

Speakable

Speakable  Because you can.
Speaking • Reading • Confidence

A magazine with news and
articles about communication
and confidence

Speakable adds the Hochman Method to its toolset

This innovative method can boost treatment
plans for specific needs. Know more about
this addition to Speakable!

Importance of observing your children's behaviour at school

Learn more how your
children's behaviour at
school might reveal
challenges and
opportunities

Speakable Team
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Speakable Magazine #13

Hello, Speakable family!

Mid-year is upon us, and we are delighted to share exciting updates from Speakable. We want to extend our heartfelt appreciation for your continued support, which has been vital to our growth and success.

As we move into the second half of the year, we are thrilled to announce the expansion of our services. In addition to our mobile speech and language services for preschools, primary schools, and high schools in Sydney, we are now offering two new programs: Math for primary students (online) provided by Wiserrkids, and Art Therapy, a creative outlet for individuals of all ages to express themselves, explore their emotions, and promote healing and personal growth.

Within this edition of our magazine, you will find articles that delve into various topics.

We encourage you to immerse yourself in this issue, gain valuable insights, and share your reading experience with others.

Thank you once again for being an integral part of the Speakable family. We are thrilled to embark on this next chapter together, as we expand our services and continue our mission of making a positive impact in the lives of those we serve.

Warm regards,

Binh Doan

Managing Editor and Executive Director of Speakable

Speakable Team



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Recognising speech and language difficulties in young children



Being a parent gives you the unique chance to watch your child grow from a helpless infant to an adult capable of building his or her own destiny and family.

Because we come from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, each parent has had a variety of experiences. It's also true that every child is special and utterly unique in their own way. A parent who only wants what's best for their child may experience worries, worry, and anxieties as a result of this uniqueness.

A child's learning curve for speech and language is also distinct and requires careful consideration because the earlier an issue is detected, the sooner it can be treated.

The first and most important step to take if you suspect your child is showing signs of speech or language difficulties is to refrain from comparing them to other children. Each child is different and may just have a varied learning curve; they are neither better or worse than other kids, as was previously noted. The second step is to go through the following checklist and see if your child exhibits any of the following traits:

- Your kid doesn't have any social interactions (anytime in infancy)
- Your child is unable to follow or comprehend what you are saying (starting at 1 year)
- Your child mispronounces the letters b, h, m, p, and w in words (1-2 years)
- Only a few sounds or words are said by your child (18 months to 2 years)
- Your child's words are not easily understood (18 months to 2 years)
- Your kid doesn't seem to be able to blend words well (starting at 2 years)
- Your kid seems to just know a few words (age 2-3 years)
- Your child uses the terms d, f, g, k, n, and t inappropriately (2-3 years)
- Even to close friends and family members, your child's speech is confusing (2-3 years)
- Your child does not ask for things in 2-3-word sentences (by 3 years)

Recognising speech and language difficulties in young children

The next step is to make an appointment with a speech and language pathologist so they can conduct a proper evaluation to validate your suspicions if you see any of these traits. Perhaps your child's temporary speech impairment is simply the result of other things. Perhaps the child needs to work on improving his or her speech and language skills as soon as feasible and with less stress than if they wait to seek out more support.

Speakable's highly skilled team will be able to conduct an assessment to uncover various communication challenges and assist in developing a plan on how to address them. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you believe your child needs an assessment or therapy.

Identifying and treating difficulties in Math



Around the world, a lot of parents have kids that struggle in math. This reality might be overwhelming in the absence of adequate resources or a strong support network. Children who detest math frequently lament that it is too tough or that they are not smart enough. Regrettably, this assumption has a negative effect on any child's ability to succeed in math.

We could point out 12 signs that a child is having relevant difficulties, as follows:

- **Makes negative comments about math.** When your child attempts to avoid math-related tasks and says things like "I hate math" or "I'm not good at math," it's usually an indication that they are having difficulty with the subject.
- **Gets anxious when doing math.** Your child becomes more apprehensive when it's time to do math, whether it be in class, on an exam, or when working on a homework assignment.
- **Grades that are higher in other subjects but lower in math.** Your child excels in every subject, with the exception of math, whether you hear this directly from a teacher or see it on their report card.
- **Difficulty linking mathematical families.** If your child cannot make the link between, for instance, $2+3=5$ and $5-3=2$, they may be having difficulty with math.
- **Time management issues.** Many people, especially adults, struggle with time management, so this warning sign may appear ambiguous. Keep an eye out to see if your child has any difficulties estimating time frames, following fixed schedules, or understanding analogue or digital clocks.
- **Difficulty translating mathematical ideas to practical situations.** Your child might understand mathematical principles but struggle to recognise how they relate to life outside of the classroom. For instance:
 1. calculating the number of days before their birthday
 2. figuring out how much something should cost and how much change they should receive in return
 3. calculating the appropriate volume of ingredients to use when assisting you in cooking

