

Welcome!

Please put your camera on.

We want people to participate but please use the 'raise hand' facility to ask questions and contribute when others are talking.

Please be considerate to others - together we want to create a safe, open and reflective space to learn.

You can turn on live captions on by clicking on the 3 dots at the top of your screen if you need this.

The link to the feedback form will be put in the chat. Please do take the time to complete it after the session.

Thank you!



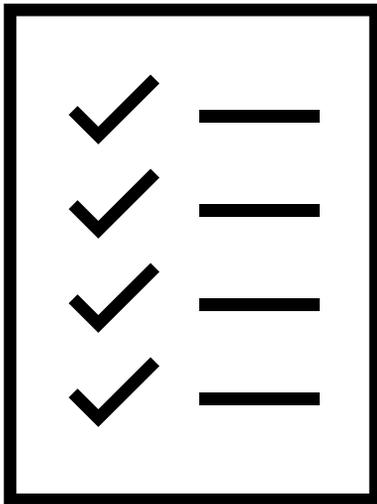
Supporting children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds with their Speech, Language and Communication

Olivia Ince & Zoe Maufe

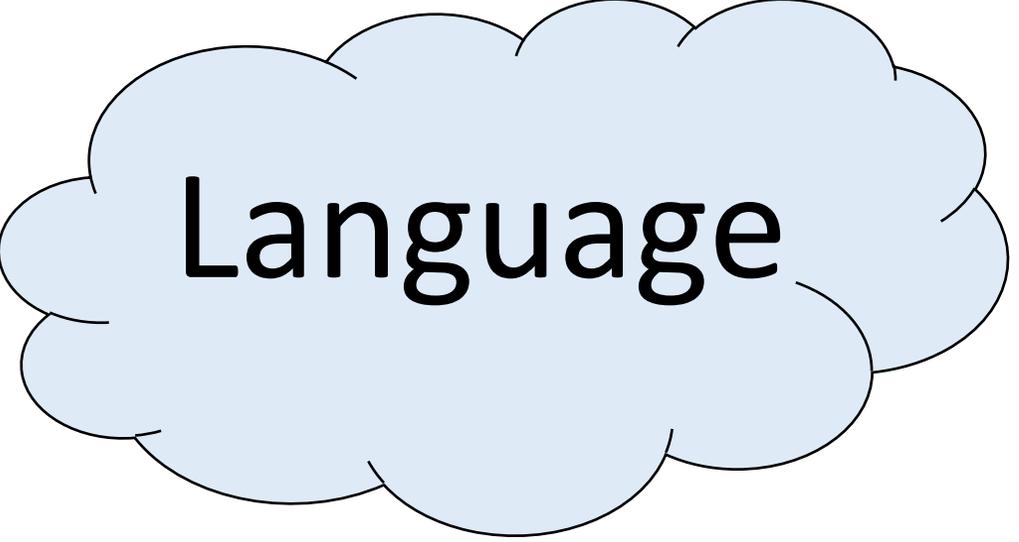
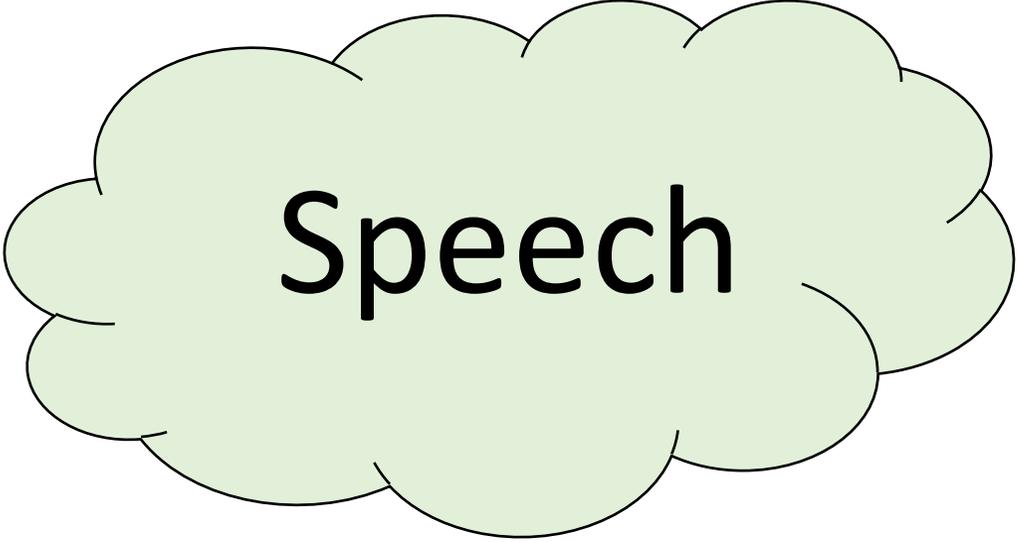
Speech and Language Therapists

