

**8 TIPS FOR CONVERSATION SKILLS**

*Great tips to increase confidence when having conversations*

**NEW PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SPEECH  
PATHOLOGISTS IN AUSTRALIA**

*Speech Pathology Australia updated its standards for more effective services and treatments*

# Speakable

A magazine with news and articles  
about communication and confidence

**PRESCHOOLER COMMUNICATION STIMULATION AT HOME**

*Many techniques to help a preschooling child develop communication skills*

**AUTISM AND WORKPLACE ARE A SUCCESSFUL COMBINATION**

*There are unique traits in people with autism that can benefit companies*

The Speakable Team

**#2 Issue | October-December 2020**

# Celebrating another milestone!

Hello achievers,

We are super excited to release our second magazine for our clients and followers. 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.

The year of 2020 was very challenging for all of us, demanding patience, creativity and resilience. Speakable learned how to provide telehealth services and now is perfectly able to provide both in-person and remote sessions for the best outcomes of our clients. We appreciate your ongoing support and you can always count on us!

Our new issue is full of cutting-edge articles to inspire parents, students, speech pathologists and other health specialists.

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



## Binh Doan

### Managing Editor and Executive Director of Speakable

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## NEWS: Speakable becomes a contributor to WWF cause



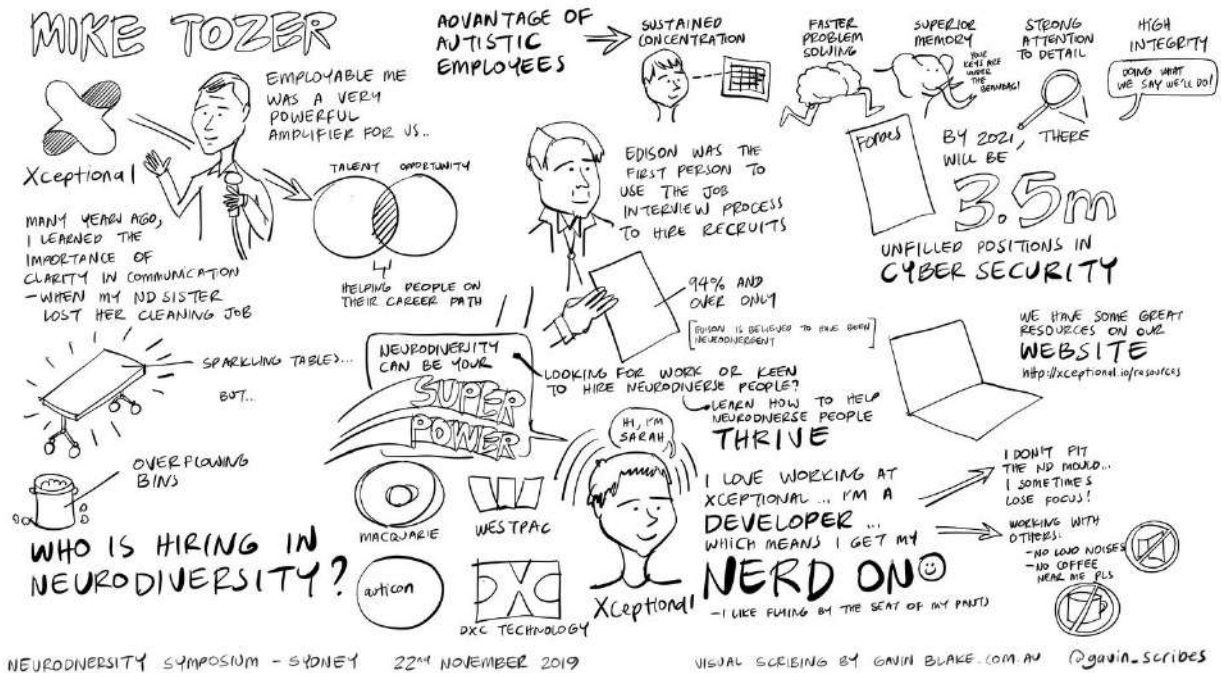
Speakable is a speech and language pathology clinic with a strong drive to sustainable practices. Throughout its years of operations, many not-for-profit organisations have been the target of its contribution, in the form of funding, spreading the word and in internal operations at the clinic.

