
  it such as building snowmen or skiing! Teachers Pay Teachers have given a suggestion of winter
  bucket list which you could see clicking here.

What other winter activities do you have with your children to stimulate their communication and engagement during cold days of winter?

#### SPEAKING CLEARLY WITH A MASK



We're all adapting to so many new circumstances from the COVID-19 that sometimes we might not even notice how it has affected our daily activities, the way we work and study, the new dynamics of enjoying our friends and loved ones. Have you paid attention to how you have been speaking in situations where the use of mask is mandatory?

A mask affects not only how the sound will come out of our mouths, but also hinders the usual lip reading that we tend to expect while talking face to face. In order to help you handle conversations where the mask is inevitable, we have picked some useful tips described below. The four ones written here are from Roger Love, an important voice coach from USA who trains actors, singers and other influential people.

- Speak louder: since masks block most of the air flow, the voice is affected and loses its clarity and reach. Diaphragmatic breathing is also very important, because when the stomach is coming back in, extra air coming out creates the expected volume.
- Exaggerate your lip use: some masks might not allow you to open your mouth too much due to the risk of exposing the nose when the jaw pushes the mask down. Therefore, exaggerate the way you move your lips to speak the consonants, pushing the lips out (more forward).
- Raise your voice pitch: higher frequencies tend to pass through masks more easily, so it's
  recommended to raise the pitch of your voice, just enough to be better heard.
- Eyes and eyebrows are important communication tools: while speaking face to face, try to emphasise emotional details by using your eyes and eyebrows, making this detail from your nonverbal language become an advantage to better communicate. You don't need to become an eyebrow dancer, but it helps!

This video was made by Jay Miller, from Voice & Speech. Jay gives some other interesting tips!

#### HAVING FUN DURING WINTER

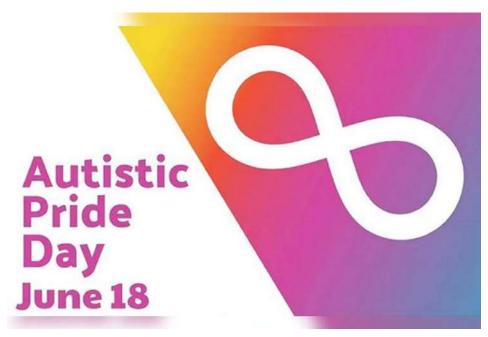


The days are getting colder and colder as Winter comes. In addition to that, in July the school holidays will start, giving the children two weeks to enjoy. We have already given some tips on Winter activities to stimulate language and communication, so this article will present some ideas to keep children active during Winter:

- Cardboard houses. If you can find a big cardboard box, explore children's imagination by
  encouraging them to decorate it as a house, or a rocket, or a TV where they are the attraction
  within it. Cardboard boxes always ensure fun among children!
- Indoor scavenger hunt. You can create a 'treasure' in a box and hide it, then scatter paper hints across the house of how to find it. Then, just observe the magic happening with engaged and excited children trying to find their prize!
- Winter sports. If you have the proper gear, sports such as skiing, ice skating or sledding can keep children active and warm against the cold Winter. Or, at least, go for a walk, a jog or short run with them.
- Party time. If you turn music on, scatter some glow sticks in the room and turn off the lights, children will immediately enter 'enthusiasm mode' and will prove that fun needs no effort!
- Wii or Xbox Kinect. Videogames are very engaging, so it's a very good idea to explore videogames which keep children physically active such as the ones shown in this video.

Do you have other ideas for activities to do during Winter?

#### **AUTISTIC PRIDE DAY**



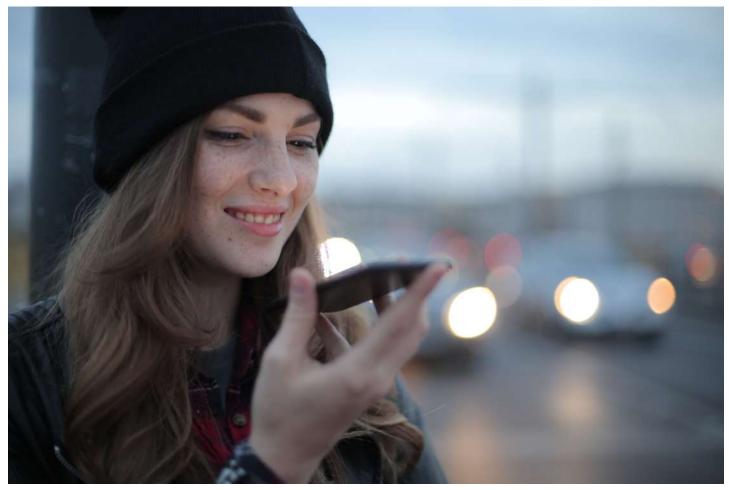
Last month, on June 18th, was celebrated the Autistic Pride Day, to increase not only the awareness about people within the Autism Spectrum Disorder, but also to ensure people with autism must be respected and recognised in their own neurodiversity traits.