New Roads Service

Session Aims:

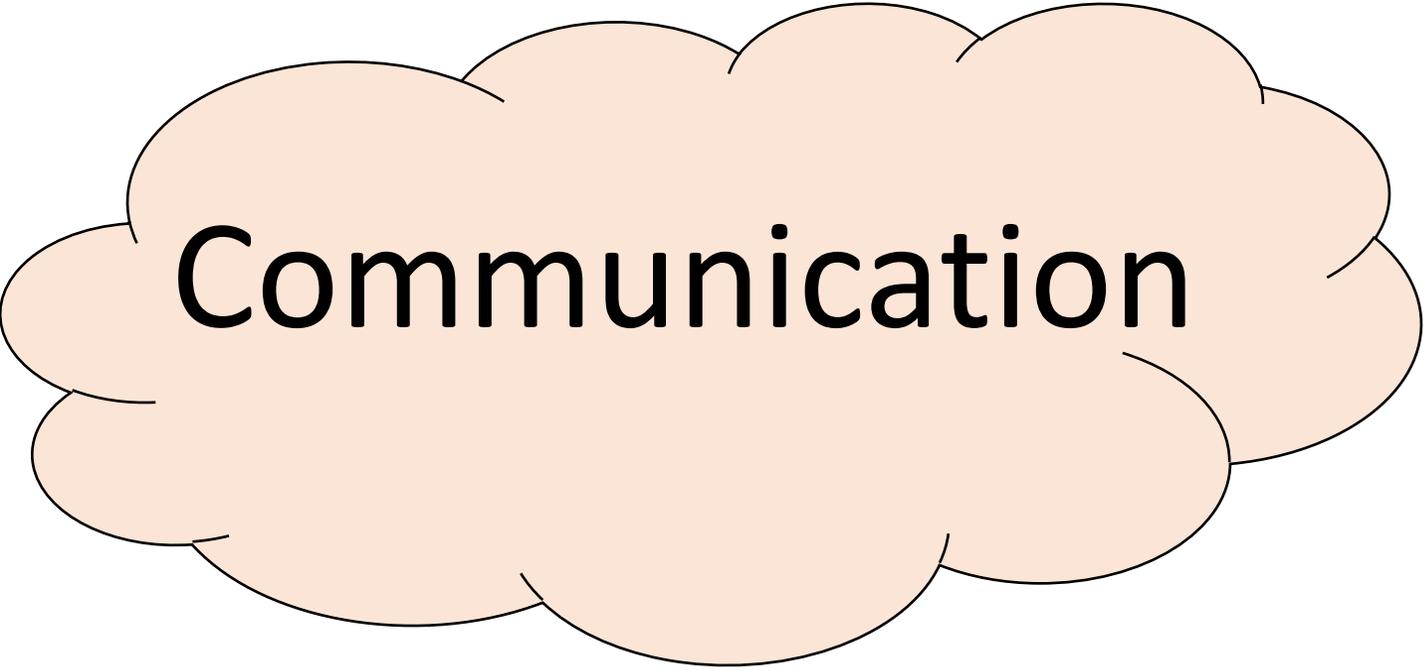


- The difference between Speech, Language and Communication.
- What are Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)?
- The link between SLCN and social disadvantage
- The impact of SLCN
- The link between social inequality and SLCN
- What we can do to support children and young people with SLCN
- Top tips to increase accessibility



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Speech:

Different languages have different rules for speech, for example which sounds can go together in sequences within words. Some languages also use different speech sounds.

Speech involves:

Clarity: being able to clearly make speech sounds so that speech is clear and can be understood by others.

Voice: having a voice which can be clearly heard and controlling the volume.

Intonation: using pitch and stress to make speech sound interesting and varied (not monotone!)

