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Speech Pathology

SPEECH SOUND DIFFICULTY

What is it?

Difficulty producing speech sounds correctly for the child's age.

Why get an assessment?

To know what sounds the child finds difficult. To confirm if it's age appropriate, a delay or a disorder. To make appropriate recommendations to help.

Some types of speech disorders

- Phonological Disorder
- Articulation Delays
- Apraxia of Speech
- Inconsistent Speech Disorder

Who should I see?

A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST

If diagnosed with speech delays/disorders....

REGULAR SPEECH THERAPY WILL HELP

Speech Therapy: How often? For how long?

Weekly is best; fortnightly is the minimum.
Therapy session lenghts: 30 minutes-1 hour

Funding?

- Private Health (check with your provider)
- Medicare rebates: your General Practitioner determines if your child is eligible for the Enhanced Primary Care Plan

Additional Reading:

- Speech Pathology Australia
- Caroline Bowen's Speech Therapy Website
- www.speechtherapymomma.com

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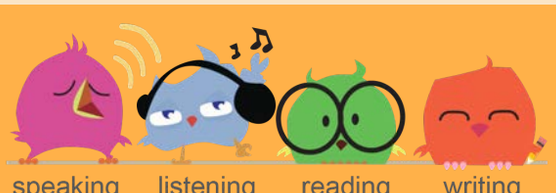

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LITERACY DIFFICULTIES
DYSLEXIA
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDER

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WHAT IS IT?

When a child is experiencing slower than normal acquisition of skills in reading and/or writing. Dyslexia is a term previously commonly used to describe reading and writing difficulties. The new, preferred term is "Specific Learning Disorder".

ASSESSMENT

A specialist's assessment and recommendations can guide teachers to select more appropriate interventions and provide more individualised support for the child.

WHO DOES IT?

- Educational Psychologists for diagnosis
- Speech Pathologists with experience in literacy difficulties can provide therapy and refer for formal diagnosis
- Educational tutors experienced with dyslexia and literacy difficulties can provide therapy and refer for formal diagnosis.

WHY A DIAGNOSIS OF SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDER?

1. More targeted intervention, and also allow for parents, teachers and the children themselves to better understand their learning needs.
2. Receive extra time or exemptions during assessments (e.g., NAPLAN, VCE).
3. May also allow the child to receive extra support at school.

STEPS TO TAKE IF YOUR CHILD HAS LITERACY DIFFICULTIES...

01 Get in touch with a Speech Pathologist or Literacy Tutor who knows dyslexia/specific learning disorders. Get an assessment and start therapy immediately.

02 Speak to your school and inform them about your child's difficulties. Request the school to meet with your Speechie/Tutor. Ensure a consistent approach to literacy teaching.

03 Join support groups for parents who have children with difficulties. The Dyslexia Victoria Facebook Group is a wealth of information. Other useful sites: SPELD, Australia Dyslexia Association (ADA), Spelfabet

04 Recommended approaches/programs: Systematic and Synthetic Phonics (SSP), Toe by Toe, Multi-Lit, Sounds-Write, Orton-Gillingham Multi-Sensory Learning (MSL)

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AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

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WHAT IS ASD?

A mental disorder that affects a person's ability to communicate effectively and at times understand abstract and social concepts.
As the name suggests, this disorder is a spectrum.
Different people may present with different symptoms.

WHY DIAGNOSE?

Helps us understand your child's symptoms better.
Helps carers, therapists and parents understand child's strengths and areas of needs better.
For some, knowing they have autism is also empowering. They can understand why they feel/think/behave differently.
Prescribe more appropriate programs and treatment methods.

WHO DIAGNOSES?

Gold Standard: Multidisciplinary approach
1. Paediatrician, consulting
2. Paediatric Psychologist
3. Speech Pathologist
*2 of the 3 professionals must agree with the presentation in order to be diagnosed with ASD.

WHAT TO DO IF MY CHILD HAS ASD?

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

The best thing you can do for them is firstly, look after yourself. Surround yourself with a community that can support you and your child. A big support group in the Western suburbs is called the ASD Western Suburbs Support Group. You can look for them on Facebook. There is a Mandarin speaking one as well. Ask us about it.

CONNECT WITH OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Speech Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Child Psychologist
- Music Therapist
- Dietitian
- Paediatrician

FUNDING

If diagnosed between 0-6 years old, your child is eligible for $12,000 from the Department of Social Services (DSS) to use toward therapies. Use before the child turns 7 years. This is sometimes known as Amaze, or Fahcsia funding.
NDIS
Medicare Helping Children With Autism (code: 82020) - partial rebate
Medicare Chronic Disease Management Plan (code: 10970)

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LANGUAGE DELAYS AND DISORDERS

LANGUAGE DELAYS VS DISORDERS?

Delays: Child's language developing slower than their peers' but eventually they catch up.

Disorders: Child's language developing slower but also in an atypical manner. Language disorder is a lifelong language difficulty. May also turn into a learning disability since academics is so language focussed.

Delays/disorders can be in either receptive (understanding) and/or expressive (spoken) language. .

WHY ASSESS FOR DELAYS/DISORDERS?

Can be stressful for parents/educators if they don't know why a child is behaving and speaking differently (or not speaking at all!).

If we know what is going on, the educators and carers can get specific baselines and recommendations about how to help the child.

WILL MY CHILD CATCH UP?

With language delays in young children, it is hard to know if they will. However, seeking help early is key. The earlier we intervene, the more success we will get.

WHAT CAUSES LANGUAGE DELAYS/DISORDERS?

Hearing difficulties.
Developmental language disorder, a learning disability that causes the brain to learn differently.
Intellectual Disability
Developmental disabilities (Down Syndrome, Autism, Microcephaly, etc.)
Speech Sound Disorders

WHO DIAGNOSES THIS?

A Speech-Language Pathologist

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY CHILD IS DIAGNOSED WITH A LANGUAGE DELAY/DISORDER?

IMPORTANT STEPS:

1. Seek help from a Speech-Language Pathologist as soon as possible.
2. Inform carers and school teachers, and ask for suggestions on how to work together to help your child.
3. Sometimes significant language delays can be isolating and create anxiety. Surround yourself with a good support group. If your child displays low self-esteem/anxiety seek a Child Psychologist ASAP.

FREQUENCY OF SPEECH THERAPY

Weekly is the most highly recommended. This may not be viable. Fortnightly therapy is the minimum. Home practice and follow up are crucial.
Therapy duration runs from 30 minutes - 1 hour

FUNDING

- Private Health (check with your provider)
- Medicare rebates: your General Practitioner determines if your child is eligible for the Enhanced Primary Care Plan

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