This date was established by the British institution named Aspies for Freedom, which conducts many other initiatives towards the inclusion and celebration of people within the ASD.

Watch the testimonial from the youtuber Stimptown about being proud of his own autistic condition in this video.

If you or any of your family members or friends is diagnosed within the Autism Spectrum Disorder, use not only June 18th but all days of the year being proud of yourself! Speakable wishes a happy and successful life and will be there for you with our services, our supportive communication and our dedicated team!

### MOBILE APPS FOR PRONUNCIATION



A constant fear among many ESL (English as Second Language) people, the mistakes in pronunciation of English words are a crucial element to allow a fluid and confident conversation with native speakers of English language. Language schools can provide many solutions, as well as Speech and Language Pathology centres for more delicate challenges. No matter the need, a way of reinforcing lessons and practice can be acquired through technology. There are mobile apps for the most different needs and interests, including English pronunciation. We have listed seven of the most indicated mobile apps for pronunciation below.

- ELSA Speak: Based on American English, this app has a speech recognition technology which indicates whether you pronounced common English words and phrases correctly. It provides tips and feedback regarding the right way of moving lips and tongue to reach the expected sounds. Available for Android and iOS.
- English Pronunciation: This app starts by providing a set of guidelines with pictures regarding how to move tongue, lips and jaw to pronounce the expected sound, and then tests the user's ability to replicate them. It includes a separate area com videos explaining phonetics in a clear way for the user. Available for Android.
- FluentU: Probably the most fun and engaging app in this list, FluentU explores many videos with very clear and current speaking, showing daily situations, celebrities in interviews, TV commercials and other interesting occasions to listen to and reproduce the words and phrases. Whenever the user is unsure of a heard word or phrase, a simple tap on the screen reveals what was spoken and provides an image of it (when available), definition and useful examples. Available for Android and iOS.
- Learn English Daily: This app is equally focused on listening and speaking from native speakers' conversations, providing instructions of how to pronounce some word or phrase present in the conversation. Available for Android.
- Pronunroid: Through a sequence of fun guessing games, the user can practice and understand
  how a word should be pronounced, exploring the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The
  search feature allows the user to check how to pronounce specific words or phrases. Available for
  Android.
- Say It: Through an extremely innovative visual representation of the practiced word or phrase, the user is able to visualise the picture of the soundwave generate by the user when saying the word, allowing the user to compare it to the soundwave of how the word or phrase should be spoken.

  Available for Android and iOS.

• Sounds: This app has pronunciation charts for both American and British English with simple calibrations, helping people who wants or needs to speak in any of these variations. Most of the apps above already approach American and British English, but this app is easier to shift from one variation to the other. The premium version has a wide variety of extra features such as pronunciation quizzes, special word lists, videos and tips towards fluent speaking. Available for Android and iOS.

These mobile apps are able to provide an impressive help on pronunciation, but the support from specialists might be necessary, depending on the challenges faced by each individual. In case you feel you or someone in your family has pronunciation difficulties, please don't hesitate on contacting **Speakable** for a technical diagnosis of the experienced difficulties.

## NEWS: SPEAKABOO CARDS TO BE AVAILABLE IN TERM 3



Through years of experience in Speech and Language Pathology, our Executive Director Binh Doan decided to develop a new instrument to help Speakable's clients practice their communication skills during sessions. This instrument was named Speakaboo Cards, whose development and trial stages have now finished.

In the beginning of school term 3, this deck of cards will be available for download to be used either in digital format or in hard copy format, the way it might work best for the user. The Spalding Methodology is the basis of the idea, which Binh enriched with many more functionalities.

When the Speakaboo Cards are ready for download, a booklet will be provided as well, explaining how to use the cards and for which situations they might work best. Wait for more news about the Speakaboo Cards in Speakable's Blog and Social Media pages!

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

This was the first issue of our new Speakable Magazine, which compiled the articles and relevant news about communication, confidence and our clinic from 2020's school term 2.

Our next issue will be released in the middle of October, celebrating not only our second magazine but also Speakable's sixth year of operations! In case you are interested in following Speakable's social media profiles and blog, please check the list below:

Speakable Blog: www.speakable.com.au/blog

Facebook Page: @SpeakableOz

Twitter Page: @speakableoz

LinkedIn Page: @speakable-speech-language
Instagram Page: @speakable\_speech\_pathology

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