

Selective Mutism

Selective Mutism is where a child is able to communicate and talk well in some situations, however they cannot talk in other situations. Selective Mutism is often easier to understand when described more as a phobia.

Below are some general strategies to help children with Selective Mutism, for further information please visit www.letsstarttotalk.co.uk

Try not to put pressure on your child to talk. this can make them feel more uncomfortable and reluctant to talk.

Remember to be patient! Selective Mutism can take time to work on and will depend on each individual child as to when they are ready to start to talk.

Accept all forms of communication from your child. They may choose to communicate by pointing or looking at something. Praise them for doing this to encourage them to do it more.

Offer your child other methods to communicate. For example, see if they would like to write messages, talk on the phone to someone or record themselves talking in private and then play it back. (Only if your child is happy to do so).

Hi how
are you?

Give opening questions such as "I wonder if.....". This gives the child an opportunity to talk but does not mean that they have to give an answer. They can answer if they feel happy too.

Find other ways of getting your child involved in activities that doesn't require them to talk. E.g. Getting them to turn the page in the book, encouraging them to point to things, asking them to look at what they would like when giving them a choice.

Build relationships with the child by playing games with them but simply commenting on what they do. E.g. building a tower or reading them a book.

