

Selective Mutism



مركز الملك سلمان لأبحاث الإعاقة
King Salman Center For Disability Research
Science Benefiting People علم ينفع الناس

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This is Sarah.
She is 6 years old and has Selective Mutism.

On their way to school
Sarah's mother speaks "My dear, you are smart
and brave. Your voice is yours and you decide
when you are ready to share it."



At School, Sarah's friends are chatting about random things. Her anxiety increases.





“Sarah, Sarah! Want to play rock paper scissors with us?” Sarah's friends asked, however, she doesn't participate.

Instead, Sarah freezes.



In the classroom, it is morning exercise time with Mrs. Dina
"Flutter flutter your wings,
my little butterflies."

The children are
laughing and moving.
Sarah is still.

The bell rings and
the children go out for recess.

Sarah sits with her friends at
the table as they chat and eat.
Sarah is silent.





The children start playing tag.
"Tag your it!"

Sarah did not move.

It is time to go home, and on their way
Sarah's mother asks about her day at school.

Sarah asks her mother to help tell her
friends and teacher about Selective Mutism.



At home Sarah and her mother make a large board explaining what Selective Mutism is and how she is a brave girl, working hard on sharing her voice.





The next day, the teacher and the mother share the board while Sarah stands next to them.

She still does not speak, but she stays close.

WHAT IS SELECTIVE MUTISM?

Selective mutism is a complex childhood anxiety disorder characterized by a child's inability to speak and communicate effectively in select social settings, such as school.

An individual's pattern of autism can vary greatly.

Some children or adults can never talk outside the house, some whisper, and some speak with only a few people.

The "individual has not elected to withhold the ability to talk in all situations; rather, the individual selects the situations and people with whom they verbally communicate" (Richard, 2011, p. 8).

Children with selective mutism typically do not speak at school, which interferes with academic, educational, and/or social performance.

Children with this disorder sometimes communicate via nonspoken or non-vocal means (e.g., pointing, writing).



Collaboration between the speech-language pathologist (SLP) and behavioural health professionals (such as a school or clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, or school social worker), as well as the classroom teacher and the child's family, is particularly important for appropriate assessment and treatment planning as well as implementation because selective mutism is categorized as an anxiety-based disorder.

SLPs are in an excellent position to coordinate intervention for children who have selective mutism because of their knowledge and skills in effective communication treatments (Schum, 2002).
American psychiatric association 2013.



VISION, MESSAGE, AND VALUES

The Center's vision is to become a leader in the field of disability research with a global impact.

The Center also seeks to implement its message of "science benefiting people" through preventing disability and improving quality of life for the disabled through scientific research.

The Center seeks to perform its duties by committing to the following values:

- Belief in seeking knowledge that benefits humankind.
- Belief in team-building and sharing of knowledge and capabilities.
- Belief in a culture of credibility, professionalism, and humaneness.

GOALS

One: *King Salman Center for Disability Research specializes in:*

- Executing scientific research in the fields of disability and providing all requirements for such.
- Supporting scientific research in the fields of disability and providing researchers in these fields with all form of needed support.
- Fostering interest in disability research and programs aimed at the disabled.

- Encouraging scientific research and effective practices in the fields of disability and encouraging the exchange of knowledge and experiences between practitioners through organizing conferences, seminars, and workshops.
- Cooperation and coordination with governmental and private entities to develop research activities and prevention programs that aim to prevent disability and improve the quality of life for the disabled.
- Encouraging scientific research through public relations and media.
- Sponsoring the registration of patents related to disability and helping inventors register their patents.

Two: Conducting and facilitating training events related to the scientific aspects of disability.

Three: Releasing periodicals publishing research papers and studies related to disability.

Four: Establishing a data centre that houses databases and statistic on disability and disability research in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and providing researchers and professionals with access to this information to facilitate and encourage research endeavours.

Five: Spreading social awareness around disability and its prevention and the ideal methods of caring for the disabled on the family and societal levels.

Six: Seeking to put into practice the results of scientific research through programs and coordination with concerned entities.





"Our gratitude and thanks to His Majesty King
Salman Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud,

the founder of the Center for his support and
sound guidance for the cause of disability in
the interest of his nation and citizens.

May Allah protect his Highness."



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