Fluency: being able to speak without hesitating too much, or repeating words/ sounds

Reference: I CAN CPD short course- Secondary Communication [CPD short course \(ican.org.uk\)](https://www.ican.org.uk)

Language

This includes both understanding of language (receptive language) and expression of language (expressive language).

Language involves:

- **Words**- understanding and using the right vocabulary. New words need to be heard in context many times before we understand them. Then we need to try out using the word many times before we use it confidently. Some words are not heard across contexts as they are specific and technical (e.g. the vocabulary used in some lessons at high school)
- **How words go together**- understanding and using grammatical structures to put words together. Sentences, stories, conversations, instructions. Also includes word order, connectives and irregular word endings.
- **Higher level language skills**- linking our language with our knowledge of the world. Skills such as reasoning, justifying, explaining, problem solving and inferring.

Language includes talking and writing as well as others language systems such as signing.

Reference: I CAN CPD short course- Secondary Communication [CPD short course \(ican.org.uk\)](https://www.ican.org.uk)

Communication

Interacting with other people:

We need to communicate to make friends and have relationships with other people.

We need to change our communication to suit the environment and who we are communicating with (e.g. chatting with a friends vs. talking to the teacher)

Non-verbal communication:

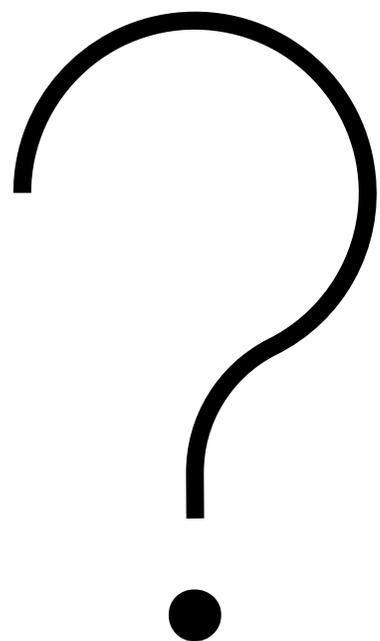
This includes eye contact, facial expression, gesture, body language, proximity and tone of voice. We need to be able to use non-verbal communication appropriately and take meaning from other people's use of non-verbal communication.

Conversational rules:

These rules include:

- Listening as well as talking
- Taking turns
- How close to stand to other people
- The right amount of information to give- not too much and not too little
- When and how to change the topic

Reference: I CAN CPD short course- Secondary Communication [CPD short course \(ican.org.uk\)](https://www.ican.org.uk)



What are SLCN?

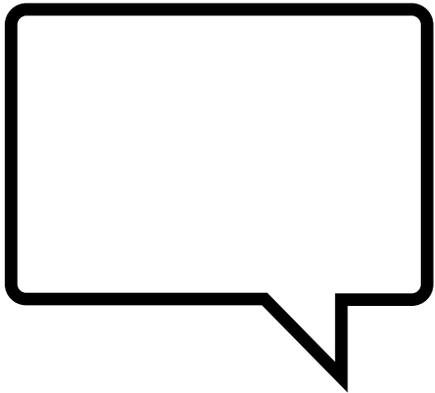
What are SLCN?



Understanding:

- May have difficulties understanding what other people are saying
- For example, understanding instructions and things that are not said directly.
- May have difficulties with indirect requests. An example of a direct request is 'give me!' and an example of an indirect request is 'can I have...?' or 'would you please...?'
- Due to these difficulties, the child or young person might present as not engaging or not doing what has been asked. In reality, they may not have understood an instruction or the broader context.
- May also be more difficult to learn new words, and words for thoughts and feelings.

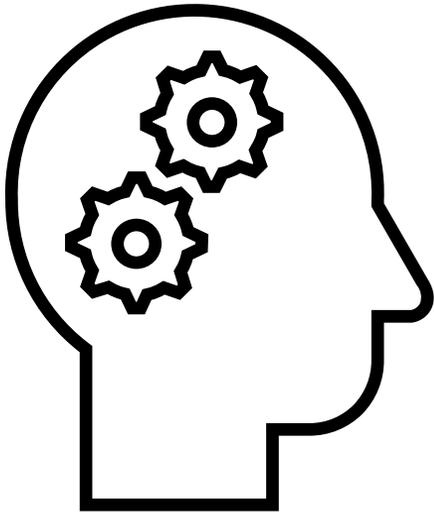
What are SLCN?



