



Recently, my daughter had to deliver an oral presentation at school. Although she was well prepared, she was understandably anxious about speaking in front of her classmates. Her experience was a reminder of **how common the fear of public speaking truly is**. Many adults still experience “butterflies in the stomach” before speaking in meetings, conferences, or before a larger audience.

While our education system strongly emphasises academics, communication skills are often underdeveloped. In an era where technology and artificial intelligence can perform many technical tasks instantly, the ability to communicate with confidence, clarity, and emotional intelligence remains one of the most valuable human skills.

As parents, we can nurture these abilities early by encouraging children to tell stories, express opinions, ask questions, and participate in conversations confidently. Equally important is teaching them to listen attentively and speak with clarity and respect. Confidence does not develop overnight — it grows gradually when children feel heard, encouraged, and safe to express themselves.

As pediatricians, we too have an important role. Encouraging children to speak during consultations and involve themselves in discussions about their own health helps build independence and self-confidence. Beyond presentations and classrooms, **the ability to speak up is a lifelong skill — one that empowers children to advocate for themselves, contribute meaningfully to society, and grow into confident, compassionate adults.**

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