

Maximizing your speech therapy experience.

A guide for parents.




Molly Thompson M.S. CCC-SLP

Pediatric Speech-Language Services, Anchorage and Eagle River, Alaska

Alaska LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and other related Disabilities) Family Advisory Council, Feb 19, 2014 Anchorage, AK

What is a speech-language evaluation?

- ▶ A speech-language evaluation is designed to gain insight into a child's developing speech language and communication skills. The speech-language pathologist (SLP) will obtain a variety of scores from the tests utilized in the evaluation. These scores (standard scores, age equivalents and percentile ranks), as well as information from other types of tests, help the SLP determine if your child has delayed or disordered speech and/or language.

- 
- ▶ In addition to determining if a speech and/or language delay is present, the SLP may give special tests, observational scales and parent report measures to gather information about social, play, communicative and behavioral patterns that are related to your concerns. A report is then generated and a plan of care (goals) if services are desired.

What is a speech-language pathologist?

- ▶ A speech-language pathologist is has a Master's Degree (minimum) creating a skilled professional who is licensed in the state to practice speech/language pathology and certified as clinically competent by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (that's the CCC after the name). A Speech-Language Pathologist screens, evaluates, diagnoses, treats and consults on disorders of communication. Where to find one:
- ▶ [American Speech-Language Hearing Association](#)

What is speech-language therapy?

- ▶ Therapy is fun! Kids learn best when an activity is interesting and engaging (it's neuroscience at its best).
- ▶ Speech-language treatment plans and goals are created and implemented based on the child's individual needs. Individual therapy may address:
 - ▶ • Opportunities to develop more appropriate play skills
 - Intelligible speech
 - Language processing improvement
 - Language and learning skills (executive function)
 - Social skills (i.e., imitation, theory of mind, joint attention) and foster more appropriate social interaction skills
 - Language comprehension and expression



Come on in!

- ▶ If you can, join the therapist in the session. Therapy is a collaborative process. Even more with the new health care law changes, emphasis is on increasing the efficiency of treatment to achieve the best outcome. This is one of the best ways to make this happen.
- ▶ Especially when the child is young, techniques that work are going to be shown and shared with you, the parent. Hands on!



It looks like too much fun

- ▶ Absolutely! Younger children learn through play and older children learn best when their interest is peaked.
- ▶ Every toy has a purpose in the SLP's room. Check out my list of toys by age at the end of this presentation.
- ▶ Science is a great way to work on language and problem solving with older children.



Neural networks

- ▶ Therapy builds neural connections.
 - ▶ The more the target behavior is
 - ▶ Practiced correctly, the greater
- The neural connection AND an easier time to access and use a new skill.



Practice Practice Practice

- ▶ Do your homework 😊
- ▶ The need to generalize is why home practice is so imperative.
- ▶ It takes multiple repetitions to make a change in a neural network. The more practice, the greater opportunity to move into a faster, more accurate network.
- ▶ You are the key to maximizing your child's therapy outcome.



AAAAAAAAAAHHHHH!

Tell the SLP when the homework activities are not a good fit for your family.

Here are some basics:

- ▶ Ask questions.
- ▶ If there is a particular goal you want addressed- let the SLP know.
- ▶ You are the most important part of the team! You know your child best. Feel free to speak up.

Sometimes we need a break: it's chemistry

- ▶ Continuity is important but it is okay to take a break if getting to therapy consistently is just too much. In these cases, if the child is not in a program elsewhere, ask your SLP for a **home program**. Pick up again when it is a better time. It does no one any good if everyone is stressed trying to make appointments and keep up with home exercises.
- ▶ **Stress=increase in cortisol= impaired memory.** (science Daily, 17 June 1999)

Quality not Quantity

- ▶ Do not take your child to more than one SLP in private practice unless they are doing a different therapy completely :feeding/Augmentative Communication. Why? Because it is duplicating services. It actually interferes in the therapy process with different people doing different things.
- ▶ If you feel you are going to have a limited amount of time to do carryover at home, let that SLP know. They may be able to fit you in more often.
- ▶ However: with the health care reform comes more restrictions. You may use up all your sessions in a matter of a couple of months and your child will still be needing services.

Sign a Release of Information

- ▶ Do this for every agency/person who is working with your child.
- ▶ Collaboration is key!!

Between the lines

- ▶ Know your medical plan. No one wants a big bill because therapy needed to be pre-authorized, or it's not covered if it's not due to accident, illness or injury.

Community Resources

- ▶ Check funding available locally.
- ▶ Tefra
- ▶ Denali Kidcare
- ▶ Grants through various agencies for therapy or equipment
- ▶ Agencies that can walk you through these processes: Stone Soup Group, FOCUS Inc, Hope, Arc of Anchorage, Catholic Social Services, etc.

Thank you!

