



SPRING 2010

HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

COMMUNICATION MATTERS

What Happens During Speech Therapy?

This issue is the fourth in our series on the variety of therapy types offered by our team. We started with Individual Intervention, where you join your child for a private session with one of our team members. Then we moved to Home Programming, where your child's SLP designed a specific individualized program for you to carry out with your child at home. Most recently, we discussed Parent Training where you are provided with education following an outlined curriculum to give you the tools, knowledge and confidence to support your child's growing communication skills in everyday natural situations. In this section, we will discuss Group Therapy, where you and your child attend a group session with three to six other children and their parents. The focus of each group varies but all groups are designed to give you, the parent, valuable skills to use at home and to provide your child with regular weekly intervention.

Group therapy can be a very effective form of treatment. Your child has the opportunity to practice his or her speech or language skills in a structured setting however, there is less pressure for your



child to perform than during an individual session. Your child has the opportunity to learn from his or her peers and learn that other children also experience communication difficulty. Members of our existing team, which includes Speech-Language Pathologists, Communicative Disorders Assistants and Parent Assistants, designed all of our programs.

We offer three different types of group therapy in our program: an oral/motor therapy group (Sound Play), an articulation-based therapy group (Sound Blast), and two language-based groups (Word Play and Sentence Builders).

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Sound Play.....	2
Sound Blast.....	2
Sound Blast Story: Fanny the Fox	
Target Sound "F".....	3
Word Play.....	3
Sentence Builders.....	3

Sound Play



This program consists of eight to 10 weekly sessions for parents and children who have difficulty coordinating their mouth muscles for speech. This curriculum is centred on several characters, each with new and interesting names. Your child will be introduced to “hoo” the owl, “baa” the sheep and his “mom,” “moo” the cow, “hippo” the hippo, “kah” the crow and many more. Each week a new sound is introduced to the group. Sounds introduced include: “p,b,m,w,h,n,t,d,f,k,g” and “ah, oo, ee, uh, oy”. We target sounds in isolation (by themselves), in consonant-vowel syllables (e.g., baa, ma), in consonant-vowel-consonant syllables and words (hoot, pop), and in consonant-vowel-consonant-vowel combinations (e.g., hippo). You and your child will complete several fun activities based upon that week’s sound. You will then be given homework to continue practice at home. A key element of this group program is parent interaction and continued practice throughout the week at home. The more practice the child has, the easier it will be for him or her to make the sounds. Learning to coordinate the speech muscles takes practice, just like learning to use any other muscles in the body. If you wanted to learn to play a sport or a musical instrument, you would practice for short periods every day to help your muscles develop skill and confidence. It’s the same for speech.

Every session consists of:

- A gross motor activity (to warm up the big muscles of the body).
- An oral motor activity (to warm up the speech muscles).
- Practice on the target vowel sound using sound cards.
- A Sound Story for the first consonant sound, taken from the “Jolly Phonics” program used in many area kindergarten programs.
- Practice making the consonant sound in isolation, combined with a sensory activity to “feel” the sound and “see” the sound symbol.
- A Sound Story for the second consonant sound.
- Practice making the second consonant sound in isolation.
- A Sound Story that combines the consonant and vowel sounds.
- A game based on the characters and sounds introduced in the stories.
- Homework sheets.

Sound Blast

This program was specifically designed for those children who are having difficulty pronouncing sounds. In Sound Blast children and their parents attend twice weekly for four to five weeks or once weekly for eight to 10 weeks. Parents continue to learn how to be their child’s speech therapist at home. During each session, you and your child have the opportunity to sing-songs, complete crafts and join in several fun activities. A new sound is introduced each week and all activities are based on that sound. Sounds targeted include: “f, v, s, z, sh, sp, st, sn, k, g”. Homework activities and suggestions for home practice are provided as well for continued speech sound practice throughout the week.

