



SOME PEOPLE STRUGGLE SILENTLY EVERYDAY ...

- **Imagine** not being able to ask for help, or to ask to go to the toilet when you are in school and having accidents.
- **Imagine** suffering academically simply because your teacher can't assess your level because you can't read to them, or participate in discussion in class.
- **Imagine** the struggle of making friends and trying to fit in when you can't initiate play, or say STOP when someone is teasing you and perhaps gets a bit rough in the playground.
- **Imagine** being in a swimming pool and panicking but not being able to call out.
- **Imagine** getting lost in the mall and knowing you wouldn't be able to seek help.
- **Imagine** people assuming that you are just rude and wilful, choosing not to speak when you are desperate to but really just can't.
- **Imagine** the feeling of not even being able to answer the role with a simple "Yes Miss" and all eyes looking on you with expectation.
- **Imagine** feeling like you're not normal because you want to speak but just can't and fearing school everyday unsure of what to expect.
- **Imagine** going to a birthday party, or it being your birthday party and not being able to give your gift or say "Thank you!" when you receive one.
- **Imagine** the question, "Why don't you talk?" "What's your name?" Your heart racing and throat throbbing, not being able to make eye contact and just freezing on the spot, and actually not understanding why this is happening yourself.
- **Imagine** being a young adult and not even having your parents to rely on for their voice. How do you find work? Go to college? Get through high school? Interviews? Travel on local transport? Take driving lessons? Have hope for the future.....? This is why its paramount to detect SM in childhood so we have a fighting chance to change these children's future, who are most often highly intelligent and creative individuals with a lot to offer the world.

SELECTIVE MUTISM NEEDS OUR AWARENESS ...



www.selectivemutism.org.nz