

Selective mutism is a rare psychiatric condition primarily occurring during childhood. It is characterized by the failure to speak in certain social situations. The ability to speak and understand spoken language is not impaired, and may be exhibited in more familiar environments. Symptoms include excessive shyness and social anxiety. Selective mutism is recorded to affect less than one percent of children in the United States. This disorder appears slightly more common in females than in males. The percent of affected population is unknown due to undiagnosis and misdiagnosis.