

WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS FOR STRUGGLING READERS AND SPELLERS?

Who is at risk of reading difficulties?

- Children who were slower than average to start talking (a child's first words should develop at 12-18 months, with short sentences developing by 2 years).
- Children with a decreased or disorganised vocabulary. This may be seen in children who:
 - Use a lot of non-specific language (e.g. this, that, there, those, you know...)
 - Struggle to tell a well-organised oral story
 - Require their conversational partner to 'fill in the gaps'. As parents, we are fabulous at hearing a few key words and then interpreting our child's meaning. E.g. Your child says, *"Umm, Riley... you know....umm...we went...the other week..."* and you respond; *"Oh yes, you're talking about when you met Riley's cousin at his house last week. That's when you went bike riding together, wasn't it?"*
- Children with unclear speech. Mumlbers may be more at risk than you think. Whilst we can often be quick to dismiss mumbling as 'being lazy', it may indicate a deeper issue with phonological processing (analysing the sounds in words).
- Children who are disinterested in books or stories
- Children who exclusively seek out action movies and tend to avoid TV shows and movies with more of a complicated story-based plot.
- Children who have poor phonological awareness
- Children whose family members have also had reading difficulties. This may be in the form of diagnosed dyslexia, or simply a family member who admits, 'I found it hard to read at school'.

If you are concerned that your child may be at risk of reading difficulties, you can:

1. Take our [online screening assessment](#) to understand your child's foundational literacy skills.
2. [Contact one of our fabulous team](#) to find out how a Speech Pathologist can support your child's reading development.