

# Gloss **A**ry

## Aphasia in children

---

Aphasia in children refers to speech, language and communication difficulties acquired as a result of an injury to the brain at any time after birth. Typically this is caused by accident or illness.

### Two main types

Acquired brain injury that disrupts function in the brain consists of two main types:

- Traumatic brain injury resulting from external impact to the head eg: a fall
- Non-traumatic brain injury resulting from events occurring inside the body eg: epilepsy, infections such as meningitis, or a tumour.

The severity of brain injury can be categorised as mild, moderate or severe and the affected brain area might range in size from quite small to fairly extensive.

### Assessment and recovery

Each child's experience is different. Children may appear to make a full physical recovery but the effects may take time to come to the surface and/or not resolve completely.

Speech and language therapists can assess an individual's residual and emerging speech, language, communication and eating and drinking skills, with the aim of facilitating recovery. Speech and language therapists can also advise on alternative and/or augmentative communication if needed.

The speech and language skills of a child with brain injury may be affected by medical problems and physical disability, as well as difficulties with attention and concentration, memory, speed of information processing, perception, executive functioning (including control, planning and organisation), emotional and behavioural issues.

It is important to monitor a child's speech, language and communication development and learning skills right through adolescence as the brain continues to develop into early adulthood.

The full extent of a child's needs may not become immediately apparent as difficulties may persist or emerge later, affecting education or social relationships. Examples of residual difficulties include temper outbursts, mood swings, memory problems and learning and social difficulties.

### References

**Bowen C and Snow P** (2017) *Making Sense of Interventions for Children with Developmental Disorders: A Guide for Parents and Professionals*. Croyden: J & R Press Ltd

**Lees A J** (2005) *Children with Acquired Aphasias* (2nd ed). London: Whurr

**The Children's Trust** (2017) *Brain Injury Hub*. <https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/>

**Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)** (2009) *Resource Manual for Commissioning and Planning Services for SLCN: Brain Injury*

**Please note: Afasic does not hold copies of any referenced material. These publications should be available at academic libraries.**

### Further reading and information

**The Children's Trust:** follow the link to the brain injury hub

<https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/>

## **Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists**

[https://www.rcslt.org/clinical\\_resources/brain\\_injury/overview](https://www.rcslt.org/clinical_resources/brain_injury/overview)

## **The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/head-injury>

## **Organisations that can help**

### **The Children's Trust**

Tadworth Court

Tadworth

Surrey KT20 5RU

Tel: 01737 365 000

Email: [enquiries@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)

<https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/>

### **Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists**

RCSLT

2 White Hart Yard

London SE1 1NX

Tel: 020 7378 1200

<https://www.rcslt.org/>

The professional body for speech and language therapists

*Written by Zein Pereira, speech and language therapist*

© Afasic 2017

**Afasic**

**E-mail: [info@afasic.org.uk](mailto:info@afasic.org.uk)**

**Tel: 020 7490 9410**

**Helpline: 0300 666 9410**

**[www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)**

**Registered charity no. 1045617**