In 2020, we take another step by becoming a permanent contributor to World Wildlife Fund (WWF), a famous and reliable foundation dedicated to restoring wildlife environments and stop illegal animal trading. Watch the organisation's manifesto in video which explains some of the initiatives undertaken by WWF and that Speakable will be from now on help to happen effectively by [clicking here](#).

Currently, the organisation's main efforts are aimed at the protection of pangolins, the most trafficked mammal in the world. Watch a fun proposal in [this link](#)!

Therefore, the more Speakable grows, the more it will be able to make a difference in the world in many ways, with the valuable support of its team and clients! Thank you!

# Autism and workplace are a successful combination



These days, more and more workplaces adopt techniques to increase efficiency and productivity in their processes. It affects not only the clients' satisfaction levels, but also the employees' opportunities for development and recognition. However, sometimes such efficiency techniques ignore highly talented professionals who might need unconventional adjustments in order to provide the best of their services. An example of that is the set of needed adjustments to accommodate an employee with autism.

Autism can be perceived in a wide spectrum of traits, which demands from employers an individual analysis of how to accommodate such employee in their predefined structure and processes. Nevertheless, an effort to have neurodiverse employees such as people within the autism spectrum can generate unbelievable benefits to the organisation's efficiency and productivity! Here are some reasons for that, according to [Mike Tozer](#):

## Autism and workplace are a successful combination

- Sustained concentration and deep focus on any activity or issue, helping them have higher resistance against distractions at work.
- Problem-solving is a very common skill among people with autism.
- Visual recall generates an impressive memory.
- The majority of them are extremely attentive to detail and to identify patterns and trends.
- Their integrity and loyalty to the organisation is always very high.

With such characteristics, it is easy to understand why people with autism can create unprecedented benefits to an employer, even when comparing to the necessary investment for reasonable adjustments.

That's why special therapies and activities to develop skills are so crucial for children with autism: the more they stimulate their talents and minimise the effects of their autistic challenges, the more included they can feel in the workforce when reaching adulthood.

Contact Speakable if you want to know therapies and programs to develop skills according to individual needs of neurodiverse children and adults.

## Preschooler communication stimulation at home



Between two and five years old, crucial developmental milestones are reached by most children, which will influence the rest of their lives regarding school performance, entering the workforce, having a satisfying social life and self-realisation. Therefore, each and every effort from parents and carers over children in such age must be provided to keep the development on track. Sometimes, psychological or neurological factors might hinder the expected development, but healthcare and education professionals are always available to plan and implement extra activities to maintain stimulation.

However, the most important stimulation happens at home with family members, the child's main models for the rest of their lives. Because of this essential role, simple but meaningful activities can be conducted by parents, carers and other influential people in order to help the child's communication stimulation, such as:

- Wording jokes and riddles. Since language and vocabulary are still under development, word games to analyse existing words, such as rhyming, and even making up words is something preschoolers might enjoy a lot.
- Storytelling is a must to help with vocabulary acquisition, but also to stimulate the child's imagination. You can take turns telling a story and then listening to a story retold by the child, or completely made up from him/her. Watch the following video where a French girl is making up a story:
- Music is always an enriching experience. When at home or in the car, songs with an interesting vocabulary to be acquired can be played, and even the child and people around could sing them to stimulate articulation and pronunciation.
- Reading aloud together can make a remarkable influence over the child's learning curve, by following the way other people talk and use intonation. It's crucial for preschooler literacy.
- Explore the child's interests when it's an opportune moment. For example, if the child likes animals, a simple bird nearby can become the topic of a rich and engaging conversation which will use a vast vocabulary and the child's confidence to communicate about it.

As you can see, not much effort is needed to stimulate a preschooler's communication skills – besides the rational and logical reasons for such activities, all of them are wonderful opportunities to strengthen family and friendship bonds with children. The more you spend time with children, the more both sides can share support, happiness and love.



## Value of networking: how often do you give referrals?



Stop for ten seconds and try to remember the professions of your family members, then your closest friends, then your not-so-close friends, then some of your acquaintances. There is an impressive variety of professions, right? Even with no social media-based platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, it's possible to consult some of these contacts when some specific support is needed. That's networking happening live. Have you ever thought of how valuable are your contacts for the needs of other contacts?

For example, a friend of yours wants to have guitar classes, and you have a relative who teaches guitar. An in-law who's looking for a good cardiologist, and your neighbour works in that specialty.

