

Speech and Language Disability

- **United States President Joe Biden** is often mocked in social media memes centered around his speech delivery. He has struggled with a stutter throughout his life!
- **Oscar winning actress Nicole Kidman**, known for her performances in films like Batman Forever, Moulin Rouge, The Hours etc. overcame her stammer with speech therapy.
- **Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Winston Churchill** whose famous speeches are quoted till date, had a speech impediment.
- **Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan** also fought a lonely battle with stammering when he was ridiculed as a child.

As per Census 2011, there are 2 million people living with speech disability in India.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 defines Speech and Language Disability as a permanent disability arising out of conditions such as laryngectomy or aphasia which affect one or more components of speech and language due to organic or neurological causes.

These disabilities can be caused by a range of factors

- Including developmental delays
- Neurological disorders
- Physical impairments

A speech impairment is usually characterized by difficulty in articulation, voice or fluency. Examples include stuttering or problems while producing particular sounds.

- **Articulation** refers to the sounds, syllables and phonology produced by the individual.
- **Voice**, may refer to the characteristics of the sounds produced, specifically, the pitch, quality, and intensity of the sound.
- **Fluency** is also considered a category under speech, encompassing the characteristics of rhythm, rate, and emphasis of the sound produced.

People with speech and language disabilities often require ongoing therapy from audiologists, speech language pathologists and support to improve their communication skills including use of assistive technology and specialized education programs

For better understanding of this disability do visit the website of [Indian Speech, Language and Hearing Association](#)

Living with a speech and language disability can be isolating, as it can be challenging to participate in conversations and connect with others. However, with the right support, people with these disabilities can develop their communication skills to connect with others in meaningful ways.