Identifying and treating difficulties in Math

- **Mental difficulty in math.** Although while it might be useful in the early years, your child may be having difficulty with math if they solve math problems by counting on their fingers. This is due to the fact that when kids get older, they'll run across higher numbers and more difficult equations that call for mental math skills, which finger counting can inhibit.
- **Does not look for other solutions to math problems.** Your child can become disheartened when working through a math problem and give up before considering - or attempting - another potential solution.
- **Trouble remembering and understanding simple math concepts.** Thinking numerically could be significantly impacted by memory. Your child struggles to recall and use basic math facts and ideas even though they have previously been taught to them.
- **Difficulty understanding complex mathematical facts and concepts.** A child's capacity to embed new mathematical abilities in a meaningful, long-lasting fashion will be constrained if they have trouble building upon earlier mathematical notions.
- **Difficulty to pay attention.** Your child might be having difficulty with (the specific manner they're performing) math if they become fidgety, get distracted while doing a problem, or appear mentally exhausted.
- **Not hitting milestones.** Generally, children hit certain math milestones around the same age — but sometimes, they have trouble developing these skills at the same rate and fall behind. Students in 1st and 2nd grade, for example, may struggle as they move on from counting by ones to twos, fives, and tens, while others pick it up with ease.

If you identify one or more of these signs when your child deals with math, it would be important to have a conversation with the teacher and consider testing the child's learning abilities. The Speakable team is ready to assess and treat learning difficulties of any nature with scientific-proved techniques and treatments.

Speakable adds the Hochman Method to its toolset



Speakable is incorporating the Hochman Method, an explicit set of sequenced strategies for teaching expository writing that can be integrated into any content, through the Advancing Thinking Through Writing (ATTW) programme from The Writing Revolution.

Starting at the sentence level, specific strategies can be utilised to enhance the structure, coherence, and clarity of learners writing. The focus then shifts to compositions, paragraphs, and outlines.

With its arsenal of cutting-edge techniques and approaches, Speakable will now be able to tackle any learning obstacle in our clients by teaching note-taking, summarising, and revision.

Boost communication skills on Mother's Day: four fun ideas



Mother's Day is a perfect time to celebrate the bond with your child while also improving their communication skills. Here are four simple yet effective ideas for fun activities that you can do to encourage communication on this special day.

- **Write a Thank You Note:** Encourage your child to write a heartfelt thank you note to their mother, expressing their appreciation for all that she does. This activity helps children practice expressing emotions and organizing their thoughts. You can provide prompts to guide younger children, and have a special moment where the child can read the note aloud or present it to their mother.
- **Cook Together:** Plan a Mother's Day meal and involve your child in the process. From selecting recipes to preparing the meal, there are plenty of opportunities for conversation and collaboration. Encourage your child to ask questions, share ideas, and talk about their favorite memories with their mother. This activity also provides opportunities to practice following directions, using new vocabulary, and working as a team.
- **Create a Memory Jar:** Provide your child with a jar, colorful paper, and markers. Ask them to think of special memories they have with their mother and write them down on the paper. Once the memories are written, fold the papers and place them in the jar. This activity promotes reflection, gratitude, and sharing of thoughts and memories.
- **Play "Guess Who":** Create a personalized version of the classic game "Guess Who" by using pictures of family members, including the mother, on cards. Take turns asking yes-or-no questions to guess which family member is on the card. This game encourages children to ask questions, practice descriptive language, and engage in conversation.

If you want more ideas of bonding activities for Mothers and their children, visit our other articles about this topic:

Boost communication skills on Mother's Day: four fun ideas

- [How mums can help their children's studies](#)
- [Mothers' influence over children's development](#)
- [Speech and language activities to celebrate Mother's Day](#)

In conclusion, Mother's Day can be a meaningful opportunity to celebrate and improve communication skills. Through simple activities like writing thank you notes, cooking together, creating memory jars, and playing games, you can encourage your child to express themselves, share their thoughts and memories, and strengthen their communication skills while celebrating the special bond with their mother.

