



*Together, we are
powering up kids' voices.*

Community Information Event

Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)

Welcome & Why We're Here

Moderator: Fran Paton

We're here to create a shared understanding of Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS).

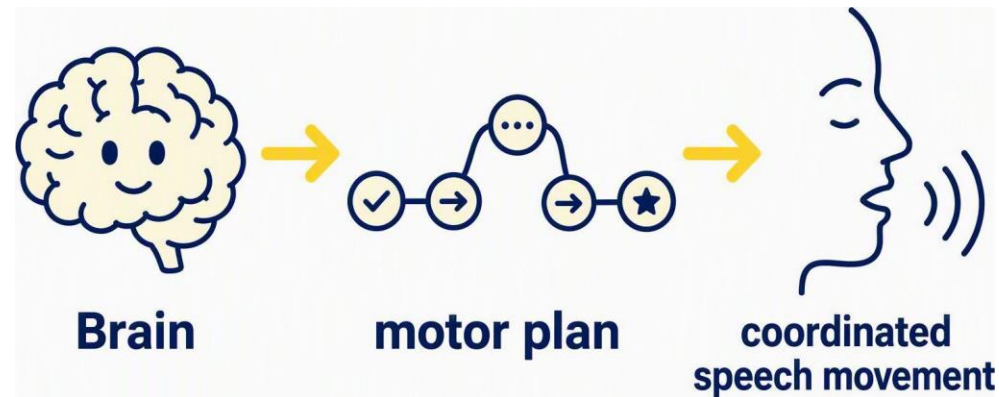
- ✓ What is CAS and what can it look like?
- ✓ How is a child assessed and what can therapy look like?
- ✓ How do you support a child at home and at school – emotionally and socially?
- ✓ Questions



**You are
not alone.**

What Is Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)?

CAS is a neurological childhood (pediatric) speech sound disorder in which the precision and consistency of movements underlying speech are impaired in absence of neuromuscular deficits (e.g. abnormal reflexes, abnormal tone) (ASHA, 2007).



What Might CAS Look Like?

Early on:

- Very little babbling
- Late first words
- Limited consonant inventory
- Vowel dominance
- Speech that is difficult to understand with inconsistent errors.
- Limited speech despite having lots they want to communicate.
- Frustration because they know what they want to say.



What Might CAS Look Like?

Later:

- Continued presence of sound errors
- More difficulties with multisyllabic words
- Associated expressive language delays
- Difficulties with phonological awareness and literacy
- **Inconsistency of productions**
- **Prosodic differences**
- **Choppy speech**



A Key Reminder



Not every child with these characteristics has CAS.



Identifying CAS requires professional assessment.

Why Can CAS Be Difficult to Identify?



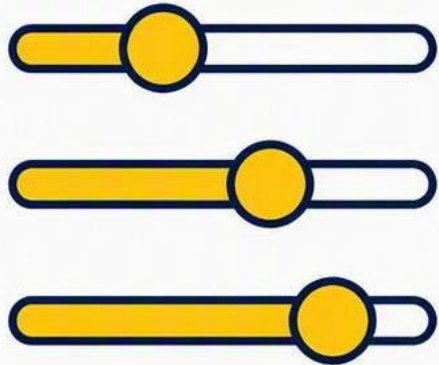
- Identification of distinctive characteristics can be difficult.
- There is no single specific test for CAS.
- Characteristics can change over time.

If You Suspect CAS

- Find an SLP who is trained and has experience assessing and treating children with CAS and is able to conduct a **dynamic** assessment.
- An SLP may assess:
 - Receptive/expressive language — how the child uses and understands language
 - Oral Mechanism exam — an evaluation of oral structure
 - Motor speech skills — how the mouth moves for speech production. SLP will conduct a dynamic assessment to identify characteristics of CAS.



What Does Effective Therapy Look Like?



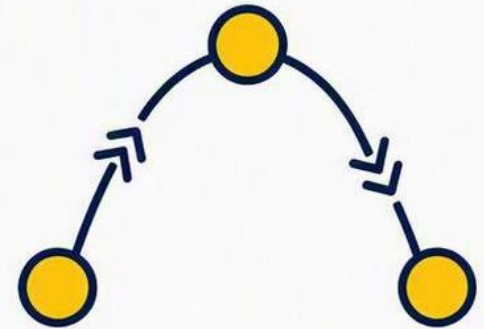
Individual fit



**Supporting
evidence**



**Applying
Principles of
Motor Learning**



Speech movement

Supporting the Child Socially & Emotionally



- Communication is about much more than clear speech.
- Take the pressure off talking.
- Welcome all communication methods: gestures, signs, pictures and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).
- Name and normalize feelings.
- Stay calm, patient and co-regulate during communication breakdowns.

Build Islands of Mastery

- ❖ Help children experience themselves as capable
- ❖ Protect activities where their hands, body or imagination shine — drawing, building, swimming, music.
- ❖ Success in these activities can reinforce a child's sense of capability.
- ❖ Celebrate effort and bravery, not just clear speech.
- ❖ Recognize persistence: “You kept trying — I’m so proud of you.”



Supporting Children at School

- Help school staff understand what CAS is — and what it is not.
- Share information about how your child communicates and what supports help.
- Support communication in ways that reduce pressure and protect confidence.
- Work together with the school and your child's communication professionals.



Educate.



Advocate.



Support.



Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- A formal, living document that outlines your child's strengths, needs and the special education program and/or services they require at school.
- It is fluid and can be updated throughout the school year as your child's strengths, needs and learning change.
- May include instructional, environmental, and assessment accommodations, as well as modified or alternative expectations and individualized goals.
- Creates a shared plan between families, teachers, and school staff to support your child's learning and success.

IEP: Supporting Communication

- Allow more processing time — give your child time to understand, plan and respond without feeling rushed.
- Reduce speaking demands — avoid putting your child on the spot or requiring them to repeat answers unnecessarily.
- Allow alternative ways to communicate — such as pointing, writing, typing, visuals, gestures or AAC when appropriate.
- Work with your Resource Team to identify various supports that can be used consistently across the school day and trickle into different subjects and activities.



Why Community Matters



Resources

Learn more about CAS



Childhood Apraxia of Speech (OPPENCAS)

oppencas.ca

Child Apraxia Treatment

childapraxiatreatment.org

Apraxia Kids

apraxia-kids.org/

Ottawa Apraxia

ottawaapraxia.ca

Find us @ottawaapraxia on Instagram and Facebook

Let's Talk

Questions, experiences and conversation



**What
questions do
you have?**



Questions about CAS?



**Questions about
assessment or therapy?**



What has helped your child?



**What do you wish you had
known earlier?**

Together, we are
POWERING UP KIDS' VOICES



Thank you for being part of the Ottawa CAS community.