SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES WITH SPEECH

A handbook for people working with children with communication difficulties

Let's Communicate Section 8

United Nations Children's Fund
New York

Rehabilitation Unit
World Health Organization
Geneva

Rehabilitation Unit
Ministry of Health, Zimbabwe
In the last section we looked at how to encourage communication in children who are multiply disabled.

In this section we are going to look at children who have special difficulties with speech in the absence of any other disability.

By the end of this section you should be able to
- identify children who have special difficulties with speech
- understand the aims of working with these children
- recognise the main features of each different type of speech difficulty
- give general advice to parents and teachers on how to help the child
- refer the child on for further advice.
SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES WITH SPEECH

Which children are we talking about in this section?

- We are talking about children who have difficulties with speech in the absence of any other difficulty.

- These difficulties with speech may be caused by a problem in the areas of the voice box, movement of the lips, tongue and palate and structure of the mouth.

- In this section we will be looking at four special difficulties with speech. These are:
  - sound sequencing difficulties
  - articulation difficulties
  - stammering
  - voice difficulties.

- These children have difficulty with speech, but do not have major difficulties with attention, listening, imitation and turntaking, play, understanding and gesture. Their communication house is firmly built so it is with these children that we are more likely to work directly on speech.

What are our aims in working with children with special difficulties with speech?

Our aims are:

- to identify correctly children who have special problems with speech
- to give general advice to parents and teachers on how to help the child
- to make appropriate referrals for extra advice when necessary.
Where will the breakdown in the communication cycle be?

Understanding of verbal and non-verbal messages

1. Hear and see the message
   - Where is the cup?

2. Register what you see and hear
   - What sounds are those? Is it a dog? Is it a person?

3. Recognise what you see and hear
   - I recognize some of these words...

4. Recognise the meaning
   - Ah! He wants to know where the cup is.

5. Decide on the response
   - I need to tell him that the cup is on the table.

6. Decide how to send the response
   - Should I say out or sign, or write my response?

7. Choose sounds and words
   - Table

8. Know order of symbols
   - Which sounds, signs, letters, words come first?

9. Send the response – monitor and correct it
   - Cup...

Expression using verbal and non-verbal messages

The breakdown of the cycle for children who have special difficulties with speech, will be at steps 8 and 9 only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children who have special difficulties with speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• understand spoken language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• know what they want to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• have difficulty saying out words clearly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When we think a child has particular difficulty with speech it is important for us to hear him speaking in a natural situation.

Well that's easy - we can just force him to talk, can't we?

Well actually, it's not that easy - forcing children to speak usually has the opposite effect - it stops them from talking. So what we need to do is find ways of gently encouraging a child to talk. Read on...

Here are some ideas of how to encourage a child to talk:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DON'T</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>create a natural situation</td>
<td>force the child to repeat words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>give the child time</td>
<td>rush the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>praise the child when he tries</td>
<td>scold him or laugh at him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be patient</td>
<td>be impatient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involve other children and the parents</td>
<td>put all the focus on the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask open questions</td>
<td>ask closed questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open and closed questions - what are they?

An **open question** is one which requires a person to use **a full sentence to answer**.

A **closed question** is one which requires a person to use only **a single word to answer** such as "yes" or "no".

Here are some examples:

1. (a) What can you tell me about your brothers and sisters? (open)
   (b) Have you got brothers and sisters? (closed)

2. (a) What do you like to do at home? (open)
   (b) Do you like playing football? (closed)

3. (a) Which lessons do you like best at school? (open)
   (b) Do you learn to read at school? (closed)

So...to encourage a child to talk, remember to use open questions!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>0-6 months</th>
<th>6-12 months</th>
<th>12-18 months</th>
<th>1½ - 3 years</th>
<th>3-5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPEECH</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>Yes but not clear</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>Yes but not clear</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GESTURE</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAY</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTENTION</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LISTENING</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURN &amp; IMITATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROSS MOTOR</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strengths: All other areas.

Needs: Speech and listening only.
Now let's compare the abilities of a child who has special difficulties with speech with the abilities of children who have other disabilities.

