

# Speakable

A magazine with news and  
articles about communication  
and confidence

Speakable  Because you can.  
Speaking • Reading • Confidence

## Innovation unleashed Speakable's 2nd victory in R&D awards

Learn more about this important award and how Research and  
Development guides Speakable's ethics and solutions

## VR revolutionizing Speech Therapy

Virtual Reality can provide a whole new world of  
possibilities for Speech Therapy - learn more about this!

Speakable Team

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# Speakable Magazine #14

Dear Speakable Family,

As the spirit of spring unfolds across Australia, ushering in a canvas of vibrant blooms and a renewed sense of vigour, we are thrilled to present to you the latest edition of Speakable Quarterly Magazine!

A heartfelt thank you is in order for each and every one of you. Your continual support and belief in Speakable have not only been our anchor but also our north star, guiding us through nine incredible years of operation. Yes, we've turned nine! Each word spoken, each barrier broken, and every milestone achieved in these years have been the combination of your trust and our commitment to offering unparalleled speech and language services.

On this delightful occasion, we have more good news to share. Speakable is now accredited to provide the dynamic 'Brick by Brick' program! More than a program, 'Brick by Brick' is a commitment to fortified and empowered communication, especially designed for children to enhance their verbal skills in a nurturing and progressively supportive environment.

Embracing the frontier of technological advancements, we'll be introducing Virtual Reality (VR) to our toolkit. VR is not just tech-savvy; it's a transformative experience for our clients dealing with behavioural challenges during therapy. Within the confines of a virtual yet realistic and responsive world, clients can practice, refine, and master their communication skills, making therapy not just beneficial but enjoyable.

To our dedicated Year 12 students heading into their crucial HSC exams, consider this a standing ovation and a chorus of good luck coming your way from all of us at Speakable. These exams are not just tests; they are gateways to various opportunities awaiting you on the other side. Approach them with optimism, resilience, and the knowledge that you have the capability to excel.

As you flip through the pages of this spring edition, you'll find a tapestry of tradition and innovation with each article demonstrating a narrative of continuous growth and expansion in our practice. Here's to celebrating nine years and toasting to our future!

Warm regards,

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

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# The power of early intervention in speech therapy



Early intervention is crucial for children who are experiencing speech and language delays or disorders. Research has shown that early identification and treatment can have a significant impact on a child's speech and language development, leading to improved outcomes later in life. Here are some of the key reasons why early intervention is so important in speech therapy:

- **Maximizes brain plasticity:** During early childhood, the brain is highly plastic, meaning it is capable of adapting and changing rapidly in response to new experiences. Early intervention takes advantage of this critical period of brain development to help children develop strong speech and language skills.

- **Prevents academic and social struggles:** Children with speech and language delays are at increased risk for academic and social difficulties, as well as behavioural problems. Early intervention can help prevent these struggles by addressing speech and language issues before they become more challenging to treat.
- **Reduces need for future therapy:** By addressing speech and language delays early on, children may require less speech therapy in the long run, potentially reducing the need for ongoing therapy as they get older.
- **Improves overall quality of life:** Strong speech and language skills are critical for success in school, social relationships, and future employment. Early intervention can help children develop these skills, leading to a higher quality of life and greater independence in adulthood.
- **Increases family involvement:** Early intervention often involves working closely with parents and caregivers to support their child's speech and language development. This can increase family involvement in their child's progress and create a strong support system for the child's ongoing development.

In conclusion, early intervention is a powerful tool for promoting strong speech and language skills in children. If you are concerned about your child's speech or language development, it is important to seek out a licensed and qualified speech-language pathologist who can provide early intervention services. By addressing speech and language issues early on, you can help your child reach their full potential and enjoy a lifetime of success and fulfillment.