Synesthesia: a fascinating neurodiverse condition



Synesthesia is a fascinating neurodiverse condition that affects approximately 4% of the population. It is a condition where senses become cross-wired, resulting in unique and personalized sensory experiences. In this article, we will discuss the main characteristics of synesthesia and how the Speakable team is trained to help individuals with this condition.

Here are some of the main characteristics of synesthesia:

- **Perception of sensory experiences are cross-wired:** In synesthesia, a person's sensory experiences are cross-wired, which means that they experience sensory input in a way that is not typical. For example, someone with synesthesia may associate colors with numbers or letters with specific tastes.
- **Unique and Personalized Experiences:** Each person's synesthetic experiences are unique and personalized to them. For instance, two individuals with synesthesia may not associate the same colors with the same numbers.
- **Different types of synesthesia:** There are several types of synesthesia, and each type is characterized by a different type of sensory cross-wiring. The most common form is grapheme-color synesthesia, where letters or numbers are associated with specific colors. Other forms include sound-color, where sounds or music are associated with colors, and taste-touch synesthesia, where certain tastes are experienced as textures or physical sensations.
- **Often triggered automatically:** Synesthetic experiences are often automatic, meaning that the individual does not have to actively think about the association to experience it.
- **No negative effects:** While synesthesia may seem strange to those who don't experience it, there are no negative effects associated with this condition. In fact, many people with synesthesia consider their unique perception of the world to be a gift.

Synesthesia: a fascinating neurodiverse condition

- **Possible benefits:** Synesthesia has been linked to enhanced creativity, memory, and cognition. For example, synesthetes may have an easier time remembering numbers or musical patterns because they associate them with unique sensory experiences.

At Speakable, we understand that each person's neurodiverse experience is unique and should be approached with sensitivity and respect. Our team of experts is trained to develop customized treatment plans that address the specific needs of individuals with synesthesia. Through our evidence-based approach, we help our clients learn strategies to manage their synesthetic experiences and embrace their unique perceptions of the world.

In conclusion, synesthesia is a fascinating neurodiverse condition that affects how individuals perceive the world around them. While it may seem strange to those who don't experience it, synesthetes often consider their unique perception of the world to be a gift. At Speakable, we recognize the importance of respecting and accommodating these differences, and our team is dedicated to providing high-quality care to individuals with synesthesia and other neurodiverse conditions. If you or a loved one is living with synesthesia, we encourage you to reach out to us to learn more about how we can help.

Winter Wonderland: four activities to stimulate communication skills



Winter is a magical season filled with opportunities to engage your child's communication skills. Here are four exciting ideas for activities that you can do to promote communication while enjoying the beauty of winter.

- **Winter Nature Walk:** Bundle up and take a stroll in the winter wonderland with your child. Encourage them to use their senses to describe what they see, hear, feel, and even taste! Ask open-ended questions like "What sounds do you hear? What do you see that is white and sparkly?" This activity promotes observation skills, descriptive language, and conversation.
- **Winter Storytelling:** Cozy up by the fireplace or under a warm blanket and engage in winter-themed storytelling with your child. Encourage them to use their imagination to create their own winter stories or retell their favorite winter tales. This activity helps develop storytelling skills, creativity, and oral language.
- **Winter Crafts:** Get crafty with your child by engaging in winter-themed arts and crafts. From making snowflakes to creating snowman crafts, there are endless possibilities. Encourage your child to describe their creations, explain their thought process, and engage in conversation while creating. This activity promotes fine motor skills, creativity, and communication.
- **Winter-themed Board Games:** Spend quality time with your child by playing winter-themed board games that encourage communication and social interaction. Games like "Winter Bingo" or "Snowman Charades" require players to communicate with each other, express their ideas, and engage in cooperative play. This activity promotes turn-taking, following directions, and communication skills.

Winter Wonderland: four activities to stimulate communication skills

See below our past articles with many more ideas for Winter activities:

- [Winter-based activities for communication and fun](#)
- [Wintertime Holidays activities with speech and language](#)
- [Snowman activities for Winter](#)
- [Having fun during winter](#)
- [Winter activities to stimulate communication](#)

Winter provides a perfect opportunity to engage your child's communication skills through fun and interactive activities. From nature walks to storytelling, crafts to board games, there are plenty of ways to promote communication while enjoying the wonders of winter. Embrace the season and have a blast with these activities that are both entertaining and educational for your child! Happy winter adventures!

