

Voice

Paediatric Community Speech and Language Therapy

What is voice?

Voice is the sound that is made when our vocal cords touch and vibrate. Our voice is unique to us (we all sound different). Without voice, we simply cannot be heard! Every time we make noise such as by talking, laughing and coughing, our vocal cords vibrate.

If this vibration is forced then the sound of our voice may change to sounding hoarse, croaky, breathy, weak or strained. We may also experience other issues such as our vocal cords becoming red and/or sore and our voice may sound too high, low, loud or quiet.

Your child may complain of a sore throat, and you may notice that their voice tires easily. If these issues develop into a voice disorder, it will impact on your child's ability to communicate effectively and could affect their self-confidence.

Go to your GP with these issues if you haven't already. They may wish to refer your child to the Ear, Nose and Throat team for further assessment.

How to help

Providing a good role model for your child is important. Sometimes using the strategies (listed below) as a family will help your child understand what is expected of them, rather than just telling them to do them.

Strategies to practice good vocal hygiene:

- Drink lots of water and avoid fizzy, energy drinks and caffeine.
- Avoid shouting or using a loud voice.
- Avoid using silly voices for example when playing with toys children will often use noises in the throat to mimic characters.
- Avoid whispering (talk at your normal volume).
- Try to swallow instead of throat clearing.
- Avoid prolonged voice use / long conversations. If your child has a lot to talk about, encourage breaks.

Remember to...

Remind yourself of the strategies often so you continue using them
Tell everyone around your child about them so they can use them too

Helpful links

[British Voice Association](#)



[Great Ormond Street: Encouraging a healthy voice](#)