Checking your assessment profile against the column below will help you to decide whether the child you have assessed really does have special difficulty with speech. If the profile obviously does not match up with the column, think again!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MENTAL HANDICAP</th>
<th>DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY</th>
<th>CEREBRAL PALSY</th>
<th>HEARING IMPAIRMENT</th>
<th>MULTIPLE DISABILITY</th>
<th>SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES WITH SPEECH</th>
<th>(Section 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPEECH</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GESTURE</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAY</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTENTION</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
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<td>M - severely</td>
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<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURNTAKING &amp; IMITATION</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROSS MOTOR</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>M - delayed</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
<td>S - severe hearing</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>S - severely</td>
<td>M - severely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES WITH SPEECH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Mildly - severely affected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesture</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turntaking &amp; Imitation</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities of daily living</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross motor</td>
<td>Like other children of same age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So you see... children who have special difficulties with speech are different from the other groups of children that we have looked at so far. Their strengths are in understanding, gesture, play, attention, turntaking and imitation, activities of daily living and gross motor skills. Speech and listening are their only needs.
Now let's look in more detail at four special difficulties with speech. These are:

- sound sequencing difficulties
- articulation difficulties
- stammering
- voice difficulties.

Remember! In this section we are talking about children who have these difficulties in the absence of any other disability, so this does not include children with cerebral palsy, mental handicap, hearing impairment or multiple disabilities.

For each of these we will look at:

- what it is
- how it is caused
- how we can identify it
- appropriate goals
- general advice for parents
- general advice for teachers.

With these groups of children you might need to get extra advice because they can be particularly difficult to help. You might find there are people in your area who deal specifically with children who have special difficulties with speech—... for example a speech therapist or correctionist; a psychologist; an ear, nose and throat doctor. Be sure to refer children to them if you need more help.
What is sound sequencing?

Sound sequencing is being able to put sounds together to form a word. A child has a pattern in his head which tells him how to put the sounds in the correct order or sequence to make that word.

What are sound sequencing difficulties?

Difficulties happen when the pattern of sounds that a child has in his head is either “lost” or disordered. This means that a child is able to make the sounds, but he is not able to put them together in the correct sequence to make a word.

Let’s make this more clear...

We can think of speaking as being a bit like knitting.

For knitting we need to have a pattern in our heads. The pattern tells us how to put the stitches together in the right order to make the garment we want. We also need to be physically able to make those stitches with the knitting needles.

For speaking we need to have a pattern in our heads. The pattern tells us how to put sounds together in the right order to make the word we want. We also need to be physically able to make those sounds.

A child who has sound sequencing difficulties is physically able to make sounds, but he does not have a pattern in his head of how to put the sounds together in the right order to make a word.

What is the cause?

- The cause of sound sequencing difficulties is usually unknown.
How can we identify a child who has difficulties with sound sequencing?

A child who has a sound sequencing difficulty will have

- unclear speech
- possible difficulties with listening
- possible difficulties putting words together to make sentences
- no difficulties making individual sounds when asked
- no structural abnormality of the speech organs.

What are our goals for children with sound sequencing difficulties?

We aim

- to improve the intelligibility of the child’s speech
- to ensure that talking is enjoyable for the child
- to give general advice to the parents and to the teacher
- to make a further referral when necessary.

Now let's look at each of these goals in turn, and think about how they can be achieved. Read on ...
How to improve the intelligibility of a child’s speech

• By playing games we can develop a child’s listening skills, which in turn, will help his speech.

When you talk to him, remind him to "listen!".

Play a game of listening for "go!" before putting a stone in the tin.

Play music for the children to dance to. They must listen and all sit down when the music stops.

Bang a rhythm on a drum. The child must listen and then copy the rhythm.

Bang loud noises on the drum. The children must listen and move like elephants. Tap quiet noises on the drum—the children must listen and move like mice.

Look on the next page for more ideas...
Take a set of animal pictures. The child must listen, and when you make an animal noise she must match that sound to the picture of the animal.

Take two tins. Give each tin a different sound, e.g., tin 1: "b"; tin 2: "d". The child must listen for you to say either "b" or "d" and put a stone in the appropriate tin.