# Bilingualism on speech and language development

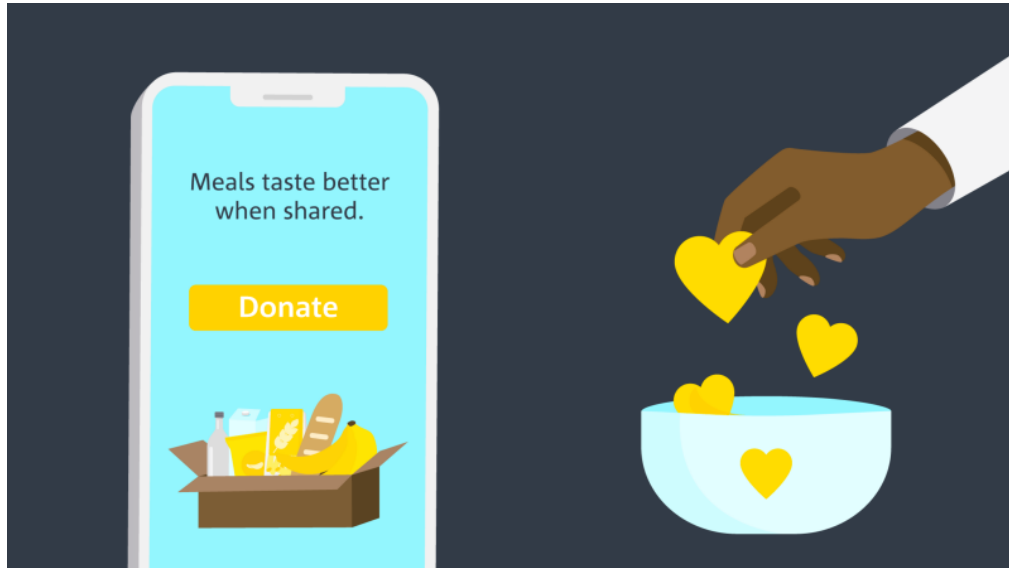


Being bilingual is a remarkable asset that opens doors to diverse cultures and opportunities. But did you know that bilingualism also influences speech and language development? In this blog post, we will delve into the fascinating connection between bilingualism and speech and language skills.

- **Enhanced cognitive abilities:** Research suggests that bilingual individuals often exhibit improved cognitive skills, such as better problem-solving, multitasking, and attention control, which can positively impact speech and language development.
- **Language flexibility and adaptability:** Growing up bilingual exposes children to different language structures, sounds, and vocabulary, fostering greater flexibility and adaptability in language use and comprehension.
- **Improved executive function:** Bilingualism has been associated with enhanced executive function skills, including cognitive flexibility, working memory, and inhibitory control, which can support language processing and production.
- **Code-switching proficiency:** Bilingual individuals have the unique ability to switch between languages seamlessly, known as code-switching. This linguistic skill showcases their language proficiency and can contribute to their overall communication competence.
- **Cultural appreciation and empathy:** Bilingualism facilitates cultural understanding and empathy, as individuals gain insight into different cultural perspectives through language, which can enrich their communication skills.

Embracing bilingualism brings with it a range of benefits, including cognitive advantages, linguistic flexibility, and cultural appreciation. If you're interested in learning more about the impact of bilingualism on speech and language development, reach out to the Speakable team, who can provide guidance and support on this exciting journey.

# Fighting hunger with creativity and technology



Since Speakable made the decision to fight hunger as part of their corporate social responsibility strategy in 2021. Speakable decided to sponsor the [Share The Meal](#) initiative because it is in line with UNESCO's **Sustainable Development Goals** and will thereby help the UN's **World Food Programme**.

For every therapy session it provides, Speakable has donated the equivalent of a meal since February 2021. Therefore, the more sessions Speakable offers its clients, the more meals are sent to hungry children around the world.

Since the launch of the ShareTheMeal project in 2014, the World Food Programme will commemorate delivering 134 million meals in January 2022. Speakable is reaffirming its commitment to aiding more children throughout the world and is extremely proud to play a significant role in this cause.

Anyone can participate in the ShareTheMeal effort by downloading and utilising its unique smartphone app, which is available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#). It has received numerous awards. To learn more about this great endeavour, view the video from the following link: [Share The Meal](#).