## Value of networking: how often do you give referrals?

Now, focus on the allied health professional aspect. A child is experiencing a concerning decrease in school grades and the parents talk to the school staff, who understands the need for a certain number of tests to conclude what could be happening. It could be an issue related to mental health such as anxiety or depression, a detected level of dyslexia or ADHD, a difficulty from the child to react to their own internal feelings such as hunger, tiredness, and many other possibilities. When they know what's happening, a therapy program can be developed to minimise or maybe eliminate (when possible) such negative effects, but the professionals who conducted the tests and the parents don't know any therapist.

Even before all of this being conducted, you could, as a friend of the parents, have mentioned some contacts you have, enabling the parents to have a list of possible helpers even before knowing they would need such professionals.

**Speakable Team** is a strong supporter of networking among its contacts for better outcomes to its clients, it's always a pleasure to meet new professionals! How many contacts have you shared today?

## Learning difficulties and disengagement at class



Classes tend to be standardised teaching and learning processes which are expected to generate fruitful outcomes to most, if not all, students. However, students are not simply empty bags to be filled with information – they have their own cultural, social and personal contexts, which sometimes might avoid them to perform at class in their best capabilities.

The sooner these difficulties are detected in specific students, the sooner the school can implement early interventions for their assistance. Parents can also identify such traits even at home with school homework, house chores or at playing. If you notice one or more of the characteristics below, try to pay more attention to identify if there is a real reason for concern:

## Learning difficulties and disengagement at class

- always being the last one still working on a timed assignment
- behavioural issues including aggression, violence, or social withdrawal
- being the class clown, being defiant, or pretending to be “too cool” to care how they’re doing in school
- cutting class, or skipping school entirely
- daydreaming
- difficulty copying from the board
- difficulty following directions – especially if the student is hearing the information for the first time or there are several steps to remember
- erratic or no attendance
- failing numerous tests despite having studied
- forgetting that there was a home assignment due at all
- hanging back during group projects, sitting in the back row, or doing everything in his/ her power to avoid being called on during class
- intelligence being obvious in person, but not reflected on his/her report card
- lack of interest in school and/or stated intention to leave
- low literacy or numeracy/poor attainment
- making frequent trips to the bathroom or asking to go to the nurse when faced with stressful assignments or tests
- negative interactions with peers
- refusal to participate in challenging activities
- serious pre-test anxiety
- significant change in behaviour, attitude or performance
- trouble remembering assignments and doing them correctly
- very messy handwriting

## Learning difficulties and disengagement at class

There are so many more possible signs of learning difficulties or the potential to disengage, so don't stay limited to this list above. When one or more signs are detected, a deeper and broader observation should be conducted to understand which possible reason could be cause this. There could be easily identifiable ones such as the need of glasses, language barriers from an immigrant, family under problems such as a divorce, and other reasons. Maybe, they could be very subtle ones such as anxiety, dyslexia, autistic traits, recent negative experience from bullying, financial problem in the family, stigma for any minority condition, health-related conditions such as dehydration, hunger or constipation, and many other possibilities.

Whenever such concerning traits are identified, parents and teachers must immediately discuss about strategies to minimise these signs, or even to seek for allied healthcare to help with possible mental health or learning disorders.

Speakable is a speech and language pathology clinic with specialists ready to help students achieve their best when their barriers might be SLP-based. Just get in contact with us and check how we could help your child to perform at his/her best at class and in life!

## NEWS: Speakable celebrates its 6th anniversary!



*Speakable members and friends celebrated our 6th anniversary*

Since 2014, Speakable has been providing speech and language pathology treatment services, and helping many individuals achieve a more fruitful and confident life from childhood to adulthood. We are extremely proud of the number of people we have met during these years. They have become customers or team members, and supported us in various moments towards success and fulfilment.

On September 27th, a beautiful Sunday, we celebrated our 6th year of operations in front of an amazing view, at Pier One Sydney Harbour! We enjoyed each other's company, celebrated our achievements in the last 12 months. The event also strengthened our team bonding.

We are very happy for this celebration and we reinforce our commitment to keep our services the most satisfying and engaging to our clients and among our team! Let the next 12 months be even better for our 7th anniversary of operations!

