



# 11<sup>TH</sup> ESLA CONGRESS OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

26-28 MAY 2022 | SALZBURG-AUSTRIA

New frontiers in speech and language therapy: advancing practice, research and education

## Children's speech: The future is now

Professor Sharynne McLeod

Children are the future of our world AND they are important members of our current world. Children are members of our families, communities, and society – now and in the future.

As professionals and researchers, we have a role to support children to:

- Be children who can actively participate in their family, community, and society
- Belong within their family, community, and society now and in the future
- Become adolescents and adults who will actively contribute to the future

We often focus on children's ability to communicate within clinical settings. We typically ask parents about their children's speech and language competence, administer standardised assessments, and create intervention goals focussing on children's speech and language targets. As researchers we have demonstrated the potential impact of children's communicative competence on their future educational, social and occupational outcomes.

This presentation will review knowledge that we have gained through research and clinical practice leading to evidence-based practice to support children's speech and language competence. We will also learn from children about how to support them to belong and participate as active members of their family, community, and society now.

"Children are not the people of tomorrow, but are people of today. They have a right to be taken seriously, and to be treated with tenderness and respect. They should be allowed to grow into whoever they were meant to be — the unknown person inside each of them is our hope for the future." (Korczak, 1929)