# The dynamic role of SLP in Assistive Technology



Assistive technology has revolutionized the way individuals with communication disorders interact with the world. In this blog post, we will explore the vital role of speech and language pathology in harnessing the power of assistive technology to enhance communication and improve quality of life.

- **Customized communication solutions:** Speech and language pathologists play a crucial role in assessing individuals' unique communication needs and recommending and implementing appropriate assistive technology devices or software tailored to their specific requirements.
- **Ongoing assessment and device customization:** Speech and language pathologists provide ongoing assessment and device customization, ensuring that assistive technology solutions meet the changing needs of individuals and continue to optimize their communication abilities.

- **Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC):** AAC systems, ranging from low-tech options like picture boards to high-tech devices with synthesized speech, empower individuals with communication challenges to express themselves effectively. Speech therapists provide training and support in AAC implementation and ensure optimal device use.
- **Language and literacy support:** Speech and language pathologists collaborate with individuals using assistive technology to develop language and literacy skills, such as vocabulary expansion, sentence construction, and reading comprehension, using specialized software and applications.
- **Voice banking and synthetic speech:** For individuals who have lost their natural voice due to medical conditions, speech therapists facilitate voice banking—a process of recording and preserving their unique voice—which can be later used in assistive technology devices to generate personalized synthetic speech.

Assistive technology opens new avenues of communication for individuals with speech and language disorders, and speech and language pathologists are at the forefront of this transformative journey. If you're interested in learning more about the role of speech and language pathology in assistive technology, reach out to a professional who can guide you on the path to amplified communication.



# Unleashing the potential of animal-assisted therapy



Animals have a remarkable ability to connect with humans on a deep emotional level, and this special bond forms the foundation of animal-assisted therapy. In this blog post, we will explore how animal-assisted therapy is making a significant impact in the field of speech and language pathology, fostering communication, and enriching the lives of individuals with communication disorders.

- **Enhancing social interactions:** Animals serve as catalysts for social interactions, facilitating social engagement, turn-taking, and promoting peer interactions among individuals with communication difficulties.

- **Facilitating engagement and motivation:** Animals create a relaxed and non-judgmental environment, encouraging individuals to actively participate in therapy sessions, engage in communication exercises, and work towards their communication goals with increased motivation.
- **Improving attention and focus:** The presence of animals has a calming effect and can help individuals improve their attention and focus during speech and language therapy sessions, leading to better concentration and progress in communication skills.
- **Providing emotional support:** Animal-assisted therapy offers emotional support, comfort, and companionship to individuals who may feel anxious or stressed during therapy. The presence of an animal can create a soothing and safe space for communication practice.
- **Stimulating language and vocabulary:** Interacting with animals can stimulate language production and vocabulary development. Individuals may describe animal behaviours, engage in storytelling, or practice verbalizing commands or instructions to the animals, enhancing their language skills.

Animal-assisted therapy has emerged as a powerful and innovative approach in speech and language pathology, leveraging the unique bond between humans and animals to enhance communication skills. If you're interested in learning more about how animal-assisted therapy can benefit individuals with communication disorders, reach out to the Speakable team who can guide you through this pawitive journey.



# Blossoming Communication: Springtime Activities



As nature awakens and blooms in spring, so can communication skills! In this blog post, we'll explore how the vibrant energy of spring can be harnessed to engage in creative speech and language activities, fostering growth and development in a joyful and seasonal way.

- **Art inspired by nature:** Channel the colours and beauty of spring into artistic activities. Create nature-inspired crafts like flower collages, where children can practice describing shapes, colours, and textures.