As before, but this time the child must listen for the given sounds in a word, and then put the stone in the appropriate tin.

Name common objects. When saying the words, make deliberate mistakes. The child must listen and correct you when you are wrong.

Go and buy me some sugar, surf and peanut butter.

Play "shopping games" where the child must listen carefully to words.

Spend time each day playing these games with the child. Make it fun!
How to make talking enjoyable for a child

- The most important thing is for a child to enjoy talking, and for him to be encouraged to "practise" speaking.

When a child tries to talk encourage him. Accept any attempts he makes, even though his speech may not be perfect.

Spend time talking together with the child. Listen to what he tells you and show interest in him.

Sit together looking at pictures and books. Talk about them. Tell each other stories.

Do not force the child to speak in front of other people if he does not want to.

Do not laugh at the child when he mispronounces words. Rather encourage him and say out the correct word for him to hear.

Share these ideas with all family members and friends so that everyone knows how to help the child.
Advising parents and teachers

- As with all other children with communication difficulties it is most important to teach the parents how to help their child at home. Teach the parents the activities we have included under “How to improve the intelligibility of a child’s speech” and “How to make talking enjoyable for a child”.

- Make sure that the parents really understand about their child’s difficulty and explain to them that having their child’s tongue cut will not help the sound sequencing difficulty.

General advice for parents

- People talking to the child must make sure that she is listening before they talk to her.
- If the child is unable to get her message across using speech encourage her to show what she wants to say by using gestures.
- Have patience with the child and do not scold her for the way she talks. She can’t help it.

General advice for teachers

- Use the ideas included under “How to make talking enjoyable for a child” (page 11).
- Give the child the same opportunities for talking as the other children in the class, but do not force her to speak if she does not want to.
- Accept any attempts the child makes to speak. Do not draw particular attention to her speech. Remember, it is what she says that is most important, not how she says it.
- Try to explain to the other children about the child’s difficulties, and discourage them from making fun of her.
- If the child’s difficulty is interfering with her progress at school go to your local education office for help. Find out what services are available in your area, to help these children.
ARTICULATION DIFFICULTIES

What is articulation?
- Articulation is the coordinated movement of the speech organs to produce intelligible sounds.

What are articulation difficulties?
- Articulation difficulties happen when the speech organs, for whatever reason, do not work normally.
- This means that certain sounds may be difficult or impossible for a child to articulate and as a result his speech may be unclear.

What is the cause?
- A problem with any of the speech organs can result in an articulation difficulty.
- The speech organs are

Lips  Tongue  Position of teeth  Hard and soft palates

...all these work together using air from the lungs to articulate sounds.

- Articulation difficulties may be caused by
  - poor movement of any of the speech organs
  - structural abnormality, e.g. cleft lip, cleft palate
  - unknown factors.
How can we identify a child who has articulation difficulties?

A child who has an articulation difficulty will have

- unclear speech
- no difficulty putting words together to make sentences.

She may also have

- a history of feeding and drinking problems
- difficulty controlling saliva, i.e. dribbling
- periods of hearing loss
- a structural abnormality of one of the speech organs
- a tendency to breathe through her mouth
- a lot of air coming down her nose when speaking.

What are our goals for children with articulation difficulties?

Our goals are

- to help the child articulate sounds more clearly
- to ensure that talking is enjoyable for the child
- to give general advice to the parents and to the teacher
- to make a further referral when necessary.

But hang on! - I'm a bit confused now. What's the difference between articulation difficulties and sound sequencing difficulties. Can you explain?

Yes! Remember that before, we said that speaking is a bit like knitting. A child who has sound sequencing difficulties is physically able to make sounds, but she does not have a pattern in her head of how to put the sounds together in the right order to make a word. In contrast, a child who has articulation difficulties has a pattern in her head, but she is physically unable to make the correct sounds.
How to help a child articulate sounds more clearly

- By playing certain games we can encourage movement and coordination of the speech organs

  - Licking sugar, jam or peanut butter from around the lips.
  - Blowing a feather, a leaf or a piece of paper to each other.
  - Holding a piece of paper between the lips.
  - Blowing through a straw.
  - Copying faces and movements in the mirror.
  - Playing games making different animal noises.

