

Rapid Communication on Adult and Child Selective Mutism

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Selective mutism is a condition in which a person can talk in some circumstances but not others. A youngster with selective mutism, for example, may speak at home but not at preschool or in the presence of strangers. Selective mutism is distinct from illnesses that result in the inability to speak due to a physical or cognitive impairment. People with the illness are able to communicate, but it is difficult for them owing to their nervousness. As a result, many doctors and advocacy organisations consider selective mutism to be an anxiety disease.

Selective mutism is an uncommon disorder in which people have trouble speaking in some contexts but not others. Some people refer to it as a fear of speaking. People with selective mutism can be confident communicators in many situations, but struggle in new or public settings. Selective mutism in children, for example, commonly begins when the youngster begins attending school or entering other public situations for the first time. Daycare, a church, playdates, and music classes are examples of these environments. The average age of onset for selective mutism is five years, albeit this could be due to the fact that this is when many children start school. According to most research, selective mutism affects less than 1% of children. Selective mutism can sometimes last until adulthood. Females appear to be affected more frequently than males, though the reasons for this are unknown. It's also more likely among children who are immigrants or who are learning a second language [1].

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5), a person must meet the following criteria to be diagnosed with selective mutism: Despite having the ability to speak in other contexts, such as at school, I have persistent difficulties speaking in situations when speech is expected. Trouble speaking that is not caused by a lack of understanding or comfort with the language difficulty speaking that is more than likely caused by another problem, such as communication disorder symptoms that continue at least one month and interfere with school, job, or socialising. Defiance or disobedience is not the causes of selective mutism. People with selective mutism, on the other hand, are unable to talk because of acute nervousness and shyness. They may be afraid of being judged, ridiculed, or ignored by others.

There is no one reason for the illness. Rather, a variety of circumstances can lead to the development of selective mutism. These elements are

Significant transitions-For some youngsters, going to school can be a stressful experience. This is especially true if they have had limited opportunities to socialise in the past or if they are learning a second language. Bilingual youngsters are overrepresented in studies on selective mutism, suggesting that fear of communication may play a role in the disorder [2].

Children who experience worried or avoidant behaviour at home may learn to act in the same manner. As a result, they may avoid circumstances that make them feel anxious, such as social situations. This avoidance can exacerbate a fear of speaking. Selective mutism is classified as an anxiety disorder in the DSM-5. It clearly states that doctors should not diagnose selective mutism if the symptoms are better explained by another diagnosis, such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD).As a result, selective mutism and ASD cannot coexist, according to current diagnostic criteria.This definition is debatable. Selective mutism, according to some experts, could be a symptom of ASD or a diagnosis that frequently occurs alongside ASD. In a 2018 research of 97 youngsters with selective mutism, Trusted Source discovered that 63 percent of them were also autistic [3].

References

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