- ▶ Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.
- ▶ Molly Thompson
- ▶ www.polarspeech.com or abilitygroupak.com
- ▶ 907-569-5669
- ▶ polarspeech@gmail.com
- ▶ If you can 't find me, you don't know how to use google 😊

Toys by the ages 2-3 years

- ▶ EBAY picks and home
- ▶ Fisher Price (FP) cash register- non-electronic (sequencing, symbolic play and matching)
- ▶ Any FP house (non-chunky) (they are off market due to being labeled “chokeables” after 30 years of playtime!) {symbolic play, vocabulary building, sequencing and cause-effect}
- ▶ Chunky FP too
- ▶ Blues Clues house/characters or current craze
- ▶ Characters from favorite movies or books
- ▶ FP record player; the one with 4 plastic records and winds up: up to 4 step sequencing
- ▶ Any toys you can organize by sameness: beanie babies, blocks, crayons
- ▶ Fluorescent light tube holder and anything you can race through it (cars, balls)- they are see through
- ▶ Balls of all kinds: (turn-taking, cause-effect)
- ▶ Play-dough and your own kitchen tools



Toy Store Picks 2-3 years

- ▶ Gearation (sequencing, problem-solving including cause-effect at higher level)
- ▶ Puppets: creative play
- ▶ Duplo blocks
- ▶ Puzzles
- ▶ Bath tub crayons for working on speech with fine motor/tactile input
- ▶ Play-Dough (more for the 3-4 age group)
- ▶ Babies/ stuffed toys especially with a doctor bag or accessories for feeding/clothing (symbolic play, vocabulary)
- ▶ Dinosaurs, PVC characters from movies/tv (classification, symbolic play)
- ▶ Trucks, cars, necklaces
- ▶ Weebles
- ▶ Voice Activated toys
- ▶ Cariboo board game

3-4 years

- ▶ Many of the 2-3 year toys are still appropriate
- ▶ Puzzles
- ▶ Thomas the Tank engine (still)
- ▶ Brio Mec
- ▶ Duplo kits with pictures to make items
- ▶ Fisher Price still appropriate
- ▶ Play-dough still appropriate
- ▶ Mr. Potato Head (sequencing, fine motor/speech, body parts(early spatial concepts))

4-5 years

- ▶ Any of the above are fine
- ▶ Frigits Deluxe by Think-of-it: the marble maze or something along the same lines: verbal and problem solving.
- ▶ Hi-Ho Cherry- O: 1:1 correspondence, sequencing
- ▶ Marble Mazes by Discovery Toys or the Frigits complete kit (on-line)
- ▶ Lego Creator Board Game: fine motor, sequencing, constructive play, matching (depends on the child's fine motor skills)
- ▶ Cariboo board game {by Cranium}: matching colors, shapes and letters as well as early problem solving: at Toys R US
- ▶ Phonics Desk
- ▶ Characters from Star Wars, GI Joe, Barbies, etc...
- ▶ Markers, paper
- ▶ Marbles for classification as well as old-fashioned fun
- ▶ Colorforms
- ▶ Flashlight (all ages from 4 up)
- ▶ Play-Dough
- ▶

5-6

- ▶ Items from 4-5 are still fun
- ▶ Transformers
- ▶ Play-dough (still fun)
- ▶ Capsela (with a lot of adult help but still fun)
- ▶ Big Brain Academy (board game and DS)
- ▶ Zookeepers Nightmare (game found on Amazon)
- ▶ Rush Hour

6-9 years

- ▶ The Force (good for attention) and Mind Flex
- ▶ Blink and Set (card games) for classification and reasoning
- ▶ Apple to Apples (social and word play games)
- ▶ Mad Libs
- ▶ Outburst Jr. board game (classification and word finding, vocabulary)
- ▶ Taboo Jr. game (word finding and vocabulary)
- ▶ Apples to Apples Jr. (classification and vocabulary)
- ▶ SET card game (for older kids in this group up to age adult): visual problem solving and reasoning
- ▶ Guess Who board Game

6-9 continued

- ▶ Sorry: have Disney Sorry and others. (sequencing, reading, some problem solving)
- ▶ Lego Creator board game
- ▶ LogicBlocs (may be an EBAY item now)
- ▶ these use computer chips for a room alarm in one kit, light tag in another and a general gadget in the third very COOL!!
- ▶ Brio packaged Bob the builder sets, and other vehicle construction kits. The original, discontinued Brio construction kits were in a blue and red bag made planes, trains cars, cranes, etc. (the older ones can be found on EBAY)
- ▶ Capsela (still may need some help)
- ▶ Big Brain Academy (board game and D
- ▶ Legos)
- ▶ Zookeepers Nightmare

9-12 years

- ▶ 9-12
- ▶ Prepackaged science kits (found at AMAZON, Classic Toys and Over the Rainbow).
- ▶ Magnet kits
- ▶ Magnetic words in a box
- ▶ Crafts, balloon crafts for directions, sequences, etc.
- ▶ Kids cookbook- directions, math
- ▶ All board games from above)
- ▶ CLUE board game
- ▶ Juggling kits (directions and hand-eye coordination)
- ▶ Legos
- ▶ On the internet for free!!: try quizzes at www.selectsmart.com, wacky web tales on www.eduplace.com and the quicksolve mysteries (need to google this😊)
- ▶ Capsela
- ▶