Listening: The building block for language and literacy

Changing progress, changing outcomes for children with hearing loss

Aleisha Davis MSLP Cert LLSL® • Alyshia Hansen BA • Katie Neal MClInAud

The Shepherd Centre, AUSTRALIA: Canberra / Liverpool / Newtown / The Australian Hearing Hub Macquarie University / Wollongong
@ research@shepherdcentre.org.au  (02) 9370 4400 shepherdcntre.org.au

May 2016

Outcomes for children with hearing loss

In 2016, age appropriate speech, language and vocabulary skills are possible for children with any degree of hearing loss following early diagnosis, early fitting of technology and early intervention.

Speech, language, literacy & social skills

Before speech and language, comes...


How can we identify poor progress before it shows in speech and language assessments?

Track development of the prerequisite listening skills on which speech, language and communication are built.

More than just Detection

Spoken Language Competency requires acquisition and development of Four Crucial Listening Stages

- Detection (hearing a sound).
- Discrimination (telling the difference between sounds).
- Identification (determining what sounds are), and
- Comprehension (understanding what they mean).

LEVELS OF LISTENING TO BUILD SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Children with profound hearing loss demonstrating listening skills on par to children with typical hearing from 12-18 months of age.

Range of listening skills for children with Unilateral Hearing Loss, even though speech and language may be in typical range.

Indicates possibility listening with one ear only may not be enabling child to reach their communicative potential.

Significant improvements in listening skills directly post CI.

Children with hearing loss and CI may benefit from use of hearing aids.

Outcomes of the Functional Listening Index (FLI)

Development of the Functional Listening Index (FLI)

Built to enable the tracking of functional listening skills across the areas of detection, discrimination, identification and comprehension to guide later speech and language development.

- Based on formative auditory scales (see References)
- Fairly:—Clinicians to use the same tool (rather than a large number of different tools according to individual preferences)
- Children’s listening skill development from birth to 60 months to be tracked
- Development of early through to advanced listening skills
- Detailed specific steps in development
- Comparison of auditory development for children with hearing loss to children with typical hearing
- Alignment with standardised receptive and expressive language outcomes
- An index for use rather than a hierarchy as development of skills doesn’t necessarily rely on acquisition of the one before

The FLI provides evidence to act before the impact of poor listening on speech and language becomes apparent and delays exist. It’s use has led to:

Expected Typical Hearing Trajectory

- Alignment with standardised receptive and expressive language outcomes
- Development of early through to advanced listening skills
- Confirmation that children with hearing loss are on par to children with typical hearing

Outcomes of the Functional Listening Index (FLI)

- 6 PHASES/60 ITEMS

6. Advanced Open Listening Set
5. Listening Through Nonsense
4. Comprehending Language in Different Listening Conditions
3. Comprehending Simple Spoken Language
2. Associating Sound with Meaning
1. Sound Awareness

Listening Outcomes along the Functional Listening Index (FLI)

Key Messages

- Objective information and evidence for families and clinicians
- Direct changes in clinical management and intervention decisions
- Improved speech and language outcomes

References

- percentiles were calculated using data from children with typical hearing