Expression:

- Stammering
- Selective mutism
- Difficulty finding the right words
- Difficulty constructing sentences
- Difficulty putting together a coherent narrative (telling a story)
- All these difficulties can be misinterpreted negatively
- Children and young people who are hesitant and revise their sentences due to their difficulties might be seen as untruthful.

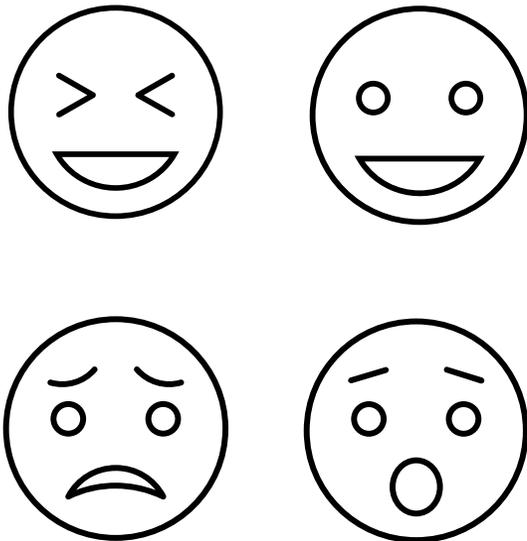
What are SLCN?



Memory and concentration:

- May have poor working memory abilities. This makes children and young people more easily distracted. They will need information to be repeated.
- These difficulties can often be interpreted as laziness or a purposeful attempt to frustrate teachers and parents.

What are SLCN?



Emotional regulation:

- Language is important for emotional regulation.
- May have difficulties finding the words to describe feelings.
- Can find it hard to cope with own emotions and feeling calm.
- Difficulties understanding own and other peoples' thoughts and feelings can lead to difficulties behaving in the expected way.

What are SLCN?



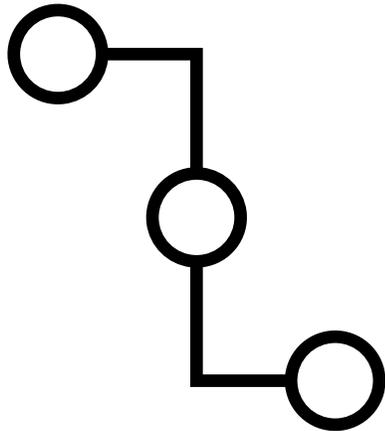
Social interaction:

- May struggle to understand jokes, idioms (for example, 'get a grip') and sarcasm. These are important for social interaction.
- May also have difficulties understanding the rules of conversation, including how to repair misunderstandings when they occur.
- Can be partly due to slow processing, which leads the child or young person to miss cues and means their turn taking is mistimed.

