

Speech Pathology Book of the Year Awards Announced.

Best Book for Language and Literacy Development Young Children

Can we lick the Spoon Now? by Carol Goess and illustrated by Tamsin Ainslie.

Best Book for Language and Literacy Development Lower Primary

Hairy Nose, Itchy Butt by Elizabeth Frankel and illustrated by Garry Duncan.

Best Book for Language and Literacy Development Upper Primary

Now by Morris Gleitzman

Best Book for Language and Literacy Development Indigenous Children

Our World: Bardi Jaawi Life at Ardiyooloon by the One Arm Point Remote Community School.

The awards aim to promote literacy and the need for good literacy skills, while building a library of resources that speech pathologists, teachers and parents can use to help promote literacy and reading.

The year's shortlist consisted of 51 books in four categories: Best Book for Language and Literacy Development Young Children, Lower Primary, Upper Primary and Indigenous Children, with entries from favourite Australian authors such as Mem Fox, Margaret Wild and Bruce Whatley.

Each year, Speech Pathology Australia selects children's books based on their appeal to children, educational value, graphics and design, as well as their ability to facilitate communication, interaction and discussion.



For a full list of all books nominated, please visit the Speech Pathology Australia website at www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au These books are great Christmas present ideas.



Communities for Children is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs



Congratulations to the winners of the Speech Pathology Quiz in Speech Pathology Week in August. Hub Facilitators will be announcing the winners during hubs this week.

The results of the quiz are back with 66 families completing the quiz and the responses are listed in the Northern Gold Coast Communities for Children Newsletter.

The most common myths identified through this quiz are as follows:

1. Using flashcards and educational DVDs stimulates language development.

▶ False

While it can be tempting to purchase special products marketed as “educational” for young children, these products are not necessarily effective in helping children learn how to communicate.

- Baby DVDs – several DVDs geared towards infants and very young children have been marketed in recent years, with the aim of promoting babies’ development, including their language skills. However, the research on such DVDs to date has not provided evidence that these products produce better language skills. In fact, these DVDs may be the cause of somewhat smaller vocabularies in children who spend more time watching them. For more details, read Hanen’s article “Educational DVDs: What Helps Babies Learn and What Doesn’t”.
- Flashcards - Learning a new word from a flashcard teaches a child to say a word in response to a picture. This, however, does not mean that the child will understand the full meaning of the word or how to use it appropriately in real-life situations. New vocabulary has to be learned in meaningful interactions during everyday life and repeated many times before becoming part of a child’s vocabulary. Roberta Golinkoff, PhD., co-author of "Einstein Never Used Flash Cards: How Our Children Really Learn and Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less", explains that “babies learn best through playful interactions with people who love them” and had the following advice for parents about educational products: “**Save your money! Play with your child**”.

2. Boys talk later than girls.

▶ True

It is true that boys produce their first words and sentences later than girls. However, these differences are only in terms of a matter of a few months. There is a normal range within which children acquire certain language milestones. “Girls tend to be on the earlier end, and boys on the later end, of this age range”, according to researchers Seyda Özçalskan and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2010). Therefore, boys are not actually delayed in their language development, just a little behind girls. So if a young boy is really lagging behind in his speech and language development, don’t assume that it’s because he’s a boy and that it’s perfectly normal. He may require some speech and language intervention.

3. Children who are late to begin talking may have difficulties learning at school.

▶ True

Even when late talkers appear to catch up to other children their age, they are still at greater risk for difficulties with reading. Therefore, if you are concerned about your toddler’s language development, don’t listen to people who tell you to “wait and see”. Consult a speech language pathologist since the earlier a child receives help, the easier it is to catch up, and the better the prognosis.

4. Twins are at greater risk for language delay.

▶ True

In a review of the research regarding the development of twins, Karen Thorpe summarized the following in her 2006 article:

- Twins, particularly male twins, have higher risk of language delay.
- Language delay is usually mild and it seems to reduce by middle childhood.
- There is great variation in language scores among twins.

Therefore, while not all twins have language delays, they are at greater risk for language delay.