

How Can Speech Therapists Help?

If a child encounters communication and feeding difficulties, our Speech Therapists will conduct a comprehensive assessment for the child and design targeted training for both the parents and the child, which may include strengthening oral muscles, guiding correct pronunciation, promoting speech development through play, and suggesting safe and effective feeding methods. Our Speech Therapists may collaborate with other healthcare professionals to provide a comprehensive treatment plan.

Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Happy Valley

Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital
Speech Therapy Service
5/F, Li Shu Pui Block
2 Village Road, Happy Valley, Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2835 7156
Fax: (852) 2892 7568
Email: pmrehab@hksh-hospital.com
www.hksh-hospital.com

Service Hours

Monday to Friday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Saturday: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays
Consultation by Appointment

For enquiries and appointments,
please contact us



Paediatric Speech Therapy Service



HKSH Paediatric Speech Therapy Service is designed for children who encounter difficulties in communication and eating. Through professional evaluation and assessment, our Speech Therapists aim to understand if a child's speech and swallowing abilities match age-appropriate developmental levels, identify potential causes of developmental delays, and consequently design suitable treatment and training plans to improve and enhance the child's communication and eating abilities.

Common Communication and Eating Problems in Children

- Speech Sound Disorders (Articulation Problems)
- Language Delay or Disorders
- Voice Problems
- Fluency Disorders (Stuttering)
- Feeding and Swallowing Difficulties
- Oral-motor Disorders

Speech Sound Disorders (Articulation Problems)

Children typically develop pronunciation skills according to their growth stages. If they are unable to accurately produce certain sounds by a certain age, they may have a speech sound disorder. Some children face articulation issues due to congenital, functional or structural problems, such as hearing impairments or cleft lip and palate. Common conditions may include:

- Difficulty in producing certain sounds
- Substituting sounds, such as saying "dope" for "soap"
- Omitting certain syllables, such as saying "arm" for "farm", or "hay" for "hate"
- People unfamiliar with the child are unable to understand the child's speech

Language Delay or Disorders

Some children experience difficulties in understanding or expressing language, which results in slower language development compared to their peers. Language problems may be due to a lack of a facilitative language environment, overall developmental delay, autism spectrum disorders, hearing impairment, brain injury, or even unknown causes. Common conditions may include:

- Inability to follow directions
- Difficulty in naming common objects or pictures
- Inability to take turns in conversations, lacking common vocabulary
- Inability to construct sentences or having grammatical errors in sentences
- Inability to initiate or carry on conversations

Voice Problems

Some children may experience difficulties using their vocal cords due to poor vocal habits or issues with the structure of their vocal cords. Common conditions may include:

- Speaking with a hoarse voice persistently
- Losing voice frequently
- Having a voice that differs from peers of the same age and gender
- Going off-key during speech
- Exhibiting voice pitch that is too low or too high
- Struggling to control volume, either too soft or too loud

Fluency Disorders (Stuttering)

Some children experience speech fluency issues or stuttering, which may persist into adulthood, impacting their confidence, academics, career, and social life. Common conditions may include:

- Repeating parts or whole words, such as "h-h-hi there"
- Prolonging sounds, such as "sss...see that?"
- Inserting meaningless words or empty fillers in speech, such as "I can...um...um...you know...meet you"
- Displaying facial distortions or body tension while speaking

Feeding and Swallowing Difficulties

Infants and young children may experience feeding and swallowing difficulties due to various reasons, such as congenital defects like cleft lip and palate, premature birth, or brain injury. Children with swallowing problems are at risk of poor nutrition, dehydration and pneumonia due to food or liquid entering the airway. Common conditions may include:

- Difficulty in sucking
- Refusing to feed
- Difficulty in chewing
- Coughing or choking during meals

Oral-Motor Disorders

If a child has oral motor development disorders, it may affect the growth, development, and function of the oral and facial muscles, leading to difficulties with articulation, feeding, or swallowing. Common conditions may include:

- Protruding tongue in between teeth at rest, while speaking or during swallowing
- Mouth breathing
- Tongue-tie
- Abnormal teeth alignment
- Drooling over the age of two
- Persistent finger or pacifier sucking habits

