Chicago Speech Therapy Resource: Understanding Childhood Apraxia of Speech

Childhood apraxia of speech (CAS) is a complex speech disFree Download that affects a child's ability to plan and produce speech sounds. It is a motor speech disFree Download, meaning that it is not caused by a problem with the child's muscles or nerves. Instead, it is caused by a problem with the brain's ability to coordinate the movements necessary for speech.



A Chicago Speech Therapy Resource What is Childhood Apraxia of Speech by Karen George

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CAS can be a very frustrating disFree Download for children and their families. Children with CAS may have difficulty speaking clearly, and they may also have difficulty understanding what others are saying. This can make it difficult for them to communicate with their peers and participate in everyday activities.

There is no cure for CAS, but speech therapy can help children with CAS learn to speak more clearly. Speech therapy can also help children with

CAS understand what others are saying and develop other communication skills.

What are the symptoms of CAS?

The symptoms of CAS can vary from child to child. Some common symptoms include:

- Difficulty producing speech sounds
- Speech that is slow, labored, or halting
- Speech that is difficult to understand
- Difficulty imitating speech sounds
- Difficulty with prosody (the rhythm and intonation of speech)

Not all children with CAS will have all of these symptoms. Some children may have only a few symptoms, while others may have many. The severity of the symptoms can also vary from child to child.

What causes CAS?

The exact cause of CAS is unknown. However, it is thought to be caused by a problem with the brain's ability to coordinate the movements necessary for speech.

CAS is not caused by a lack of intelligence. Children with CAS are just as intelligent as other children. However, they may have difficulty learning to speak because of their speech disFree Download.

How is CAS diagnosed?

CAS is typically diagnosed by a speech-language pathologist (SLP). An SLP will evaluate the child's speech and language skills and determine if the child has CAS.

There is no one specific test that can diagnose CAS. However, an SLP may use a variety of tests to evaluate the child's speech and language skills. These tests may include:

- Speech production test
- Language comprehension test
- Oral motor exam

How is CAS treated?

There is no cure for CAS, but speech therapy can help children with CAS learn to speak more clearly. Speech therapy can also help children with CAS understand what others are saying and develop other communication skills.

Speech therapy for CAS typically involves:

- Teaching the child how to produce speech sounds correctly
- Practicing speech sounds in different contexts
- Improving the child's prosody
- Helping the child develop other communication skills, such as sign language or using a communication device

Speech therapy can be a long-term process. However, with consistent therapy, children with CAS can make significant progress in their speech and language skills.

What is the prognosis for children with CAS?

The prognosis for children with CAS varies. Some children with CAS will make significant progress in their speech and language skills with speech therapy. Others may have more difficulty learning to speak clearly. However, even children with severe CAS can learn to communicate effectively with the help of speech therapy and other support services.

How can I help my child with CAS?

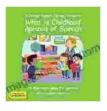
There are a number of things you can do to help your child with CAS:

- Be patient and understanding
- Encourage your child to communicate, even if it is difficult
- Provide your child with opportunities to practice speaking
- Praise your child for their efforts
- Work with your child's speech-language pathologist to develop a treatment plan

With your support and the help of speech therapy, your child can learn to communicate effectively and reach their full potential.

Additional resources

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- Apraxia Kids
- Speech and Language Kids



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