Binh Doan and the Speakable team

## Having Literacy Support from Mother Nature



The first years of a child are crucial to understand that child's potential to learn and develop intellectual, motor, cognitive, social skills and many other characteristics, so it is reasonable that parents and carers are very attentive when selecting which schools and childcare centres their children will attend.

Each school and centre offer a set of techniques and initiatives in a unique way, though most of them are highly concentrated in the indoor activities from a classroom. However, **outdoor activities** are extremely engaging for children and early literacy, which makes educational institutions with such activities much more engaging and beneficial for children.

## Having Literacy Support from Mother Nature

Natural phenomena can amaze children, since a very trivial ladybug walking on the grass, to dry leaves falling from trees to feeling the first raindrops before getting back to class. Children are natural scientists and experimentalists, observing every phenomenon around them and trying to understand and even replicate (you know, when they throw the same object to the ground, they might be just trying to check if the sound of hitting the ground is always the same).

When they are learning how to read and write, their interest for natural phenomena will be awesome driving forces to develop such language skills, so they are able to learn more about nature and talk about it with friends and family. Therefore, parents and carers should recognise the great value of outdoor activities for children's curiosity, imagination and engagement.

[Click here to watch this video](#) from [Natural Start Alliance](#) about more benefits from nature-based early childhood education



## New professional standards for speech pathologists in Australia



The **Speech Pathology Week 2020** is reaching its end on August 29th, after a whole week of debates, rewards and presentation of innovations for the improvement of speech and language pathologists' practices, which will cause very positive outcomes to people receiving SLP therapy sessions.

The most important event during the Week was the release of the new *Professional Standards for Speech Pathologist in Australia*, which will take effect from January 1st 2021 on. The new Standards present the following highlights:

- The increased effort from Speech Pathology Australia to support services and initiatives which respect and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islanders' languages and cultures. Traditional English will not be used to suppress local languages and dialects, cherishing communities' traditions while speech and language pathologies are treated with professionalism and respect.
- The expected skills and knowledge for a Speech and Language Pathologist to have in order to provide an effective and standardised service.
- The new organisation of role and responsibilities of Speech and Language Pathologists, divided in Domains, Standards and Elements for better identification of areas to develop the SLPs' capabilities.
- The importance in using the new Standards along with relevant legislation, Speech Pathology Australia policies and the Speech Pathology Australia Code of Ethics.

If you want to read the entire document, you can simply [click here](#) and visit the page from Speech Pathology Australia which explains the entirety of the Standards.

All the Speakable Team is studying the new Standards to be in line with them even before 2021, just contact us to see how we can help you solve any speech and language pathology needs!

# Tips for HSC Exams



Students in Year 12 are under constant pressure in their search for the next step in their academic path. The many options to be assumed in their university lives might be overwhelming at times, so it's crucial to not let negative thoughts and perspectives affect the students' mental health. That's the number one focus. Alongside with this focus to not let negative thoughts affect students, there are practical actions to be undertaken that will be very useful for Year 12 and important events such as HSC and ATAR.

Though HSC and ATAR come from the same set of data (students' performance), HSC will reveal an individual mark and ATAR will provide a ranked position of that student among all the other ones in the state. Therefore, achieving a high mark at HSC will automatically ensure a high position in the ATAR, which will be analysed by Universities during admission process. One very important detail is that 50% of the final HSC mark for each subject is taken from a student's assessment mark, which only generates more pressure over high schoolers.

# Tips for HSC Exams

In order to help students who intend to achieve high scores in HSC and ATAR, we have separated some helpful tips below:

- **Balanced performance:** It's very important to divide the effort and attention to all subjects, not only the ones which the student likes most. After all, the sum of all subjects' marks will provide the HSC, so each subject is equally important.
- **Discipline:** High schoolers are teenagers, who desire fun and as much social interactions as possible. However, a self-control and discipline will be necessary to keep focused in good marks and genuine effort for learning subjects which will be necessary for the University.
- **Goal and target setting:** Achieving high HSC and high ATAR should never be anyone's intent, because it's an empty and potentially frustrating thing to strive for. Instead, the student should establish a goal such as 'being approved in University ABCDEF' and/or 'starting VWXYZ course'. From that objective, the target is then determined, such as 'achieving 90 or more in ATAR'. When goal and target are set, the energy can be directed and the feeling of satisfaction for each small victory will be potentialized.
- **Learning techniques:** Sometimes, students fail in their studies when prioritising quantity of hours instead of quality of hours. Memorisation and other learning techniques must be improved in order to achieve consistent results, and not only a celebration of Y hours reading a book.
- **Subject selection:** Since the top 10 units count towards the student's HSC mark, it is recommended to select 10 or 11 units in order to avoid unnecessary workload in such a crucial school Year. As well, selecting the ones which the student feels more comfortable and interested in learning will certainly work as an incentive to study and reach better marks.
- **Syllabus awareness:** When the student knows the units' performance descriptors in advance, it's much easier to concentrate efforts to the achievement of each of them, which will ensure high Bands in HSC, which will also ensure a high ATAR.