- **Garden of vocabulary:** Take advantage of outdoor activities like gardening to introduce new words related to plants, flowers, and gardening tools. Engage children in conversations about planting, watering, and nurturing, while expanding their vocabulary.
- **Nature's soundscapes:** Explore the auditory landscape of spring by going on sound walks, identifying and imitating the sounds of birds, rustling leaves, and bubbling streams. These activities promote sound recognition and imitation, crucial for speech development.
- **Storytelling under the sun:** Bask in the sunlight and gather for outdoor storytelling sessions. Encourage children to share stories about their favourite spring adventures, promoting language skills, imagination, and social interaction.
- **Picnic pronouns:** Organise a springtime picnic and engage in pronoun practice. Encourage children to request, share, and describe food items using correct pronouns like "he," "she," and "they," fostering grammar skills in a relaxed setting.

Spring is a wonderful opportunity to infuse speech and language therapy with the vitality of the season. By integrating nature, outdoor activities, and creative exercises, speech and language pathologists can inspire growth and progress in communication skills. Embrace the spirit of spring and explore these engaging activities to nurture blossoming communication.

Learn more activities for Springtime in our previous article about it:

[Springtime-themed speech and language activities](#)

# Speakable celebrates its 9th year of operations



September is the month when Speakable celebrates the beginning of its activities in 2014. This 9th birthday represents a great achievement for the clinic, for our team and for the released tools and programs throughout the year, especially the Hochman Method and Kwik Reading Program, as well as the special support to Math for children. These tools are now within Speakable's toolset to provide more innovative therapy sessions to our clients. See here a brief description of our new tools:

- **The Hochman Method** is 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. Read more about this tool by [clicking here](#).
- The **Kwik Reading Program** was created to increase both the speed and comprehension and not just train speed reading to skim, scan and skip words to get the gist of what you read. [Click here](#) for a brief description.

These new tools reassure Speakable's commitment to the wellness of our community and the continuous innovation of tools and techniques to ensure individuals can have better communication skills and confidence. We share this same commitment by assuming some of the

## [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)

designed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 for the year 2030. Here is how Speakable is part of this global initiative:

# Speakable celebrates its 9th year of operations

- **Goal #1: No Poverty.** Speakable is engaged in creating balance in citizens' finances, applying fair prices, negotiating fair relationships with suppliers and contributing to charities such as UNESCO's **World Food Programme**.
- **Goal #4: Quality Education.** The team of SLPs and Education Advisor are completely engaged in using the best teaching-learning techniques to provide effective and involving sessions to all clients.
- **Goal #17: Partnerships for the Goals.** Through the Sub-Goal #17-5 (Invest in Least Developed Countries), initiatives such as The World Food Programme aim to provide better conditions for kids from poor areas to be healthy to study and have a potentially better quality of life while growing.

Part of the cost from any of Speakable's product or service is directed to Speakable's corporate social responsibility regarding UNESCO's World Food Programme, in the form of the inspiring initiative called [ShareTheMeal](#). Feel free to contact us by [telephone](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [email](#) to book a first meeting with us to know how we can help you!



# Nurturing Communication through Mindfulness



In our fast-paced world, the practice of mindfulness has gained attention for its positive impact on overall well-being. But did you know that mindfulness can also play a significant role in enhancing communication skills? In this article, we'll delve into the intriguing connection between mindfulness and effective communication.

- **Deepening active listening:** Mindfulness encourages individuals to be fully present in conversations, enhancing active listening skills by fostering genuine engagement and understanding.
- **Reducing communication anxieties:** Mindfulness techniques like breath awareness and grounding exercises can help manage communication-related anxieties, allowing individuals to express themselves more confidently.
- **Enhancing nonverbal cues:** Being mindful of body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice can lead to more authentic and effective nonverbal communication, enriching the overall conversation.
- **Cultivating empathy:** Mindfulness nurtures empathy by promoting an open and non-judgmental attitude, helping individuals attune to others' emotions and perspectives.
- **Improving self-expression:** By fostering self-awareness and emotional regulation, mindfulness empowers individuals to articulate their thoughts and emotions with clarity and poise.

Mindfulness offers a holistic approach to communication enhancement, emphasizing the value of presence, empathy, and self-awareness. Whether you're seeking to improve professional communication or deepen personal relationships, incorporating mindfulness into your journey can lead to transformative improvements in your ability to connect with others.

