

PEDIATRIC SPEECH THERAPY NEWSLETTER



HELPING FAMILIES FIND A SCREEN TIME BALANCE

Choosing how much time children spend interacting with technology is often a difficult situation for parents to navigate. Fortunately, technology is continuously advancing to include more and more educational applications, shows, and games. Despite these educational opportunities, parents should consider finding a balance between screen time and other activities, as excessive interaction with technology could lead to delays in language acquisition (Cowan, 2018).



The American Academy of Pediatrics (2018) recommends that children ages two to five years avoid more than one hour of screen time per day. When a child engages in more than this, he or she may have an increased likelihood of expressive language delays (Cowan, 2018).

Parents play a vital role in helping their children establish healthy relationships with technology. For example, parents can ensure their children engage in active screen time as opposed to passive screen time. Active screen time occurs when a child actively engages with technology and an additional communication partner (e.g., making a video call or playing a language-focused game on a device with a caregiver). Passive screen time occurs when a child interacts with a device alone and does not have the chance to partake in a social experience (e.g., watching a TV show).

Parents also have the opportunity to show their children what it means to strike a balance between screen time and personal interactions. As children observe their parents partaking in alternatives to screen time (e.g., reading a book or going outside), chances are that children will want to do the same!



SNOW FALL INTO SOCIAL THINKING® — ENCOURAGING POSITIVE SOCIAL EXPERIENCES IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

When a child can actively think about his or her social interactions, there is an increased likelihood of appropriate social behaviors. Social thinking skills are necessary for individuals to understand their own and other's thoughts and feelings. Ultimately, these skills promote positive social engagements.

Many individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) demonstrate difficulty with social thinking skills. Individuals with autism commonly experience challenges with understanding social cues, others' intentions and behaviors, and abstract emotions. Parents, peers, teachers, therapists (e.g., speech-language pathologists), and family members can encourage positive social engagements by providing children with tools to think through social interactions.

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ASK A THERAPIST



WHAT HELPS CHILDREN BECOME BILINGUAL?

The brain of a newborn baby can be thought of as a sponge absorbing all there is to learn about the world. Infants have the unique ability to listen to their environments and pick out what speech sounds belong to one language versus another. This is a special skill that helps children develop fluency in different languages.

As an infant continues to grow, his or her brain becomes fine-tuned to the speech sounds most commonly heard. Therefore, if an infant is only exposed to English, he or she will recognize this and let go of the ability to perceive more than one language to make room for an optimal understanding of the native language. If an infant is exposed to English and another language, his or her brain will continue to acquire skills in both languages.

Some parents who choose to expose their child to more than one language may express concerns about their child's language development. Parents may notice their child mixing up grammar rules or using words from both languages when speaking a single sentence. According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (2018), this is a normal part of becoming bilingual.

A speech therapist is an excellent resource to turn to if parents have concerns about their children's speech and language development. Informing your child's speech therapist of the languages your child is exposed to at home and school is essential in ensuring the most appropriate services to promote your child's overall progress.

APP OF THE MONTH:

Pictello



Ages 6+

Target Skills

Speech & Language

About The App

This interactive storytelling app allows children & parents to make virtual storybooks and build social communication skills.



Snow Fall Into Social Thinking® - Encouraging Positive Social Experiences In Children with Autism, Continued...

One resource to turn to is Michelle Garcia Winner's Social Thinking® framework. Key features of this framework include making abstract concepts concrete and using visual structures to support language abilities. For example, a speech-language pathologist may show a child an image titled, "Whole Body Listening." This visual allows a therapist or parent to teach a child that his or her eyes are part of everyday communication and may be used to sustain social interactions. Another example might be showing a child an image titled, "What I Think versus What I Say." This strategy helps children distinguish what is appropriate to say out loud and what is not. In addition to the Social Thinking® framework, there are several other strategies to encourage social thinking skills as well. They are as follows:

Social Stories™: A Social Story™ is a personalized learning tool to help children with autism and other developmental disabilities navigate social situations. They draw attention to relevant social cues and explain social experiences from a child's point of view. Social Stories™ allow children to preview and review the appropriate behaviors unique to a specific environment, so they feel supported before, during, and after a social experience. Parents, therapists, and any individual who understands a child best can write Social Stories™ according to Carol Gray's 10 defining criteria (Gray, 2018).

