

## Does my child have a voice problem?

Voice disorders in children are usually described as “hoarseness.” Hoarseness is a rough character or quality of the voice that may make it more difficult to be heard and understood. Hoarseness may be associated with intermittent complete loss of voice, typically after extensive use (eg at the end of the school day).

Children up to the age of 10 or 11 sometimes develop a hoarse voice after too much voice use; they tend to be noisy and active, often using their voices much more loudly than is necessary. It is important to encourage a balance between situations where a loud energetic voice is used and those where a quiet, calm voice is used.

There are things you can do to help your child:

- encourage quiet talking (at normal volume)
- discourage excessive shouting
- reduce background noise. eg turn TV off
- encourage them to drink lots of water
- make sure you are close to your child when they are talking so that they do not have to raise their voice.

Hoarseness in children is very common, but if your child is persistently hoarse, he/she may need to be examined by an ENT consultant.