

Selective Mutism

Selective mutism (SM) is an anxiety disorder in which a child is unable to speak in some settings and to some people. A child with SM may talk normally at home, for instance, or when alone with her parents, but cannot speak at all, or speak above a whisper, in other social settings—at school, in public, or at extended family gatherings. Parents and teachers often think the child is willful and refuses to speak, or speak loud enough to be heard, but the child experiences it as an inability. It can cause severe distress—she can't communicate even if she is in pain, or, say, needs to use the bathroom—and prevents her from participating in school and other age-appropriate activities. It should not be confused with the reluctance to speak a child adapting to a new language might exhibit, or shyness in the first few weeks at a new school. -(The Child Mind Institute in NYC)

Books on Selective Mutism:

- 1) Can I Tell You About Selective Mutism?: A guide for family, friends and professionals by: Maggie Johnson and Alison Wintgens (**P/T 616.855 JOH**) Meet Hannah - a young girl with selective mutism (SM). Hannah invites readers to learn about selective mutism from her perspective, helping them to understand what it is, what it feels like to have SM, and how they can help. This illustrated book is packed with accessible information and will be an ideal introduction to selective mutism. It shows family, friends and teachers how they can support a child with the condition and is also a good place to start when encouraging children with SM to talk about how it affects them.

- 2) Easing School Jitters for the Selectively Mute Child by: Dr. Elisa Shipon-Blum (**P/T 618.928 SHI**) It is a down-to-earth informational book that will provide advice in an entertaining manner. Every colorful page is filled with facts, helpful ideas, reasons that selectively mute children feel the way they do, and an interactive section where parents can work with children to help them list, draw and write about the things that make them feel good about themselves and see the positive aspects of school.

- 3) Helping Your Child with Selective Mutism: Practical Steps to Overcome a Fear of Speaking by: Ph.D. Angela E. McHolm, Ph.D. Charles E. Cunningham, Melanie K. Vanier (**P/T 618.928 MCH**) This book is the first available for parents of children with selective mutism. It offers a broad overview of the condition and reviews the diagnostic criteria for the disorder. The book details a plan you can use to coordinate professional treatment of your child's disorder. It also explains the steps you can take on your own to encourage your child to speak comfortably in school and in his or her peer group. All of the book's strategies employ a gradual, "stepladder" approach. The techniques gently encourage children to speak more, while at the same time helping them feel safe and supported.

- 4) Leo's Words Disappeared by: Elaheh Bos (**P/T E BOS**) As Leo starts school, something strange happens. His words disappear! Now Leo must find new ways to give his words the courage to come back. A fun and practical introduction to different techniques of anxiety management, specifically used for children with selective mutism.

- 5) Lola's Words Disappeared Activity Book by: Elaheh Bos (**P/T 618.928 BOS**) As Lola starts school, something strange happens. Her words disappear! Now Lola must find new ways to give her words the courage to come back. A fun and practical introduction to different techniques of anxiety management, specifically used for children with selective mutism.

- 6) Maya's Voice by Wen-Wen Cheng (**P/T E CHE**) Maya is a bright-eyed, inquisitive little girl who loves to share her sweet voice. But when she starts school, she loses the confidence to use her voice and goes about her school day in silence. With time, patience, understanding, and love from all those around her, Maya discovers her sweet voice.

- 7) Tackling Selective Mutism: A guide for Professionals and Parents by: Alice Sluckin and Benita Rae Smith (**P/T 618.928 SMI**) Bringing together the latest research and understanding on selective mutism, this edited book gives essential information on the various treatment and therapy options. Experts in the fields of speech and language therapy, psychology, music therapy education and communication offer a wide range of professional perspectives on the condition, while case studies from people with selective mutism, past sufferers and parents reveal the personal impact. The book also clarifies what support a person with selective mutism is likely to need at home, school and in social situations.

- 8) Too Shy for Show-and-Tell by: Beth Bracken (**EBRA**) Sam is so shy that nobody knows much about him, but when he must stand in front of his class for show-and-tell, he finds the courage to share.

- 9) Unspoken Words: A Child's View of Selective Mutism by: Sophia Blum (**P/T 618.928 BLU**) Unspoken Words: A Child's View of Selective Mutism, is the first book of its kind! It's written by a teenager who suffered from Selective Mutism. This unique book is directed to children with Selective Mutism as well as for parents, professionals and

teachers to help them understand a child's unspoken words when unable to speak and express themselves.