A key component of the Sound Blast program is learning to detect the level of speech production your child is at in order to have successful progress. We move through the following levels during speech sound practice:

- Producing the sound in isolation (e.g., ssssss).
- Producing the sound in a simple syllable (e.g., saaa).
- Producing the sound in a word, first repeating the word after another, then successfully saying the word on its own (e.g., sun).
- Producing the sound in a phrase, first repeating the phrase after another then successfully saying the phrase on its own (e.g., it’s a sun).
- Producing the sound in a sentence in a structured setting (e.g., I found the sun).
- Producing the sound in general conversation.

By recognizing the level your child is at, you will be able to have a reasonable goal to work towards.

Sound Blast Story: Fanny the Fox *Target Sound "F"*

Once there was a fox named Fanny. She decided to go and see the farm down the road. As she was sneaking over the fence, Fanny fell. Some of her fur got stuck on the fence. Then she saw a farmer. Fanny was scared so she moved fast and climbed into a box. Oh no! She didn't see the fork that was at the bottom of the box. Ouch! She hurt her foot. Poor Fanny.



Word Play

In Word Play, parents and their children attend once a week for eight to 10 weeks. Word Play was designed as a vocabulary-building group for children who are late in talking. Each week a new vocabulary theme is introduced. Topics include: All About Me, Animals, Around the House, Around the Town, Actions, Locations, Descriptions, and Food. The main focus of Word Play is focused stimulation. In focused stimulation, the caregiver learns to provide repeated models of a word in a natural context in order to assist the child in learning the new word. The goal of focused stimulation is for the child to hear the target word at least five times naturally in any given situation. Focused stimulation works best if the caregiver is given five to 10 target vocabulary words to enhance in regular interactions with the child. During Word Play, these words are chosen based on the theme of the week, the sounds, words your child can already say, and what is motivating for your child to say. An example of focused stimulation may be:

- You're eating an apple.
- I like apples.
- Mmmmm, yummy apples.
- Apples are red.
- Let's have another apple.

The targeted word is "apple". The word is introduced in a natural setting (while eating an apple) and repeated several times in context. Your child may not use the word immediately. However, you have laid the foundation for later communication success.

Sentence Builders

In Sentence Builders, children and their parents attend twice a week for four weeks or once a week for eight weeks. The main focus of Sentence Builders is syntax, or grammar. Most children who attend this group are completing their Junior Kindergarten year. They are able to speak in full sentences. However, they have difficulty speaking in a grammatically correct manner:

They may have difficulties with pronouns "he/she;" present progressive verb tense "is running, are running;" past tense, "walked;" asking questions, "where is the cat?" or prepositions "in the box". A key component of Sentence Builders is the use of indirect, natural correction. That means emphasizing the grammatical marker that is difficult for your child without forcing him or her to repeat after you. For example:

- Child: "Him go school".
- Parent: "Yes HE is goING TO school".
- Child: "Her nice".
- Parent: "SHE IS nice. I like her".

Each week a new grammatical target is chosen and you and your child will learn fun ways to target the skill naturally throughout the week at home.



You're the One!

Nobody does it better.

- You know your child better than anyone else ever can.
- You are your child's best communication partner.
- You hold the key that opens the world of language for your child.

We're here to help.

Our staff of registered Speech-Language Pathologists and Support Personnel will provide you with the ideas, strategies and materials you need to help your child. It's up to you to use them.

You can do it!

Nobody does it better.

Be our partner in enriching your child's world. The Haldimand-Norfolk Preschool Speech and Language Program.



Communication Matters is published biannually by the Haldimand-Norfolk Preschool Speech and Language Program. It has been developed to increase awareness for services available and tips on the prevention of speech, language or hearing disorders in the preschool population. This newsletter is intended for parents, teachers and caregivers of preschool-aged children. You are invited to contact the Health Unit with your articles and ideas.



Simcoe

P.O. Box 247, 12 Gilbertson Drive
Simcoe, ON N3Y 4L1
519.426.6170 / 905.318.6623

Langton

22 Albert Street
Langton, ON N0E 1G0
519.875.4485



Caledonia

282 Argyle Street South
Caledonia, ON N3W 1K7
905.318.5367

Dunnville

117 Forest Street E.
Dunnville, ON N1A 1B9
905.774.3333

Web: www.hnhu.org **Email:** info@hnhu.org