


Selective Mutism

Paediatric Community Speech and Language Therapy

<p>Selective Mutism</p>	<p>What is Selective Mutism?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective Mutism is an anxiety-based disorder which usually starts in early childhood. • Those with Selective Mutism speak fluently in some situations e.g. at home, but remain consistently silent in others, e.g. at nursery or school. • They might appear to be blank or have a frozen expression when expected to speak. Children may also whisper to particular friends or trusted adults. • Some children can show the signs of Selective Mutism, however, they may have had a big change and with early support the symptoms can lessen. 	
<p>How to help</p>	<p>Everyday Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek support as soon as you're concerned about your child. • If your child has not started speaking at nursery or school after a period of settling in, ask for support from their Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo). • Avoid labeling your child as 'non-speaking' in front of others or telling your child off for remaining silent. • Encourage conversation at home, and in other settings e.g. family events, to develop verbal skills and confidence. Humour, jokes and laughter can teach the child that speaking is fun! <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage nursery or school to involve your child in activities through non-verbal activities. • If you refer to us, write down what your child says at home word for word to tell us. • Consider a SOLAR referral: https://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk/our-services/solar/ 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Remember to...</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">★ <i>If your child responds well to praise, do so when they take part or put effort in</i> ★ <i>Gain your child's attention before you speak to them</i></p>		
<p>Helpful links</p>	<p>Selective Mutism Information</p> 	<p>Information for parents and carers</p> 