- By improving a child's eating habits we can also encourage movement and coordination of the speech organs

  - Encourage the child to eat solid food, e.g. meat, bread, fruit.
  - Place food to the side of the child's mouth to encourage chewing.
  - Help the child to close his mouth. Praise him when he tries.

These activities should be done daily with the child. Do not force him. Make the activities fun and do them together.
How to make talking enjoyable for a child

• As with children who have sound sequencing difficulties, it is most important that a child with articulation difficulties enjoys talking and is encouraged to practise speaking. Use the ideas on page 11 of this section!

Advising parents and teachers

• As with all other children with communication difficulties it is most important to teach the parents how to help their child at home. Teach the parents the activities we have included under “How to help a child articulate sounds more clearly” (page 15) and “How to make talking enjoyable for a child” (page 11).

• Make sure that the parents really understand about their child’s difficulty and explain to them that having their child’s tongue cut will not help the articulation difficulty.

General advice for teachers

• Use the ideas included under “How to make talking enjoyable for a child” (page 11).

• Give the child the same opportunities for talking as the other children in the class, but do not force her to speak if she does not want to.

• Accept any attempts the child makes to speak. Do not draw particular attention to her speech. Remember, it is what she says that is most important, not how she says it.

• Try to explain to the other children about the child’s difficulties, and discourage them from making fun of her.

• If the child’s difficulty is interfering with her progress at school go to your local education office for help. Find out what services are available in your area.
STAMMERING

When a person speaks, he puts sounds together to form words, and words together to form sentences, in an easy and relaxed way so that his speech is flowing.

What is stammering?

- Stammering is when a person is unable to talk in an easy and relaxed way and his speech is unnaturally hesitant. His speech does not flow easily.

What causes stammering?

- There are many different theories about the causes of stammering, but no one theory has been proved correct.
- Essentially we can say that the cause of stammering is unknown.

How can we identify a child who stammers?

If you listen to people speaking you will notice that there are times when all of us speak in a hesitant way — we may be nervous, or tired, or excited... Everyone has their own way of speaking — some people speak in a very flowing way, while others may be quite hesitant. When a person's speech is so hesitant that it is a problem for that person, or when communication with other people is difficult because of the hesitancy, then we might say that that person has a stammer.

- We say that a person stammers when their speech is so hesitant that it is a problem for them or for other people.
- Below the age of 5 years, hesitancy when talking is normal, so we would never label a very young child a stammerer.
What are our goals for children who stammer?

We aim

- to help the child speak in a more easy and relaxed way
- to ensure that talking is enjoyable for the child
- to give general advice to the parents and to the teacher
- to make a further referral when necessary.

To achieve the above goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>☑ Do</th>
<th>✗ Don't</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Give the child time to speak, even if it is slow and difficult for her. Don’t finish her sentences for her. Try not to show impatience by your facial expression or tone of voice. Be patient!</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen to what the child who stammers has to say, as carefully as you would listen to any other child. Try not to interrupt her while she is speaking. Do not give her advice like “slow down” or “relax” or “speak more clearly”</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remember always to show interest in what the child has to say, rather than how she is saying it</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>At 5,5,5,5 school today the lady teacher gave me a 5,5,5,5,5,5 star!</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>At 5,5,5,5...</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Really? What for?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What! Now come on: Hurry up!</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W, w, w, w...</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W, w, w, w...</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Take a deep breath</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W, w, w, w, w when I was c, c, c, c,</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Now, just relax.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>You know what I saw? I saw a b, b, b, big snake!</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A snake? I hope it didn’t bite you!</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Y, y, you know what I saw?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Now hold on! You’re going too fast!</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| <strong>W, w, w, w...</strong> |
| <strong>Now just relax.</strong> |
| <strong>W, w, w, w, w when I was c, c, c,</strong> |
| <strong>Take a deep breath</strong> |
| <strong>W, w, w, w...</strong> |
| <strong>Really? What for?</strong> |
| <strong>What! Now come on: Hurry up!</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Do</strong></th>
<th><strong>Don't</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give the child the same opportunities for talking as you give other children — even if you know he will stammer. Never force him to speak in front of others, but if he wants to try, encourage him.</td>
<td>No John. I haven't got time for your answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes! You can all have a part in the school play!</td>
<td>You can all have a part in the play. Except John. You might find it difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child who stammers is just the same as any other child, apart from his difficulty with speech. Do not treat him any differently from other children and have the same expectations of him as you do of other children of his age.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the other children to be patient when the child who stammers is talking. They should listen to what he has to say and give him time to say it. Discourage anyone from laughing at the child or from imitating the way he speaks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember to share these ideas with the parents and the teacher of the child who stammers. It is most important that everyone involved with the child is following the same advice. For more ideas on how to make talking enjoyable for a child, see page 11 of this section. And if you need more help, find out if it's possible to make a specialist referral in your area.
**VOICE DIFFICULTIES**