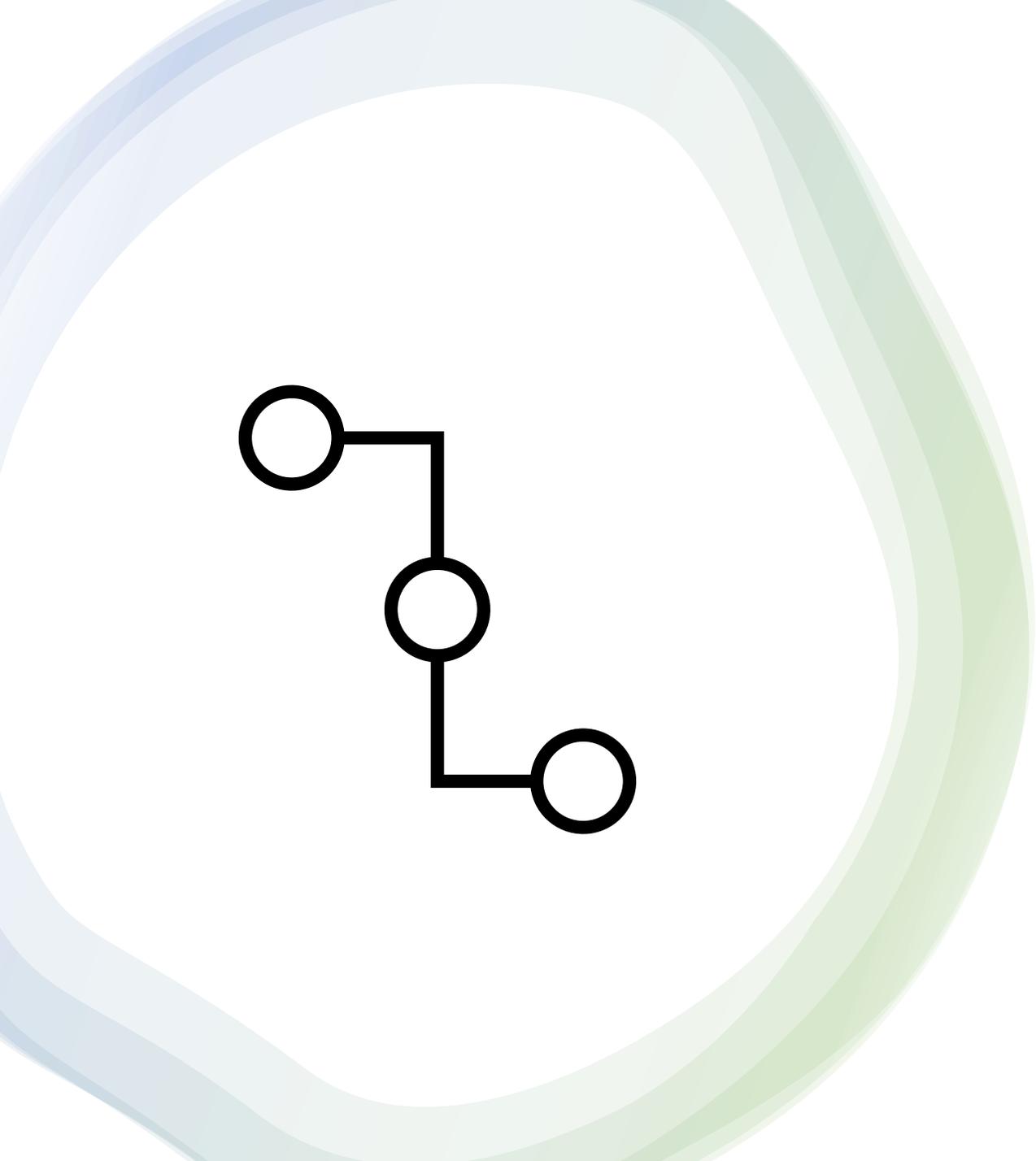
What might SLCN look like?



The link between SLCN and social disadvantage

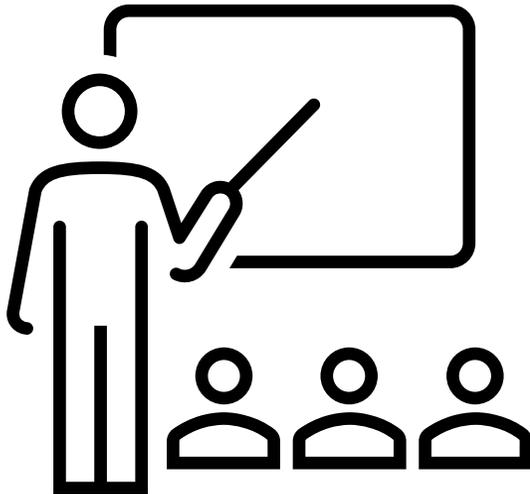


- Poor communication skills are closely linked with social disadvantage.
- Research shows children living in poverty in the UK suffer disproportionately from language delay. In areas of high social deprivation in the UK, between 40% and 56% of children start school with a language delay.
- Poverty can strongly reduce parents' ability to respond to their child's early language needs and offer a home learning environment that enhances language skills in the early years. Early language skills provide the building blocks upon which children's reading skills develop and are a key indicator of educational success and influence life prospects.
- As a group, children from disadvantaged backgrounds more commonly have reduced developmental opportunities that can limit their learning of language.



