

THE SELECTIVE MUTISM CHECKLIST

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Name of child or adolescent

Age

Each item should be checked off using the following rating scale

- 0 Not at all, never occurs, does not apply
- 1 Mild, sometimes observed, applies to some extent
- 2 Moderate, often observed, certainly applies
- 3 Severe, frequently observed, strongly applies

Unwillingness to speak

Reluctant to speak to anyone outside of the family home	0	1	2	3
Reluctant to speak to visitors to the family home	0	1	2	3
Willing to speak to some family members but not others	0	1	2	3
May speak to children but not adults outside of the home	0	1	2	3
Unwilling to speak if anyone is watching them.....	0	1	2	3
Won't answer when spoken to	0	1	2	3

Adequate language development

Does talk to close family and people they know well.....	0	1	2	3
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Subtle language difficulties

Was later than average in learning to talk	0	1	2	3
Sometimes seems to have trouble expressing themselves	0	1	2	3

Use of nonverbal communication

Uses gestures, shrugs or facial expressions instead of words.....	0	1	2	3
Nods or shakes head appropriately when spoken to	0	1	2	3
Points or touches instead of speaking.....	0	1	2	3
Uses grunts in place of words.....	0	1	2	3
Just stares blankly when spoken to.....	0	1	2	3
Won't look people in the eye	0	1	2	3

Problem lasts for more than a month

Unwilling to speak to some people for at least a month.....	0	1	2	3
Unwilling to speak in some situations for at least a month.....	0	1	2	3

Problem does not respond to pressure

Cannot be bribed into speaking	0	1	2	3
Does not respond to threats or punishments	0	1	2	3



Cautious personality

Extremely shy	0	1	2	3
Does not like to take risks of any kind.....	0	1	2	3
Slow to gain confidence in new situations.....	0	1	2	3
Joins in group singing, but stops if watched.....	0	1	2	3

Inflexibility

Stubborn over little things	0	1	2	3
Was slow or resistant to toilet training	0	1	2	3
Very picky about food, clothes	0	1	2	3
Often has tantrums if they cannot get their own way.....	0	1	2	3
Rigid about routines.....	0	1	2	3
Does not like change	0	1	2	3
Obsessional, excessively neat or fussy.....	0	1	2	3
Does not like unusual textures, tastes or physical sensations.....	0	1	2	3

There are no other reasons for unwillingness or inability to speak

Has been traumatized	Yes	No	Unknown
Is Autistic.....	Yes	No	Unknown
Has an Intellectual Disability	Yes	No	Unknown
Has a Receptive or Expressive Language Disorder.....	Yes	No	Unknown
Is seriously ill	Yes	No	Unknown
English is an alternative language (EAL).....	Yes	No	Unknown
Has a hearing impairment	Yes	No	Unknown

Positive characteristics and strengths (describe at least 3)

Important notes

This checklist can be used to help diagnose and assess Selective Mutism. However, several conditions have similar characteristics and there may be a range of explanations for the observations made. Specialist assessment is necessary for a formal diagnosis.

- Supporting notes on Selective Mutism (pages 64–9)
- Guides for discussions with colleagues, parents and students (pages 184–8)

