

Helping children who are worried about talking

Some children will talk happily at home but find it difficult to talk in other places, like school. Teachers and school staff can help children to feel more comfortable about talking in school.



How to help a child who finds it difficult to talk in school

The best way to help a child who finds it difficult to talk in school is to try to reduce the pressure on them and support them in developing their confidence. Reassure them that it's OK if they don't feel like talking at the moment, there's plenty of time.

Ideas to try include:

- In circle-time activities, ask who would like to say something instead of expecting each child to have a go.
- Help the child to contribute in a non-verbal way, for example, by holding a prop, giving items out or showing something they have brought from home.
- Increase the number of activities where the children talk, move or sing **together**.
 - At register time, let the children choose between answering the register or raising their hand.
 - Let the children point to what they want at lunchtime.
 - Find children who will include the child at playtime.
 - Make chatty or reassuring comments rather than asking the child questions.
 - If possible, find a teaching assistant to gently befriend, include and encourage the quiet children in the class.

Children's
speech and
language
therapy