# Boosting confidence and readiness to ace HSC



The HSC exams can be a challenging yet rewarding experience for students. It's important for students to focus on building confidence and preparedness. In this article, we'll share practical tips to help students navigate this crucial time with poise.

- **Strategize and prioritize:** Create a study plan that allocates time to each subject based on its weightage and your proficiency, ensuring balanced coverage of all topics.
- **Revise effectively:** Opt for active study techniques like summarizing notes, teaching concepts to others, and practicing past papers to reinforce understanding and memory.
- **Practice mindfulness:** Incorporate short mindfulness exercises or meditation breaks to manage stress, enhance focus, and maintain a clear mind during study sessions.
- **Stay well-rested and nourished:** Prioritize sleep and maintain a balanced diet to support cognitive function, memory retention, and overall well-being.
- **Seek support:** Don't hesitate to reach out to teachers, mentors, or tutors for clarification on concepts, study strategies, and exam techniques.

With the HSC exams approaching, it's natural to feel a mix of excitement and nerves. By implementing these practical tips, you can navigate the final stretch with confidence and readiness. Remember that every effort you put in now contributes to your success, and Speakable is here to support you on this journey.

Read three other articles with many more tips to help you:

- [Tips to be ready for HSC exam](#)
- [HSC Exams during the pandemics](#)
- [Tips for HSC Exams](#)

# Innovation unleashed Speakable's double victory in R&D awards



We're thrilled to announce that for the second consecutive year, Speakable clinic has been honored with the prestigious 'Research & Development Award' by Acquisition International. This remarkable achievement underscores our unwavering commitment to advancing speech and language therapy through cutting-edge research and innovation.

At Speakable, we believe that research and development are at the heart of transformative progress in the field of speech and language pathology. This recognition reaffirms our dedication to pushing the boundaries of knowledge and technology, allowing us to provide even more effective and impactful therapies for our clients. We're immensely proud of our team's relentless pursuit of excellence and grateful for the support of our clients and partners who continue to inspire us on this remarkable journey.

Our journey towards excellence in research and development has been a remarkable one. This consecutive win is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and innovative spirit of the entire Speakable team. It motivates us to continue pioneering new approaches and therapies in speech and language pathology that make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. We're excited about what the future holds and look forward to sharing more groundbreaking advancements with our clients, partners, and the speech therapy community as a whole.



# VR revolutionizing Speech Therapy



Virtual Reality (VR) is transforming the landscape of speech and language therapy. Its innovative applications are providing a range of advantages that are reshaping how therapy is conducted, making it more engaging, effective, and accessible than ever before. Key Advantages of Implementing VR in Speech Therapy:

- **Immersive Learning:** VR offers a highly immersive environment where patients can practice language and communication skills in realistic scenarios.

- **Personalized Therapy:** Tailored VR programs adapt to individual patient needs, providing a customized therapy experience.
- **Increased Motivation:** The interactive and game-like nature of VR makes therapy sessions more engaging, motivating patients to participate actively.
- **Data-Driven Insights:** VR therapy platforms collect valuable data on patient progress, enabling therapists to make data-driven decisions for more effective treatment plans.
- **Accessibility:** VR therapy can be accessed remotely, bridging geographical gaps and making therapy more accessible to a wider audience.
- **Safe Environment:** Patients can practice and overcome communication challenges in a safe and controlled VR setting, building confidence.
- **Real-Life Scenarios:** VR exposes patients to real-life communication scenarios, helping them transfer their skills to everyday situations more effectively.

Speakable is excited to announce that we are preparing to integrate VR therapy into our practice. This technological leap will allow us to provide even more effective and engaging therapy options to our clients, ultimately enhancing their speech and language development. Stay tuned for more updates on this exciting development as we continue to innovate and elevate the quality of care we offer.

# Thank you!

This was the fourteenth issue of our new Speakable Magazine, which compiled the articles and relevant news about communication, confidence and our clinic from 2023's school term 3.

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

- 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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