## Tips for HSC Exams

- **Time management:** With so many activities to perform every week, time management becomes an essential skill for students aiming towards high HSC and ATAR. An effective control of time to study each necessary lesson, to produce texts and other school activities, and even to relax, will combat stress and anxiety.

Speakable Team wishes amazingly high scores in HSC and ATAR to all our clients! In case parents or carers detect learning difficulties in their children, we are here to provide specialised support for everyone!

# 8 Tips for Conversation Skills



Having a happy life includes many factors such as achievements in personal and professional aspects, being proud of our own appearance and personal traits, and having remarkable social interactions with friends, workmates, classmates, familiars and love partners. For this last factor, it's very important to have in mind that social interactions are based on two-way communication and reciprocity. Therefore, the better you are with **conversation skills**, the better tend to be your social interactions and the potential of having a happy life.

We have captured the eight great tips from [Jeff Callahan](#) and put below in a summarised way:

- **Being Approachable:** Starting a conversation with empathetic questions such as 'How are you?', 'Are you OK?', 'Are you concerned?' or anything that demonstrates your ability to notice that the person might need someone to talk and support.

## 8 Tips for Conversation Skills

- **Eye Contact:** It's important to remember that not all cultures focus on keeping eye contact as a respectful manner between hierarchical positions, or between men and women, or even with someone with autistic traits. However, in cultures where it's accepted, make sure you show with your eyes that you are connected to the person in the conversation.
- **The Iceberg Effect:** Everyone has a limited number of topics that is really of their interest and knowledge. However, knowing a little about a lot will help establish an interesting conversation with anybody. The more content you consume (TV, radio, books, internet articles etc.), the higher the chances of being an interesting person to have a conversation.
- **Enthusiasm is Contagious:** Many people tend to adapt their 'energy level' to the person who's conducting the conversation. If the leading talker is flat-toned, low-energy, everyone talking to this person will tend to assume the same profile, which might make these people bored. When you show high levels of energy and enthusiasm, people tend to turn to the same manner, making them think how you energised them and how great it was during the conversation.
- **Orbit The Difficult Topic:** Sometimes, the topic at the conversation is not within your real knowledge. However, you can orbit that topic with related topics, things that you can talk about and don't allow you feel and look lost at the conversation. For example, people are talking about modern urban Architecture, but you're not an architect. However, you can talk about the feeling specific building generate to you, you can ask about the other people's original interest in knowing more about Architecture, you can mention some news or historical people related to Architecture. When you use the correct bit of related topic, you can not only be considered inside the conversation, but you could even lead the conversation through your perspectives.

## 8 Tips for Conversation Skills

- **Interrupting and Returning The Ball:** Sometimes, a person says something that you might feel the need to add some comment, either expanding or contrasting what is being said. Try not to 'break the flow' of another person, but if you do, you can always return the conversation lead to that person by saying 'Sorry, you were saying XYZ', or something similar. Therefore, you add your comment and demonstrate respect for the person you had to interrupt.
- **Celebrate Shared Things:** Sometimes, you will say something that will perfectly fit into someone else's life. The same favourite movie, a shared hobby, a similar past experience... When you notice that spark in the eyes of a person meaning 'Me too!', 'Same as me!' etc., pull that person to the conversation to share some words. That person will feel highly regarded and will be excited to talk about something they like and know.
- **Daily Practice:** Never forget, good conversations might happen anytime with anyone, so be prepared for them every day! You can consider every small talk as an opportunity to strengthen bonds, make new contacts and becoming memorable in someone's day.

