



Childhood Apraxia of Speech: A Parent's Guide



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For permissions requests, please contact

Rebecca Garnsey @ rebecca.garnsey@inspireaheg.com.au

Inspire Allied Health and Education Group PTY LTD

PO Box 275,

Camden NSW 2570

Australia

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Inspire Allied Health and Education Group PTY LTD

PO Box 275,

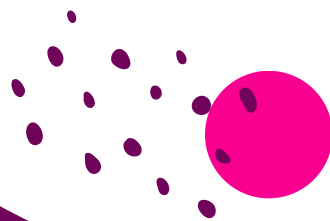
Camden NSW 2570

Australia



What is Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)?

Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) is a motor speech disorder that affects a child's ability to accurately and consistently produce sounds, syllables, and words. Unlike other speech disorders, CAS is characterised by difficulty planning and coordinating the precise movements of the tongue, lips, jaw, and palate needed for clear speech.





Characteristics of Childhood Apraxia of Speech:

Inconsistent Speech Sound Errors: Children with CAS may produce the same word differently each time, making it challenging for others to understand.

Difficulty with Sequencing Sounds: CAS often involves difficulty in putting sounds and syllables in the correct order, affecting the overall clarity of speech.

Difficulty with Prosody: Some children with CAS have difficulty producing the correct stress patterns on words and phrases impacting the intonation or 'rhythm' of their speech.

Limited Repertoire of Sounds: Children with CAS may have a restricted set of consonants and vowels they can use, further complicating their ability to communicate effectively.

Groping Movements: Some children with CAS may exhibit groping or trial-and-error movements as they attempt to coordinate their speech muscles.

Difficulty with Imitation: Children with CAS may struggle to imitate speech sounds and sequences accurately.



Who Diagnoses Childhood Apraxia of Speech?

Speech Pathologists are trained professionals who diagnose and treat speech disorders, including CAS.



How is Childhood Apraxia of Speech Diagnosed?

Diagnosing CAS involves a comprehensive assessment by a qualified Speech Pathologist. The evaluation may include analysing the child's speech production, motor planning abilities, and other related factors.



Checklist for Parents - Characteristics of Childhood Apraxia of Speech:

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- ✓ Inconsistent speech sound errors
 - ✓ Difficulty sequencing sounds
 - ✓ Difficulty with prosody or the 'rhythm' of their speech
 - ✓ Limited repertoire of sounds
 - ✓ Groping movements or trial-and-error behaviours
 - ✓ Difficulty with imitating speech sounds accurately



Steps You Can Take If You Suspect Your Child Has Childhood Apraxia of Speech:

1. **Consult a Speech and Language Pathologist:**

Schedule an appointment with a certified Speech Pathologist for a comprehensive assessment.

2. **Document Speech Patterns:** Keep a record of your child's speech patterns, noting any consistent errors or difficulties.

3. **Seek Early Intervention Services:** Early intervention is crucial for children with CAS.



Treatment and Support Strategies for Childhood

Apraxia of Speech:

There are a range of supports suitable for children with CAS. Inspire Allied Health and Education encourage the following suggestions:

Speech Therapy: Regular sessions with a qualified Speech and Language Pathologist focusing on motor planning, sequencing, and sound production.

Parent Involvement: Work closely with the Speech Pathologist and implement recommended activities at home to reinforce therapy goals.



Augmentative and Alternative Communication

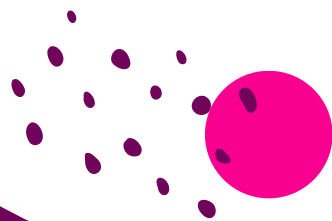
(AAC): In some cases, AAC tools and strategies may be introduced to support communication.

Consistency and Repetition: Practice speech exercises consistently to reinforce motor planning and sequencing.

Multisensory Approaches: Use activities that engage multiple senses to enhance speech motor skills.



Remember that every child with CAS is unique, and their needs vary. Please reach out to Inspire Allied Health and Education Group to find out how we can support your child and family.





Contact

Phone Number: (02) 4666 4255 / (02) 4648 0837

Email: hr@inspireaheg.com.au

Website: www.inspireaheg.com.au

 www.inspireaheg.com.au

 [@inspireahegrp](https://www.instagram.com/inspireahegrp)

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