

# Speakable

A magazine with news and articles about communication and confidence

## The gut-brain axis and your health

The brain must work in tandem with other body functions in order to ensure health and cognitive skills - discover how to take a good care of your brain and guts

## Tips for school's new year

2023 can start much more engaging and satisfactory when teachers receive support and get appropriately prepared - here are some tips of how to start the best way

Speakable Team

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# Speakable Magazine #11

Hello Speakable family,

2023 is here and we are excited to begin our 9th year at Speakable.

Last year, we were able to accomplish various milestones such as being a winner of Research and Development Awards at Acquisition International. Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

This year, we will continue to support our clients in person and online in both Australia and overseas. Providing mobile speech and language services to our local preschools, primary and high schools in Sydney is also crucial to us.

We're adding more members to the team, so that we can have more availability to meet your needs.

Our new year's mag contains cutting-edge articles to inspire and inform carers, parents, teachers, speech pathologists and other health professionals.

We hope that you enjoy this issue. Please feel free to share your reading experience with others and send us your feedback, so that we can continue to improve.

Because we can!

**Binh Doan**  
**Managing Editor and Executive Director of Speakable**

## Speakable Team



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# The gut-brain axis and your health



Have you ever heard the expression "gut feeling" or had "butterflies" in your stomach? The gut-brain axis, the physical and physiological communication network that links the brain and gut, can be used to explain these feelings. The organ in your body that has the highest number of immune cells is your gut. The neurological system of the gastrointestinal tract, the enteric nervous system, or ENS, is referred to as the "second brain."

This is due to the fact that it regulates a wide range of gastrointestinal processes, constantly exchanges information with the central nervous system, and is capable of acting independently of both. It also provides encouraging evidence that IBS, obesity, and mental health issues are all part of the present global illness epidemic. The gut-brain axis refers to this communication between the brain and intestine.

Here are a few considerations that can help us shape our gut flora for the greatest possible health, reduce discomfort, and manage lingering symptoms:

- **Diet:** Recent research has demonstrated that reducing dietary consumption of FODMAPs, or fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides, and polyols, might alter the gut microbiota and subsequently improve IBS symptoms and quality of life. Wheat, milk, onions, honey, processed foods and red meat are typical examples of FODMAP. Instead, adding fibre (wholegrains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds, with a concentration on foods high in fibre, like spinach), sauerkraut, yogurt, prebiotics and probiotics may have a good effect on the makeup of your gut flora.
- **Exercises:** The variety of gut bacteria can be enhanced and promoted by exercise. It can be used as a therapy to keep the equilibrium of the gut bacteria or to realign it, hence enhancing general health.

# The gut-brain axis and your health

- **Medications:** Avoid using antibiotics unless absolutely necessary and only as prescribed by a doctor since they can limit the variety of your microbiome.
- **Stress-reducing activities** There is evidence that persons who have gastrointestinal difficulties may benefit from psychotherapy or other stress-reduction approaches. They can improve the parasympathetic "rest and digest" response, lessen inflammation, and lower the sympathetic "fight or flight" response. The most common techniques are:
  - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, or CBT
  - Deep breathing
  - Guided Meditation
  - Mindfulness
  - Progressive Muscle Relaxation, or PMR
  - Yoga

By implementing one or more of these activities in your life, you will be taking care of a complex system that connects your brain and gut, achieving much more than a healthier body but improving your mental health for better thought-based skills and emotional balance.

# Speakable adds Applied Behavioural Analysis to its skillset



The Speakable team is proud to announce the addition of **Applied Behavioural Analysis**, or ABA, to its skillset. Through the use of reinforcement techniques, ABA is a sort of therapeutic intervention that can enhance social, communication, and learning skills.

Additionally to improving broad adaptive behaviours like social and learning skills, it can concentrate on the development of particular skills like fine motor coordination, cleanliness, and personal care. Autism behavioural therapy is another name for it, although it's only one of ABA's uses. In a number of contexts, such as schools, homes, and clinics, ABA is successful in treating both children and adults with psychological disorders. It has also been demonstrated that regular ABA therapy may greatly enhance positive abilities and behaviours and lessen the need for future special assistance. Programs for ABA therapy can assist:

- Enhance language and communication skills.
- Boost academic performance, social skills, memory, and focus.
- Lessen the frequency of behavioural issues.

As licenced behavioural psychologists, our team of experts creates and personally manages the programme. The ABA programme is tailored to the child's skills, requirements, interests, preferences, and family situation. The ABA programme begins with a thorough evaluation of the child's current preferences and skills in order to establish precise treatment objectives. After considering the kid with autism's age and degree of competence, treatment objectives are chosen. Goals can cover a variety of skill sets, including language and communication, social skills, self-care practises, play and leisure, motor skills, and academic and learning abilities.