Jeff Callahan made a video commenting on these eight tips, you may watch by [clicking here!](#)



## Case Management for Enhanced Results



School years can represent the opportunity for both positive and negative experiences, depending on many factors such as the relationship of the child with the family, classmates, teachers and even the school administration and staff. Sometimes, learning difficulties from neurodiversity, different social or cultural background, or even some physical disability or mental health condition might hinder the child's performance at school, affecting not only future professional perspectives but self-confidence and social relationships. An extremely important professional called **Case Manager** can be there to analyse the situation and strategize solutions to minimise negative factors or even improve underperforming activities.

According to Rapp and Goscha (2004), there are some relevant principles of case management that ensure the quality of this service for children and their families:

## Case Management for Enhanced Results

- Case managers should deliver as much of the “help” or service as possible, rather than making referrals to multiple formal services.
- Work is in the community.
- Both individual and team case management works.
- Case managers have primary responsibility for a person's services.
- Caseload size should be small enough to allow for a relative high frequency of contact.
- Case management service should be time-unlimited, if necessary.
- People need access to familiar persons 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Case managers should foster choice.

[Open Training and Education Network \(OTEN\)](#) has provided a very interesting simulation of a meeting with all needed professionals to work in tandem with a case manager in order to provide efficient and supporting services to a child and family needing such services, just [click here](#) to watch it.

Speakable team is supported by our Case Manager Henrique Santos, who is always ready to help analyse and develop integrated solutions for our clients. In case you are interested in having our support, never hesitate in contacting us!

Rapp, C. A. & Goscha, R. J. (2004). The principles of effective case management of mental health services. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 27(4), 319-333.

## Experiencing a COVID-safe Christmas celebration



In two months, one of the most relevant holidays in the Western world will take place, but the pandemic represents a crucial factor to take in account when preparing for Christmas. We can see the world getting used to new social interaction rules and intensified hygiene procedures, just to make sure the virus is properly fought and finally eliminated.

In order to ensure you can have wonderful holidays free of COVID-19, there are some very important tips to follow:

- Prefer outdoor celebrations instead of indoor ones in order to avoid breathing the same air as other people potentially infected

## Experiencing a COVID-safe Christmas celebration

- If you are travelling to another part of Australia or are being visited by people from other parts of the country, keep yourself aware of the Susceptibility Index, developed to indicate areas where are more or less riskier to be infected. [Click here](#) to visit the website
- Though being among a large family for long hours of fun and caring feelings, time of exposure and quantity of people in the same place are two important factors to raise the chances of being infected
- Sanitary behaviour is essential, so you must not only comply with them but also encourage people around to do the same, such as wear masks, keep social distancing, wash hands and use sanitiser etc.
- There are some family members that, if you really love, you will have to block their attendance to the event. You should prohibit the presence of people with advanced age or with weak health conditions, because accepting them would represent the chances of getting them hospitalised or having more terrible fates. Also, avoid the presence of people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for an exam result regarding COVID-19, are demonstrating symptoms of this infection or were exposed to other people who had COVID-19

The Speakable team wishes you all a wonderful period of holidays among family, friends or just by yourself, enjoying as much as possible for the new year to come!

## NEWS: Holidays at Speakable



This is our last e-magazine issue of 2020, so we are reserving the articles and news from school term 4 for the 3rd issue to be released in the beginning of 2021. While you don't have access to the 3rd issue, you can keep yourself informed of our articles simply by following our blog as well as our social media profiles. The next page will list all of these profiles for you to choose the ones seem most interesting to conect to.

We will be operating until December 19th and we will be back in business on January 11th of 2021, providing all of our portfolio of services and also with many other news and innovations for the continuous improvement of our services and the satisfaction of our clients and team members.

The Speakable team wishes you wonderful holidays, may you finish 2020 with many remarkable accomplishments and start 2021 full of health and energy!

# Thank you for your time!

This was the second issue of our new Speakable Magazine, which compiled the articles and relevant news about communication, confidence and our clinic from 2020's school term 3.

Our next issue will be released in the beginning of 2021, so wait for next year's issue 3 with relevant and interesting information!

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](http://www.speakable.com.au/blog)

Facebook Page: [@SpeakableOz](https://www.facebook.com/SpeakableOz)

Twitter Page: [@speakableoz](https://twitter.com/speakableoz)

LinkedIn Page: [@speakable-speech-language](https://www.linkedin.com/company/speakable-speech-language)

Instagram Page: [@speakable\\_speech\\_pathology](https://www.instagram.com/speakable_speech_pathology)

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