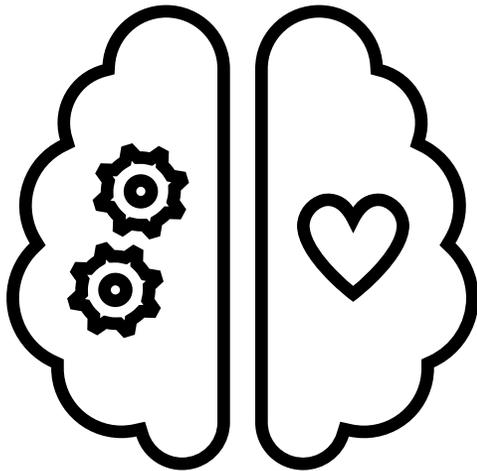
What are the impacts
of SLCN?

Impact on educational achievement



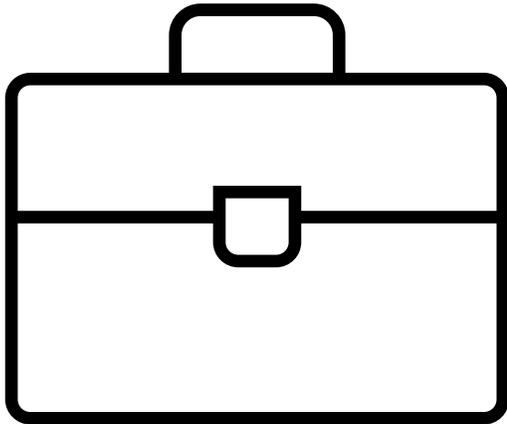
- Oral language development is central to a child's ability to access the school curriculum and develop literacy skills.
- Vocabulary difficulties at age five are associated with poor literacy in adulthood.
- Children who obtain below the nationally expected level in reading are typically characterised by poor communication, language and literacy scores.

Impact on emotional wellbeing and behaviour



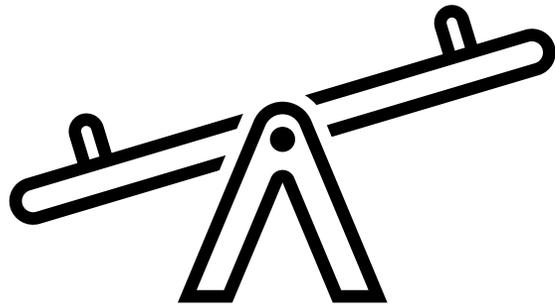
- Children with primary language difficulties are at higher risk of developing behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. This can increase the risk of exclusion from school and can lead to young people entering the criminal justice system.
- As many as 60% of young people in the youth justice system are believed to have SLCN.

Impact on employability



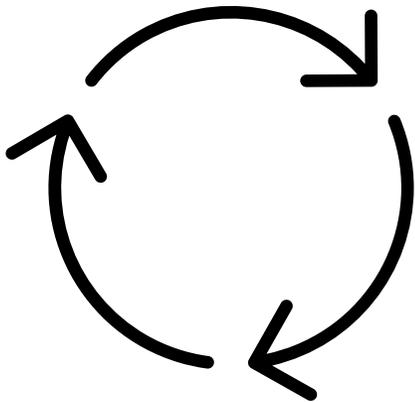
- If left unaddressed, SLCN can adversely affect children in adult life, for example, difficulties with communication skills affect employability.
- 88% of long-term unemployed young men have been found to have SLCN.

Social inequality



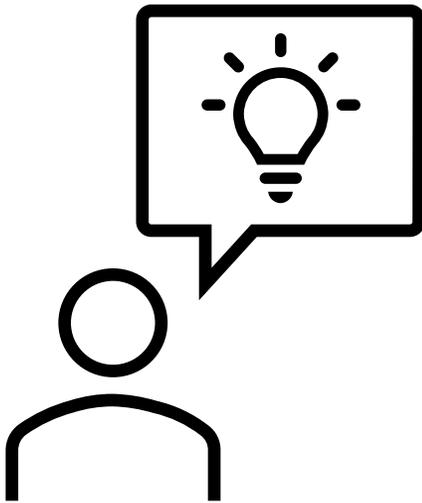
- Gaps in language development between children from affluent and disadvantaged families open up as early as three years of age.
- Improving language development in the early years is an important tool through which educational and social inequality can be tackled.

