



**Prevalence, Risk, and Impact of
Childhood Speech & Language Impairment
Professor Sharynne McLeod**

Speech and language impairment in childhood is a high prevalence condition and can have a significant impact into adulthood. This presentation will begin with a summary of the world's research on the prevalence of childhood speech and language impairment and a comparison of this prevalence with other areas of learning need in childhood. Next, the risk and protective factors associated with speech and language impairment will be described. For example, Harrison and McLeod (2010) examined a national sample of nearly 5,000 preschool children and identified risk factors as being male, having ongoing hearing problems, and a more reactive temperament and protective factors as having a more persistent and sociable temperament, and higher levels of maternal wellbeing. Having an older sibling and speaking a language other than the dominant language was identified as both a risk and protective factor. Finally, the impact of childhood speech and language impairment will be examined. There is evidence to suggest that the impact extends to children's learning and applying knowledge (including literacy and numeracy), general tasks and demands (including managing behaviour and frustration), communication, interpersonal interactions and relationships, and major life areas (including education and employment). This presentation will be of interest to people working in health, education and disability as speech therapists, teachers, managers and policy makers.

McLeod, S., & Harrison, L. J. (2009). Epidemiology of speech and language impairment in a nationally representative sample of 4- to 5-year-old children. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 52(5), 1213-1229.

Harrison, L. J., & McLeod, S. (2010). Risk and protective factors associated with speech and language impairment in a nationally representative sample of 4- to 5-year-old children. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 53(2), 508-529.

Harrison, L. J., McLeod, S., Berthelsen, D., & Walker, S. (2009). Literacy, numeracy and learning in school-aged children identified as having speech and language impairment in early childhood. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 11 (5), 392-403.

DATE/ TIME: 3 June, 2010 (Thursday)/ 6:30 - 7:30 pm

VENUE: Rm 518, Prince Philip Dental Hospital, 34 Hospital Road, HK

SPEAKER:

Sharynne McLeod, Ph.D. is professor in speech and language acquisition at Charles Sturt University (CSU), Australia. She is an elected Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and of Speech Pathology Australia. Professor McLeod is the Vice President of the International Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics Association and is editor of the *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. Professor McLeod provided expertise in the development of the World Health Organization's children and youth version of the *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health*. Professor McLeod's research focuses on children's speech. Her research foregrounds the right of everyone (particularly children) to participate fully in society. She has co-edited/co-authored the following books: *International Guide to Speech Acquisition* (Thomson), *Interventions for Speech Sound Disorders in Children* (Paul H. Brookes), *Speech Sounds: A Pictorial Guide to Typical and Atypical Speech* (Plural), and *Working with Families in Speech-Language Pathology* (Plural). Recently Professor McLeod was announced as an Australian Research Council Future Fellow and has begun a four-year research program titled *Speaking my Language: International Speech Acquisition in Australia*.