Importance of observing your children's behaviour at school



As a parent, it's essential to keep an eye on your child's behaviour and performance in school. While some kids may be able to express their concerns about school, others may have a hard time doing so. Observing your child's behaviour and performance can help you spot potential issues early and take action before they become bigger problems.

Here are some signals that something may be wrong with your child at school:

- **Change in behaviour:** If your child is typically outgoing and suddenly becomes withdrawn or quiet, it may be a sign that something is going on. Likewise, if your child is typically calm and becomes agitated or angry, it may indicate that something is amiss.
- **Decline in academic performance:** If your child's grades suddenly drop, it may be a sign that they are struggling with the material or that something else is going on. Keep in mind that every child has ups and downs in their academic performance, so look for a sustained decline.
- **Unusual physical complaints:** If your child complains of headaches, stomach aches, or other physical ailments with no apparent cause, it may be a sign of stress or anxiety related to school.
- **Avoidance of school-related activities:** If your child suddenly no longer wants to participate in extracurricular activities, avoid doing homework, or skip school altogether, it may be a sign that something is wrong.
- **Social isolation:** If your child suddenly stops spending time with friends or avoids social activities, it may be a sign that they are struggling with social relationships at school.

If you notice any of these signals, it's important to talk to your child and their teachers to identify the cause and determine the best course of action. Remember, every child is different, and what works for one may not work for another. With open communication and a willingness to seek help, you can help your child navigate any challenges they may be facing at school.

Importance of observing your children's behaviour at school

At Speakable, we understand that every child's educational journey is unique. Our team of experts is trained to work with children and their families to develop customized treatment plans that address any concerns related to academic performance, behaviour, or mental health. By working with our team, you can rest assured that your child is receiving the support they need to thrive in school and beyond.

In conclusion, as a parent, it's crucial to observe your child's behaviour and performance in school. By being aware of the signals that something may be wrong, you can take action early and help your child navigate any challenges they may be facing. At Speakable, we are dedicated to helping children and their families address any concerns related to academic performance, behaviour, or mental health. If you have any concerns about your child, we encourage you to reach out to us to learn more about how we can help.

Understanding Apraxia in children



Apraxia, also known as childhood apraxia of speech (CAS), is a motor speech disorder that affects a child's ability to coordinate and plan movements of the tongue, lips, and jaw necessary for clear speech. It is estimated that approximately 1-2 children per 1,000 in Australia are affected by Apraxia. Here are some key characteristics of children with Apraxia:

- **Difficulty with articulation:** Children with Apraxia have trouble producing clear and accurate speech sounds, particularly consonants, vowels, and combinations of sounds. They may make inconsistent errors and have difficulty imitating sounds or words.
- **Slow, effortful speech:** Children with Apraxia may struggle to coordinate the movements required for speech, resulting in slow, laboured speech that may be choppy or halting.
- **Difficulty with prosody:** Children with Apraxia may struggle with the rhythm, stress, and intonation of speech, leading to a monotonous or robotic-sounding voice.
- **Language delays:** While Apraxia primarily affects the motor aspects of speech production, children with Apraxia may also have language delays or difficulties with other aspects of communication, such as vocabulary or grammar.
- **Frustration and social isolation:** Children with Apraxia may become frustrated or embarrassed by their difficulty communicating, leading to social isolation and low self-esteem.

At Speakable, we use evidence-based techniques and strategies to help children with Apraxia improve their speech and communication skills. Our speech-language pathologists work closely with families to develop individualized treatment plans that address the unique needs of each child. Our goal is to help children with Apraxia develop clear, confident speech that allows them to communicate effectively with others.

How music helps your child's language development



As parents, we all want our children to develop strong language skills. While there are many ways to support language development, one often overlooked method is through music. Recent research has shown that exposure to music can have a positive impact on language development in children. Here are some ways in which music can help your child's language skills:

- **Music enhances phonological awareness:** Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize and manipulate sounds in spoken language. Learning to recognize and differentiate between different musical notes and patterns can help children develop this skill, which is essential for reading and writing.

