

Childhood Apraxia of Speech



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Challenged Communication between Mouth & Mind

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Occupational Therapy Speech Therapy

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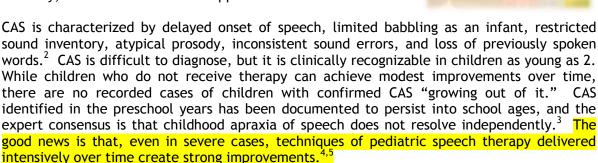


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Imagine that you are trying to speak to others. You know exactly what you want to say and what tone, inflection, and speed to use, but your mouth, throat, and tongue simply won't cooperate with you. Your muscles and joints seem otherwise healthy. You can chew and swallow. But you simply can't use speech the way you want. This could be apraxia of speech.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association defines childhood apraxia of speech (CAS) as a neurological childhood speech-sound disorder in which the precision and consistency of movements underlying speech are impaired in the absence of neuromuscular deficits. However, neuromuscular deficits may or may not be present as a co-existing condition. In the recent past, other terms such as developmental apraxia of speech and developmental verbal dyspraxia have been used, but in 2007, the American Speech-Language Hearing Association issued a position statement recommending that one term, "Childhood apraxia of speech," be used to describe the pediatric form of the disorder from all etiologies (idiopathic, neurological, and neurobehavioral). CAS can result from infections, trauma, or heredity, or it can occur with no apparent cause.



Part of the difficulty associated with diagnosing childhood apraxia of speech stems from the high prevalence of co-existing conditions. Children with CAS commonly present with other speech and language impairments and other differences in sensory processing, attention regulation, vestibular function, temperament, fine motor skills, and literacy.^{6,7} The high prevalence of important, co-existing conditions not only underscores the importance of a qualified pediatric speech/language evaluation, it also highlights the desirability of a combined speech/occupational therapy approach to achieve optimal outcomes for most children.



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Please tell parents about Emerge – A Child's Place Believing in a Child's Potential to Flourish

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