If you want to know more about this new technique in our toolbox, contact us!



# Helping children have healthier meals



Let's talk about how you can ensure healthy eating habits to your children. You need a few strategies under your sleeve whether you're a stressed-out parent, a preschool teacher, or a childcare provider to encourage kids to eat well. Yes, it can be challenging to eat healthy because of the busy schedules of families and the accessibility of grab-and-go convenience foods. But with our tips below, you can include these ideas into your hectic routine:

- **Provide options.** Nobody likes being made to do anything, especially boisterous toddlers or older children who are trying to become independent. This idea also applies to the kitchen table. Even while it may not seem like much, giving kids the option between apple slices and celery with peanut butter provides them the independence they need while yet allowing you to maintain control over nutrition.
- **Let them make their own plates.** Another strategy to encourage independence in your kids and pique their interest in tasting new meals is to let them manage their own plate. If given the freedom to pick, most youngsters will be more eager to include nutritious items on their plates—though it could take a few tries.
- **Introduce gateway foods.** Naturally wary of unfamiliar things, children also tend to be wary of many nutritious meals. So what is the answer? Combine novel meals with nutritious choices that your youngster already enjoys. A kid learns what, when, and how much to eat throughout the first five years of life depending on their family, cultural customs, and attitudes.
- **Smarter snacking.** Snacks are a need for both children and adults, but it's critical to limit your intake. Children's snack portions should always be small. Additionally, you should attempt to avoid giving them snacks too soon before supper in order to preserve their appetite for the meal.

# Helping children have healthier meals

- **Give children a glimpse into the production of food.** If children are already interested in and introduced to nutritious food, they are more inclined to give it a try. Giving children the chance to visit a farm or a local farmer's market will pique their interest in foods like vegetables, grains, fruit, and dairy since they are inherently interested. Let children explore and locate all the varied forms and colours veggies and fruits grow in and decide which ones appear best to them.
- **While cooking, involve the kids.** If they helped prepare the food, children are more inclined to taste it. Measurement of ingredients, bowl stirring, and salad tossing are all excellent places to start. They will learn how whole dishes and complete meals come together as they carry out these straightforward chores, giving them a head start on making their own wholesome meals as they become older.
- **Avoid pushing it.** As we've already discussed, supporting choice is essential to promoting a healthy diet. It's doubtful that kids will enjoy every cuisine, even though introducing children to various foods and cooking techniques might help produce adventurous eaters. In reality, despite your best efforts, you could be dealing with a finicky eater.
- **Set a good example.** Children's environments, which include culture, the media, and their families, have a significant impact on them. Influence from parents is particularly significant. Healthy or disordered eating might result from parents' attitudes and behaviours towards food.

By using one or more of these strategies, you'll increase the chance of ensuring a healthier and healthier eating routine for your children. Also, read other articles we already made to inspire you about which meals and foods are healthier for your children:

- [November is Good Nutrition Month](#)
- [Lunchbox Tips for the Good Nutrition Month](#)
- [Nutrition as a factor for optimal learning](#)



# Teaching body language to children



When expressing their feelings, people employ more than just words. Children, however, don't always recognise that. There are things you can do to assist your child if they are having problems recognising social cues or body language in general:

- **Link movement with message:** Demonstrate to your youngster how varied body gestures may indicate a distinct and precise feeling. Put your hands on your hips while tapping your fingers and shrugging your shoulders. Describe the underlying meaning of each movement.
- **Give specific examples:** By seeing how people interact in real life and on television, you can bring the idea of body language to life. (You can even turn off the sound if you and a friend are viewing TV together.) Help your youngster recognise cues that reveal each person's emotional state. Inquire about the hints that suggested the person felt that way. Your youngster will have a verbal anchor to help them recall the visual signal if you use phrases like "The man's face was crimson" or "The girl's hands were clinched."

- **Play charades using body language:** Children can better understand the relationship between the two when emotions are expressed through body language. Make it into a family game and ask everyone to participate. Create index cards with various emotions on them (one per card). These include emotions like joy, sorrow, rage, fatigue, and so on. Draw a card and act out the emotion as you go, while the rest of the group attempts to identify what it is as you go.
- **Avoid being overly literal:** Teachers who have "had enough" may cross their arms. Or perhaps they're just not that warm. A student who is disinterested in the talk could be clasping his hands behind his neck. He may also be stretching. Tell your child that gestures and body language alone don't always express the full story. To fully understand what is being said, your child must take into account both the words and the tone of voice.

You may help your child with social skills in a variety of ways. You may view a video that explains how TV watching can teach your child social skills. Additionally, look at advice on teaching your child to read facial expressions, comprehend personal space, and detect subtle voice-tone changes. In case you detect these strategies are not enough to help your child understand body language, feel free to contact us for professional support!

