

Correcting Speech

It is important that you do not correct your child's speech unless you have discussed this with your Speech and Language Therapist. The parents who are working closely with the Speech and Language Therapist are best placed to correct their child's speech, rather than other adults involved with the child.

School

Some children with verbal dyspraxia **may** show extra difficulties with reading, writing and spelling. Hence children with verbal dyspraxia should be carefully watched for their first years at school so that if necessary, support can be given.

Questions

It is important that you understand your child's speech problem so please do not hesitate to ask your Speech and Language Therapist, if you have any questions. You may also find that talking to other parents is helpful.

Therapist.....

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

VERBAL DYSPRAXIA INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

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What is Verbal Dyspraxia?

Children with verbal dyspraxia have difficulty in making and co-ordinating the precise movements of the speech muscles necessary for clear speech. There is no damage to muscles or nerves. Dyspraxia is one type of **speech** problem.

The speech muscles include:

- The lips
- The tongue
- The soft palate – the muscle at the back of the mouth which closes off the nasal passage for the blowing, sucking, swallowing and for speaking
- The larynx – the voice box
- The muscles which control breathing for speech

The children may show one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Difficulty in making speech sounds
2. Difficulty in sequencing sounds to make up a word
3. Difficulty in keeping speech clear in sentences, (single words may be pronounced correctly but long sentences may be difficult to understand)
4. Difficulty in controlling the speed, rhythm and loudness of speech
5. Difficulty controlling intonation in voice (may sound monotone) and in keeping good voice quality

Dyspraxia and Speech Therapy

The most important aspect of speech and language therapy for children with verbal dyspraxia is **practice** and **repetition** of the work **daily**.

This is why parents and Speech and Language Therapists need to work as a team, with the parents and child continuing the exercises at home **every day**.

Following assessment, speech and language therapy may be based on the following areas:

- Improving the movements of the mouth
- Helping the child to make single sounds
- Improving ability to repeat sounds and swap from one sound to another
- Helping the child to use these sounds in words
- Building up from words to sentences

What is the cause of Verbal Dyspraxia?

At present we do not know the cause of verbal dyspraxia. There often seems to be a family tendency towards speech and language problems. Brothers and sisters **may** have speech and language problems **or** their speech and language may develop normally.

What will progress be like?

The rate of progress varies in children but we expect steady progress to be made so that most children should end up with clear intelligible speech.

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