Social Skills Groups: Social skills groups feature some individuals engaging in activities to strengthen their understanding of social interactions and discover how to put this understanding into action. Typically, groups are made up of about two to eight individuals and at least one teacher or facilitator (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2018). Many therapeutic programs and school districts offer social skills groups as a way to augment a students' learning and promote generalization of skills to different environments.



Video Modeling: Video modeling is an evidence-based practice that presents identical reenactments of social scenarios for careful, repeated preview and review. Through video modeling, individuals view natural social events in precisely the same way over and over. This repeated interaction with highlighted social cues and communicative behaviors allow individuals to learn play skills, gestures, and more. Clinicians typically show videotapes two or three times before the individual has an opportunity to perform the behaviors he or she watched.

References

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SPEECH THERAPY SPOTLIGHT

Debbie S. Lombardi, AuD, CCC-A/SLP

Debbie Lombardi is the owner and provider at Premiere Speech and Hearing with offices in Collegeville and Lancaster. Debbie has a license and certification to practice audiology and speech language pathology. She has worked in a variety of settings but loves private practice and the attention and care she can provide to the patients. Debbie provides services to both children and adults. She has expertise in the area of childhood speech and language development including articulation, language, auditory processing and aural rehabilitation. Audiologic areas of expertise include diagnostic evaluations, hearing aid fitting and service and assistive listening technology. Debbie is a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. In 2019 she will serve as the VP of Publications for the Pennsylvania Academy of Audiology.



Kristin Park, MS, CCC-SLP

Kristin Park is a certified and licensed clinical Speech-Language Pathologist. Kristin has had clinical experience in a variety of settings, but has extensive experience with childhood expressive and receptive language, fluency, and articulation disorders. In addition, she has expertise in the areas of cognitive rehabilitation, verbal apraxia, oral motor planning, and voice assessment and treatment. Kristin works with infants, school-age children and adults. Recently, Kristin completed a certification in the LSVT Loud program that is designed to treat patients with Parkinson's disease and other neurologic conditions. She is a member of the following organizations: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association.



Testimonials

"My experience for years has been nothing but excellent. Very knowledgeable and efficient." – Joe

"I have had a great experience with the people at this office. They are a great bunch of people. Love it here." – Cathy

"My son has been a client here for 2 year and we have seen an incredible improvement in his speech. Sue Levy makes therapy fun and exciting, and my son loves coming here!" – Jen

Would You Like Additional Copies of this Newsletter to give as a **FREE** Resource?



If so, email Debbie at:

dlombardi@PremiereSpeechHearing.com

Please include the address of your office & how many additional copies you would like.



Concerned About Your Speech or Hearing?

**Call us today
for a free consultation
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About Premiere Speech & Hearing: *Hear. Communicate. Live.*

Premiere Speech and Hearing provides superior services in a personalized, convenient, and caring environment. Our educated and experienced Doctors of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathologists are dedicated to the evaluation and treatment of hearing loss, tinnitus, speech, language, voice, fluency and cognitive disorders. Our efforts are designed to provide patients and their loved ones with advocacy, education, prevention, and rehabilitation services. As we say, the goal is to *"Hear. Communicate. Live."*

Contact Premiere Speech & Hearing at www.PremiereSpeechHearing.com or call (610) 454-1177

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- Communication Needs Assessment
- Aural Rehabilitation Classes

Speech Services

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- Language Disorders
- Oral Motor Disorders
- Stuttering Therapy
- Voice Disorders
- LSVT Loud Provider



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