# Signs of Apraxia and its treatment



Apraxia is also referred to as Dyspraxia or Child Apraxia of Speech (CAS). It is a motor speech disorder. The brain has difficulty communicating to the parts of the body that are used to produce speech, such as the lips, jaw and tongue. The causes of Apraxia are neurological in nature. However, in most cases, the definite cause of Apraxia is unknown. Apraxia impacts on the speaker's ability to coordinate and sequence their speech muscles.

The signs and symptoms of Apraxia can vary, however common features include

- unusual rhythm and inflections,
- producing syllables and words inconsistently (differently each time) and
- difficulty transitioning from one syllable to another.

The only way to treat Apraxia with consistency and effectiveness is through a formal treatment plan from a speech and language pathology specialist. Speakable, for example, employs the Nuffield Dyspraxia Programme for children aged 3-7 years, as well as the Rapid Syllable Transition Treatment (ReST).

1. **Nuffield Dyspraxia Programme:** Frequent and focused practice sessions (such as 3-4 times per week), at Speakable and at home, can increase the chances of success in therapy. Within the program, the Speech Pathologist builds on the child's strengths, such as the sounds and words they can already produce. For example, therapy may begin targeting syllables the child can produce, and in due course, build up to word combinations and sentences.
2. **Rapid Syllable Transition Treatment (ReST):** The ReST treatment uses non words to allow individuals to concentrate on their movements, and remove the impact of old words which already have errors and allows clinicians to make words specifically for each individual's needs.

By [contacting Speakable](#) you have already taken the first steps to help your child make progress with Apraxia. If your child is currently non-verbal due to Apraxia, do not shy away from using gestures, sign language, and visual cues. This will not hinder their speech development and can help reduce frustration when they are trying to communicate a message. Practice, practice, practice! Speak to your therapist to be advised on how you can incorporate therapy into every day activities.

# Tips to develop expressive writing



We still require great writing in today's age of 140-character tweets, Snapchat, and online vernacular. Writing clearly and concisely is crucial for more than just our social media presence. Expressive writing is necessary for many vocations, job applications, and academic achievement. Expressive writing, however, poses difficulties since it requires a variety of abilities. A group of abilities known as expressive writing involve both mental and mechanical tasks, such as organising words into phrases and paragraphs, as well as mental processes like idea generation and planning. There is a connection between these mechanical and mental tasks. One task's difficulty might have a negative impact on the entire process.

Due to issues including illegible handwriting, incomplete sentences, and syntax, grammar, and spelling problems, students with learning disorders are more prone than their peers to struggle with expressive writing.

Three strategies could be used to help the child minimise the effects of their learning challenges in expressive writing, explained below.

1. **Make the work seem like a process.** Prewriting, composing, and revising are the three fundamental components of expressive writing, and they must be clearly taught. Self-monitoring checklists may be used in a variety of ways to display writing as a process while working.
  - **POW+TREE:** (P) Pick an idea, (O) Organise notes, (W) Write and say more + (T) Topic sentence, (R) Reason, (E) Explanation, (E) Ending.
  - **COPS:** (C) Capitalization, (O) Overall Appearances, (P) Punctuation, (S) Spelling.
  - **SCOPE:** (S) Spelling, (C) Capitalization, (O) Order of Words, (P) Punctuation, (E) Express a complete thought



# Tips to develop expressive writing

2. **Explain each stage of the procedure.** Expressive writing skills for individuals with learning disabilities are improved through direct training. Task analysis, planned lectures, and choral response are examples of tactics used in the explicit educational approach.

1. Instruct students on writing and reading summary methods at each stage.
2. Encourage group writing projects.
3. Inform students about the purposes of writing.
4. Use of assistive technology should be promoted.
5. Write complicated sentences with your pupils.
6. Give educators the chance to pursue professional development.
7. To impart style, use effective writing as an example.

3. **Give feedback after each step.** For students with learning difficulties to succeed, they require feedback at every stage. Giving feedback through the end-of-task evaluation is insufficient. Students require active feedback at various points throughout each of the three writing steps (prewriting, composing, and revising).

If you notice your child is presenting difficulties in performing expressive writing, feel free to [contact Speakable](#) so you can have a professional assessment whether your child needs tutoring support or more complex speech and language treatment plan.

# Benefits of a Summer Holiday Study Plan



School is about to end! Then, what will your children do? Summer vacation evokes thoughts of happy times and relaxing days, but parents may have other plans. Children can't precisely switch their minds entirely off because they have to return to school in a few weeks. Similar to how stopping physical activity can result in a loss of fitness, stopping studying can result in a decline in intellectual ability.