**What is voice?**

- When we speak air passes up from our lungs and through our voice box to make noise. This is what we call voice.
- Voice is made by two vocal cords in the voice box which vibrate when air passes through them.

**What are voice difficulties?**

- If there is something wrong with the vocal cords they will not vibrate normally and this causes voice difficulties.
- If a person has a voice difficulty her voice might sound hoarse, very quiet, too high or too low, or she might “lose” her voice altogether.

**What is the cause?**

Normally the cords inside the voice box have smooth surfaces and they vibrate smoothly together. If something happens to change the smooth surface and vibration of the cords, then a voice difficulty will result.

- Voice difficulties may be caused by
  - excessive shouting or straining of the voice
  - an abnormality of the cords
  - psychological factors.
How can we identify a child who has a voice difficulty?

- When a child has a voice that doesn’t sound as it should, we say he has a voice difficulty. His voice may be hoarse, too quiet, too high or too low, or may just sound strange.

What is our goal for children who have voice difficulties?

- Our goal is to help a child speak using a more natural voice.

- This can be best achieved by **making a further referral**.

- Because of the complex nature of voice difficulties it is important that a child who has a voice difficulty is referred immediately for specialist examination.

- The child should be sent to see an Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist who will be able to say whether there is something physically wrong with the vocal cords.

- The specialist will be able to advise the parents and might refer them to a speech/communication therapist or a clinical psychologist.

In the meantime you can give the following advice to parents and teachers ...

- discourage the child from shouting and straining his voice.

- encourage the child to talk gently.

- ensure that the child is not exposed to a lot of dust or smoke.
Important points to remember about special difficulties with speech

• There are some children who have difficulties with speech in the absence of any other disability.

• The four main special difficulties with speech are
  — sound sequencing difficulties
  — articulation difficulties
  — stammering
  — voice difficulties.

• Children who only have difficulties with speech understand spoken language.

• Children who have special difficulties with speech know what they want to say but they have difficulty saying out words clearly.

• Often, these children's difficulties are quite complex and they may need further help. Be sure to refer them on when necessary and possible.

• Parents and teachers can be given general advice on how to help these children. They also need your encouragement and support.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Treatment Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Weak Sucking</td>
<td>Stroke the outer area around the mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Difficulty Swallowing</td>
<td>Ensure that head is upright and slightly forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Difficulty Moving</td>
<td>Use jaw control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Thrust</td>
<td>Ensure fixed position with shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bite Down</td>
<td>Use firm or peanut butter on lips and teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Difficult Cheewing</td>
<td>Put jam or peanut butter on lips and teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Difficulty Swallowing</td>
<td>Put rim or peanut butter on lips and teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Difficult Cheewing</td>
<td>Use jaw control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Movements of the tongue</td>
<td>Use firm or peanut butter on lips and teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Movements of the lips</td>
<td>Use jaw control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Blow and move piece of paper in lips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Lip closure</td>
<td>Use ideas for jaw control (see 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Playing games to increase control of the lips</td>
<td>Blooming games, holding a leaf or Lifesavers piece of gum in lips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Before trying any of these suggestions, make sure that the child is positioned well.**

*These suggestions might not seem to work to begin with, but do not give up too quickly. Give the child until the child has got used to them. Precede these suggestions in between meal times.*

**Note:**

- Place food to side of mouth
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