

Speech Sound Disorder Awareness

NHS Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

A speech sound disorder (SSD) is where children have significant difficulty making sounds in their speech. They are usually difficult to understand, and their SSD may impact their confidence, phonics and reading/writing.

Facts and figures:

- 12 children out of 100 will have SSD.
- There are different types of SSD including Articulation Disorder, Phonological Disorder and Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS).
- There is no known cause for SSD but it can co-occur with hearing or language difficulties.

Common myths about SSD:

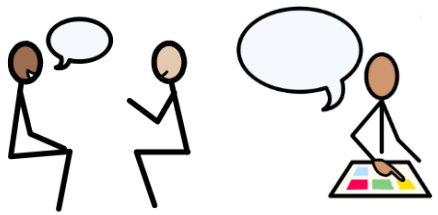
- ❖ Tongue tie impacts speech sounds – there is no evidence to show this.
- ❖ Oro-motor/tongue 'exercises' will help – again, there is no evidence that this helps.
- ❖ If children can make a sound, they should be able to use it in conversation – this skill takes a long time to build.
- ❖ Children will grow out of speech difficulties – some difficulties are severe and persistent and will need SaLT support.
- ❖ SSD is caused by parents or teachers – it is not! But there are ways we can help.

How can we support?

- ✓ If a child says something incorrectly, say it back to them in the correct way.
- ✓ Have other communication forms available, e.g. symbols, objects, use gestures.
- ✓ Keep a note of patterns you hear, e.g. if they use 's' for 't', you know 'tock' means 'sock'.
- ✓ Share information between school and home so you are all more likely to understand what the child is saying.
- ✓ Ensure any Speech and Language activities are worked on regularly at school and at home.

Children with SSD might:

- Replace sounds in words, e.g. cat → 'tat', dog → 'gog'.
- Miss out sounds or parts of words, e.g. e.g. spider → 'baider'.
- Have speech that sounds like babble.
- Have difficulty learning and remembering sounds in phonics.



Find more info for SSD Awareness Day here:

Best Care Healthy Communities

www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/childrens-SLT

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