Even if you don't have to enforce a tight study schedule throughout the summer, your young scholars will profit greatly from doing some homework, especially after school resumes. These advantages include the elements below.

- **Better knowledge and skills.** The summer is a great time for your child to review skills if they had trouble with them throughout the school year. To make the most of this time, enrol them in a tutoring, enrichment, or independent study program.
- **Possibilities for uninterrupted concentration.** Some kids may feel overwhelmed by school. If you belong to one of them, summer presents a wonderful chance to study without the interruptions of school. Reading, learning, and studying in peace and quiet at home is something your youngster may appreciate.
- **Evaluations of their learning.** The first few weeks back at school may be quite review-heavy since children frequently forget what they learn over the summer. Weekly reviews of fundamental knowledge and skills will keep everything fresh in their mind, ensuring that your kid will be at the top of the class when classes resume.
- **Practical opportunity to practise new skills.** Although there isn't always a lot of practise in the classroom, there is a lot of theory. Your child has lots of time throughout the summer to build, experiment, and explore. Establish a stimulating learning atmosphere where they may explore their interests at their own speed. That can entail making sure they have an abundance of art supplies, a laptop for writing, or creative building tools for creating brand-new worlds.

# Benefits of a Summer Holiday Study Plan

- **A chance to get ready for the new year.** The knowledge and lessons acquired in the previous school year are built upon in every subsequent school year. The summer is a great time to review the skills your child already possesses as well as to create the foundation for learning new ones. They should strengthen any areas of weakness immediately to ensure the stability of their foundation.

Over the summer, children may lose some of their math and reading skills, and when they return to school, they may even do worse on standardised exams. This means spending more time reviewing stuff and less time developing new concepts and abilities. Consider academics to be similar to physical activity or music: Both require practise to become proficient. Weeks off with no practise at all will inevitably result in skill loss. Even if they don't work for hours at a time the whole holiday, your kids will benefit from brushing up on the fundamentals by doing better when school returns and achieving higher levels of success.

Don't forget to read our tips on [how to create an effective Summer holiday study plan by clicking here!](#)



# Tips for school's new year



The back-to-school season is characterised by a wide range of feelings, including anxiety, tension, hope, anticipation, and nervousness. This has been especially true over the last two years, when educators all around the world have been dealing with a lot of unknowns. Do you need to master a new math curriculum that your state recently adopted? Did you hastily create name tags for your two new pupils so they wouldn't be left out after receiving them the morning of the first day of class? Maybe everything went smoothly? Here are some teacher advice for a successful back-to-school season, no matter your circumstance.

- **Spend some time getting to know your pupils.** Especially at the beginning of the year, teaching is hectic. Although developing connections with students is a crucial aspect of your profession, there isn't always time or enough hours in the day to accomplish it. It's a good idea to start small by conducting brief student check-ins when adopting daily SEL time. On the activities tab of your dashboard, this check-in gives you quick social emotional insight into the welfare of your pupils.
- **Be ready to teach in any setting.** Before last year, teaching full-time from home was an uncommon reality. Teachers are forced to rely on technology to complete their work when schools throughout the world close. More frequently than being in a classroom, teaching took place in kitchens, bedrooms, living rooms, and on patios. It was expected that you would make school as typical as you could given your circumstances and where you were at. In many places, this is still the case. The most recent piece of advice for teachers is to be adaptable.
- **Expect regression and gaps in learning.** This advice for teachers is not new. After the majority of children have been out of practice for a few months, teachers typically observe some regression at the beginning of the year. But on top of that, since COVID, learning has taken on a very different appearance, and owing to unconventional learning methods, kids may have certain learning gaps to close. The strain that comes with having to get pupils back up to grade level—and even above—is perhaps a little daunting.

# Tips for school's new year

- **Simple differentiation may be used to meet the requirements of all kids.** Trying to establish each student's level at the beginning of the year is a major task. Standardized testing, fluency tests, or level determination on your own may be used to start the year. It might be laborious to constantly differentiate for each lesson you teach once you have that data.
- **Do not forget to look for yourself.** You must take care of yourself in order to do your duties effectively and to care for your students. This instructor tip must be given. Take a stroll, solve a puzzle, place a takeout order from your preferred restaurant, or adopt a puppy... Remember to set aside some time every day for yourself, whatever that may be!

The Speakable team wishes an amazing holiday period for the teachers and may everyone starts the school new term in 2023 with their energies and motivation renewed! Below, check out three other posts we have prepared with tips for parents and children for the period of resuming classes!

- [Back to school: 6 tips](#)
- [Useful tips for a new school year](#)
- [Back-to-school tips for 2021](#)

# Thank you!

This was the eleventh issue of our new Speakable Magazine, which compiled the articles and relevant news about communication, confidence and our clinic from 2022's school term 4.

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)
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