

Situational Mutism

Situational Mutism is an anxiety disorder. It can prevent those affected from being able to talk in certain situations. Children with Situational Mutism have different boundaries around where they feel safe to talk, and who they feel safe to talk to. It is sometimes called Selective Mutism.

Here are our **five top tips** to help a child who has Situational Mutism:

1. Reduce the pressure

Questions demand a response. This can be difficult for a child who has Situational Mutism. Using comments supports the child to feel part of the discussion. It allows them to choose when to contribute.

2. Give them the choice

If the child feels comfortable you could discuss how they want to let others know about their Situational Mutism. This might be a comment you can share on their behalf. We do not need to apologise for a child's Situational Mutism. It's important we can help other people understand.

3. It is okay to make mistakes

When we model that's okay for us to make mistakes, it helps children understand that it is okay for them to make mistakes too. Mistakes are something that happen every day and are a part of life. We can help children understand that mistakes are a way to learn. This is really important for children with Situational Mutism.

4. Focus on what the child can do

A child who has Situational Mutism will be very aware they find talking difficult in some situations. To help support their confidence we can focus on things they are doing. This might be being tidy, kind and helpful. Point out when you notice things like this happening.

5. Think about how you include each other

Children with Situational Mutism can participate fully in activities when given the opportunity. Consider activities that everyone can be involved in. Account for different children's preferences and strengths.



You can check out our video talking about our five top tips to support a child who has Situational Mutism.
Scan the QR code.