



Speech Pathology

Paediatric speech pathologists diagnose, treat and provide support for children of all ages with neurodevelopmental or acquired communication and/or feeding disorders. More specifically this includes deficits of speech production - articulation/phonology, expressive or receptive language, social/pragmatic language, literacy, fluency or voice. Paediatric speech pathologists work with children who are experiencing difficulty breastfeeding, eating or drinking.

Paediatric speech pathologists work closely with families to ensure goals are set to suit the specific needs of the child and their environment. Speech Pathologists aim to provide children with **functional communication** to enable engagement in everyday life as well for **social and interactive purposes**. We also support children to access the educational curriculum through improving literacy - **phonological awareness, reading and spelling skills**.

Feeding and swallowing impairment can be associated with neurological conditions or may be a concern an individual experiences throughout development, speech pathologists work to improve the function of swallowing and ensure safety when beginning oral intake.

Vital Health provides assessment, treatment and home-programs to any child aged from the newborn to young adults. Our therapists work collaboratively to increase outcomes for children with complex needs, we also work in conjunction with other professionals involved in the child's care including GP's, paediatricians, teachers etc.

Specific programs/groups offered through our Speech Pathology clinic include:

- Hanen programs (Hanen certification), It Takes Two to Talk (parent /child interaction for early language)
- Lidcombe Program for Early Stuttering
- PECS – Picture Exchange Communication System
- Paediatric Feeding (in conjunction with Occupational Therapy)
- LAUGH – Language, Attention and Understanding Group for Homework
- School Readiness group (in conjunction with Occupational Therapy)

Speech Pathologists work with children with a variety of conditions impacting communication, learning or feeding, some of which include:

❖	Receptive or expressive language delay or disorder
❖	Articulation or phonological delay or disorder
❖	Stuttering – developmental or acquired
❖	Delayed literacy through to dyslexia or disorders of learning (reading, spelling, phonological awareness)
❖	Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)
❖	Tongue or Lip tie
❖	Premature babies – feeding
❖	Hearing Impairment
❖	Cleft Palate – pre & post surgical repair
❖	Acquired brain injury and associated communication difficulties – dysarthria or aphasia
❖	Social or pragmatic difficulties – no diagnosis
❖	PDD-NOS (Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified)
❖	Autism Spectrum Disorder
❖	Diagnosed disabilities – Cerebral Palsy, Prader-Willi syndrome, Kabuki Syndrome, Rett's disorder, Cri-du-Chat Syndrome + others
❖	AAC Devices (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) – for complex communication needs