

Auditory-Verbal Therapy



Photo courtesy of Utah State University

Hearing loss is the most common birth defect and is often referred to as a “hidden disability.” The American Academy of Pediatrics estimates that 6 in 1,000 newborns will have a congenital hearing loss. Thirty-three babies are born with a hearing loss every day in the United States. If children are identified early, receive appropriate amplification quickly, and are enrolled in appropriate therapy immediately, evidence shows that language development can develop on a par with same-aged peers by the time they enter elementary school or soon thereafter (see Yoshinago-Itano 1999, 2000, 2002).

Children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing comprise a diverse group. No two children and no two families are the same; nor do they have the same needs and desires. Just as they are varied, so too is the wide range of approaches to be considered. With the advent of the cochlear implant and improved technology for more powerful

hearing aids, children with hearing loss today have better access to a hearing environment. Auditory-verbal therapy is an approach that capitalizes on maximizing this access to hearing, and teaches children to develop speech and language through listening. Because of the many advances seen today, auditory-verbal therapy is adopted for many children with success.

Auditory-verbal therapy is a family-centered approach that relies heavily on parent participation. Professionals believe that children learn and grow best in a natural environment. For the young child, this is the home. Parents and caregivers, therefore, are taught how to create a language rich environment at home. They are taught strategies and techniques that can easily be integrated into daily routines that will stimulate listening, speech, and language growth. Children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing need to develop and achieve the same milestones as children who can hear. They need to be taught to attend to sounds in the natural environment. Listening is of vital importance as children learn to speak like they hear. As infants and young children discover that sound has meaning, a foundation is built upon which speech, language, and communication can develop. Auditory-verbal therapy seeks to build these strong foundations and guide families with children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing through this journey as they learn to communicate with others through spoken language.



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Contact Primary Therapy Source for more information about auditory-verbal therapy or to make an appointment with a therapist.

“The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark.” --Michelangelo



254 River Vista Place, Twin Falls, ID 83301

208.734.7333 • 208.734.8350 (fax)

www.primarytherapysource.com

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