

SEND Bulletin No. 18



Apraxia

Developmental verbal apraxia is the inability to coordinate the lip, tongue and throat muscles in order to form sounds into words. No two children with apraxia are alike in the characteristics they display. Children with developmental verbal apraxia may coordinate other movements normally.

Key characteristics

Children with developmental verbal apraxia may:

- be able to move the muscles used for speech but be unable to make words
- understand what others are saying but have difficulty replying
- have difficulty imitating speech
- be able to say short words but have difficulty with longer words and sentences
- be able to say a word correctly once, but then be unable to repeat it
- have other coordination difficulties
- have other language difficulties
- have attention difficulties
- have difficulties with self-monitoring of speech production
- have some behavioural difficulties.

Support strategies

All support strategies should be implemented under the guidance of a speech and language therapist. Therapy may include:

- speech-sound activities

- exercises to improve planning, sequencing and coordination of motor movements for speech production
- using rhythm and music to help develop sound combinations
- modelling motor movements used to produce specific sounds and words
- encouraging self-monitoring of speech production.

Support agencies

- Aiding Communication in Education: www.ace-centre.org.uk
- Apraxia Kids (USA): www.apraxia-kids.org
- Association for All Speech Impaired Children: www.afasic.org.uk
- National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (USA): www.nidcd.nih.gov
- Speech Teach: www.speechteach.co.uk

If you have any interesting information or resources which you would like to share with your colleagues via this fortnightly bulletin please e-mail them to me:

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Many thanks
Anne