Cycle of communication deprivation



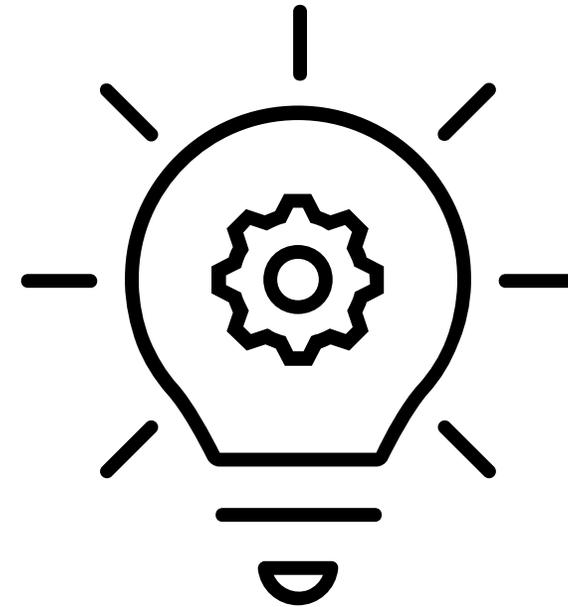
- Not addressing SLCN can lead to an intergenerational cycle of communication difficulties passed down from parent/care giver to child.
- This can have a detrimental impact upon the child's life outcomes.

What can we do?



- Provide support in the early years to ensure children from disadvantaged backgrounds have a secure foundation for language and literacy development.
- Support identification by referring to Speech and Language Therapy service.
- Adapt our own communication and the environment to meet the young person's needs.
- Use the young person's strengths to support them with their areas of need.
- [Norfolk & Waveney Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service \(justonenorfolk.nhs.uk\)](http://justonenorfolk.nhs.uk)

Top tips to
facilitate
accessibility



Top tip:

Think about the vocabulary you're using. Make this as simple and accessible as possible.

- Try to use 'everyday', simple words. Explain any complicated or specialist words using simple terms.
- Try to avoid jargon and abbreviations.
- Make sure you mean the words you're using. Sayings and phrases which have non-literal meanings can be confusing for some people and may lead to misunderstandings.

Top tip:

Use multiple shorter sentences instead of a longer, more complex sentence

Consider the length and complexity of the sentences you use.

Multiple short, simple sentences are better than fewer longer and more complex sentences.

For example:

When I come and visit you on Tuesday, we will talk about any new activities you'd like to try and after this meeting, I will see if I can organise some of these activities for you.

Vs

I will visit you on Tuesday.

We will talk about any new activities you would like to try.

After the meeting, I will try and organise some of these activities for you.

Top tip:

Use visual support.

- Visual support is anything we can see: for example photos, symbols, diagrams, written text, maps, lists etc.
- It can help with memory and gives the young person more time to think and respond. It also makes resources look more interesting and engaging!
- Visual support can be prepared in advance or created in the moment.
- There are some good symbols freely available in Microsoft Word Icons.

Top tip:

Think about the purpose of your work. This will help you to remove unnecessary language.

- Consider the purpose of your work- what do you really need to ask?
- The less demands you place on the young person, the more they may feel able to participate. Too many questions can feel overwhelming.
- Do you need hypothetical scenarios? Could you ask more general questions?
- Consider any potential triggers around the questions you're asking and how certain scenarios may be emotive for the young people you're working with.

Top tip:

Use a range of modes. Ask the child or young person's preferences.

- Use different modes- speaking, writing, drawings, pre-prepared resources. Offer to write down key words, actions, future dates etc.
- Ask the young person how they would like information given to them.
- Give the child or young person additional time- for processing, thinking and talking/expressing themselves. Allow time to read through reports/or answer any questions.
- Ensure written documents are accessible. [Publishing accessible documents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/publishing-accessible-documents)

Useful links

- Online free course
- [CPD short course \(ican.org.uk\)](https://www.ican.org.uk)
- Ages and stages of children's communication development
- [Universally Speaking \(ican.org.uk\)](https://www.ican.org.uk)
- Local SaLT Services (advice and referrals)
- [salt \(justonenorfolk.nhs.uk\)](https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk)
- Autism (information and advice)
- [Advice and guidance \(autism.org.uk\)](https://www.autism.org.uk)
- Developmental Language Disorder (information and advice)
- [RADLD | Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder](https://www.radld.org.uk)
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) Factsheets
- [Factsheets about speech and language therapy | RCSLT](https://www.rcslt.org.uk)



Thank you for listening!
Any questions?

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