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## **Starting School Next Year?** **Information Sheet No. 8**

*Eighth in a series of information sheets on children's communication difficulties aimed at health and education professionals, parents and caregivers.*

*Did you know that....?*

**“Speech impairments increase the risk of literacy difficulties.”**

*Bishop & Adams (1990), Catts (1993)*

Research shows that children with speech and oral language disorders are more likely to have reading problems. Oral language skills provide the foundation for the development of written language skills. Early detection and treatment of children's speech and language problems can help their reading acquisition!

### **What to look for:**

- Is your child's speech hard to understand?
- Are they at least 90% intelligible to an unfamiliar adult?
- Do they have difficulty imitating sounds correctly?
- Do they have difficulty with a number of different sounds –
- particularly: **s, sh, ch, k(c), g, or f** ?
- Is your child becoming frustrated with their speech?
- Do your child's siblings “interpret” or speak for your child?

### **What you can do to help:**

- Emphasise key sounds in words which your child mispronounces:  
eg. “Oh yes, it's Dad's Car”, “I need petrol for the Car”.  
Say sounds slowly and clearly.
- Repeat same sounds using many words:  
eg. “Car, Key, Cow”.
- Encourage your child to listen to the different sounds in words.
- Write down your child's sound errors (useful record).
- Encourage “oral awareness” skills:  
eg. make different tongue/lip movements in front of a mirror : round lips, smiley lips...have fun!

Reading is **so important** and **vital** to your child's education.

Give them the best start to school and their reading development by helping them with their speech and language skills early. **BEFORE** school.

**Early assessment is essential!**

In therapy, learning speech sounds is fun and enjoyable.

**Parents** are an integral part of therapy and are always present in the session.

And we give you lots of suggestions to do **at home!**

**Please call if you have any questions or wish to make an appointment.**

*NB: The information contained herein is not advice. It is general information for adults on children's communication development. It is not intended to be used as a sole means of identifying children with communication difficulties. Advice from a qualified paediatric Speech Pathologist is recommended.*

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