- **Music improves vocabulary:** Singing along to songs can help children learn new words and expand their vocabulary. The repetition of words and phrases in songs can also help children remember them more easily.
- **Music supports grammar development:** Songs often follow a specific structure, which can help children learn the rules of grammar. For example, hearing and singing along to songs with proper sentence structure can help children develop their own grammatically correct sentences.
- **Music enhances social skills:** Participating in music activities such as singing in a group or playing an instrument can help children develop social skills such as turn-taking, listening, and following directions.
- **Music supports emotional development:** Listening to and creating music can have a calming and positive effect on children, promoting emotional regulation and well-being.

Incorporating music into your child's daily routine can be an enjoyable and effective way to support their language development. Consider singing songs together, playing musical games, or listening to music while doing activities such as cooking or driving. Talk to your child's speech and language pathologist about how they can incorporate music into speech therapy sessions.

In conclusion, the link between music and language development is a fascinating area of study that has many potential benefits for children. By incorporating music into their daily routines, parents can help support their child's language skills while providing a fun and engaging activity.

Advantages of telepractice in speech therapy



In recent years, telepractice has become an increasingly popular method of delivering speech therapy services. Telepractice involves the use of technology to provide speech therapy services remotely, without the need for in-person visits. Here are some of the key advantages of telepractice in speech therapy:

- **Increased access to services:** Telepractice makes speech therapy more accessible to people who live in remote or rural areas, or who have difficulty traveling to appointments.

- **Convenience:** Telepractice allows clients to receive speech therapy services from the comfort of their own homes, without having to worry about transportation or scheduling conflicts.
- **Reduced travel time and cost:** For clients who live far away from speech therapy clinics, telepractice can save time and money on travel expenses.
- **Increased flexibility:** Telepractice offers more flexibility in scheduling appointments, as clients can often schedule sessions outside of traditional clinic hours.
- **Enhanced privacy:** Telepractice offers a private and secure way for clients to receive speech therapy services, without having to worry about others overhearing their sessions.

Telepractice has been shown to be an effective method of delivering speech therapy services, with outcomes comparable to traditional in-person services. If you are considering telepractice for yourself or a loved one, contact Speakable, a licensed and qualified speech-language pathology clinic experienced in telepractice.

Telepractice offers many advantages in speech therapy, from increased access and convenience to enhanced privacy and flexibility. If you are interested in learning more about telepractice and how it can benefit you or a loved one, talk to a licensed speech-language pathologist or visit a reputable telepractice provider.

The importance of cultural responsiveness in speech and language pathology



NAIDOC Week is a time to celebrate the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. As a speech and language pathology clinic, Speakable is committed to promoting cultural responsiveness and providing equitable, accessible, and inclusive services to all of our clients. Here are some of the ways we strive to support the speech and language needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:

- **Developing culturally responsive assessments and interventions:** At Speakable, we recognize the importance of cultural responsiveness in speech and language assessment and intervention. We work to develop assessments and interventions that are respectful of cultural diversity, incorporating cultural values, beliefs, and practices into our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.
- **Working collaboratively with Indigenous communities:** We believe in building strong partnerships with Indigenous communities, working collaboratively to ensure our services are culturally appropriate and meet the needs of the communities we serve.
- **Providing culturally competent staff training:** We understand the importance of ongoing staff training to ensure our clinicians have the knowledge, skills, and cultural competence needed to work effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.
- **Incorporating Indigenous languages:** Speakable is committed to supporting the preservation and revitalization of Indigenous languages. We recognize the importance of language in maintaining cultural identity and work to incorporate Indigenous languages into our services whenever possible.
- **Supporting Indigenous-led initiatives:** We actively support and participate in Indigenous-led initiatives that promote speech and language development, including community-led language programs and advocacy for Indigenous language rights.

Thank you!

Speakable is committed to promoting cultural responsiveness and providing equitable, accessible, and inclusive speech and language pathology services to all of our clients. As we celebrate NAIDOC Week, we acknowledge the importance of cultural diversity and strive to support the speech and language needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We invite you to learn more about our commitment to cultural responsiveness by visiting our website or contacting our clinic.

This was the thirteenth issue of our new Speakable Magazine, which compiled the articles and relevant news about communication, confidence and our clinic from 2023's school term 2.

In case you are interested in following Speakable's social media profiles and blog, please check the list on the side:

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