

COMMUNICATION DISORDERS AND SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS WEB PAGE



The “dream” of Dr. Martin has finally come to fruition after only four short years. What was started as a CORE teaching project has developed into the Communication Disorders and Sensory Impairments (CDSI) Web Site, with the urging of our new Web Master, Jason Neel. Team 7’s Supervisor, Dennis Taylor, along with Lead Supports, Maryann and Marianne have gathered useful information in the areas of Assistive Technology, Autism, Hearing Impairment, OT & PT, Speech/Language Impairment, Visual Impairment and Quick Links, and will continue to develop this long-term project.

By accessing the page through the IU#1 Web

Page, you will find overviews of the disabilities, directories, resources as well as PowerPoints and other useful information. There is even a photo gallery for your enjoyment. The Lending Library, Criteria Manual and Newsletters will be a part of this valuable resource.

If you would like to view the CDSI Web Page, go to the Intermediate Unit I Web Page and click on Special Education. Proceed to click on Communication Disorders and Sensory Impairments and you are there.

We hope that you find this web page interesting and informative in the years to come.



Team Approach to Developing Social Communication Skills

A team approach that utilizes the expertise of the SLP and classroom teacher knowledge is crucial to meeting the needs of students with pragmatic language disorders. Classroom teachers report that the weakness in social communication is one of the most disruptive factors on educational performance. Students that are unable to understand the rules of social communication often times exhibit difficulty with peer and adult interaction; overall effective classroom functioning; as well as difficulty with initiating, establishing and maintaining social relationships.

Students with language disorders that reference learning disabilities most often have intact social communication skills. They can escape their difficulties in nonacademic contexts or find success in their subject area of strength. These students, even though may exhibit limited abilities in their verbal repertoires are nonetheless socially successful because they appear to know the rules for engaging in conversational interchange. Students with social pragmatic deficits are however faced with language struggles throughout the day. Their communication partners can see some of these struggles as being overbearing assertions, excessive talking, and/or inappropriate topic introductions that do

not even contribute effectively to the conversation. Even though these students are capable of formulating lengthy, semantically appropriate and structurally intact utterances, they do not know how to enter exchanges, support or introduce topics with skill, or take their listener's perspective into consideration.

We know that SLPs are responsible for identifying and treating social-emotional communication skills. Research recommends working with classroom teachers as well as direct intervention via pull-out services. We as SLPs need to educate and support classroom teachers regarding the intimate and complex relationship between language competence and social skills. They need to know how this relationship impacts the ability of students with language impairments to survive the classroom agenda and manage peer interaction. We also need to embrace intervention through a classroom perspective. The social communication needs of the student should be viewed in terms of how the classroom functions and the demands in the mainstream. Spending time in mainstream classrooms can best develop this team approach to developing social communication skills.



Classroom Perspective/Team Approach

A classroom perspective should frame all the information shared by the SLP and the classroom teacher. Skills needed to effectively participate in every aspect of the school day need to be brought to the forefront.

A classroom perspective/team approach should frame the following:

- understand the nature of the student's communication disorder and how it impacts his/her ability to benefit from instruction
- be aware of skills needed for the student to effectively participate in every aspect of the school day
- student's behavior may very well be the result of a disability
- aware of complex relationship between social and linguistic competency
- understand the student's ability to coordinate semantic and syntactic forms to generate utterances is not sufficient to guarantee social success
- other students look to adults in the classroom on how to react to behavior that is pragmatically impaired

A Little Humor Will Go A Long Way

Centipede

One day the big animals and the little animals decided to have a football game. As the first half went along, the big animals were scoring at will. Every time they got the ball they would run it in for a touchdown.

Then came the second half...

First play: The elephant runs the ball up the middle. WAP!! Tackled for a five yard loss.

The little animals go back to the huddle cheering and congratulating each other.

"Who made that tackle?" asked the ant.

"I did," said the centipede.

Second play: The rhinoceros runs the ball up the middle. WHOMP!! Tackled for another five yard loss.

Back in the huddle the flea asked, "Who made that great stop?" "I did," said the centipede.

Third play: The gorilla tries an end sweep, led by the hippo throwing the lead blocks.

SMACK!! Centipede tackles him for a ten yard loss.

Back in the huddle, the gnat asked the centipede, "Where were you in the first half?"

The centipede replied. "Puttin' on my shoes!"



Strategies to facilitate maximum learning potential and teacher-clinician collaboration

- Explore Seating Arrangements – students with pragmatic communication issues often have difficulty with physical space. Current trend toward clustered seating to accommodate cooperative learning groups is often problematic for students with social communication deficits. Consider the following:
 1. Access to the teacher or SLP for cuing and monitoring
 2. Select appropriate peers to sit near the student (select students who are flexible, kind and have a high tolerance level for disordered pragmatic behaviors and can serve as good social communication models)
 3. Adjust seating arrangements throughout the year to alleviate potential burn-out of the accommodating students.
 4. Explore seating the student away from others at times to provide relief to everyone involved.
- Pragmatic goals/objectives for developing classroom communication skills should be done in collaboration with the classroom teacher – goals should be limited to maximizing the student’s potential and to avoid clouding the focus in collaborative services
- SLP should assist the classroom teacher in weaving development of communication skills into the daily classroom routine (ex. – when students line up, teacher can remind all students about rules of physical space)

IMPLANT JOURNEY

Where there was once criticism of cochlear implants from the Deaf community that seems to be changing with improved cochlear implant technology. The criteria for implementation is expanding and has expanded on a regular basis with cochlear implant surgery becoming “highly routine” since it was first approved in 1985. It’s important for audiologists to be aware of what’s

happening in the implant world, because patients that weren’t implant candidates five years ago may now be implant candidates. For more information on cochlear implants:

- www.shhh.org Self Help for Hard of Hearing People Inc
- www.cici.org Cochlear Implant Association Inc
- www.nad.org National Association of the Deaf



Being a Better Communicator Requires Being a Better Listener

Occasionally, even the best speakers experience difficulty when responding to another person. They sometimes encounter roadblocks on the road to better communication. These roadblocks could be judging, labeling, commanding, moralizing, diverting or advising, and should be avoided in day-to-day communication.

As a listener, the way you respond to a speaker has everything to do with effective communication. There are four major steps to effective listening that require effort on the part of the listener. These steps show another person you care about what they have to say. They require mental effort as listening is not a passive activity.

1. FOCUS ON THE SPEAKER- process what they say
2. UNDERSTAND – try not to judge, find value in what you hear
3. CLARITY- ask questions, show them you care
4. REMEMBERING- create associations to clarify the speaker's words

Focus on being a better listener. Don't interrupt. Show interest. Let those with different opinions have their point

of view. Be quiet; don't give advice unless asked for it. Ask questions. Be intentional in your efforts to become a better communicator through effective listening.

MORE HUMOR !!!



There once was a construction contractor that really loved kids. One day he decided to make a concrete sidewalk for them. After he worked all day pouring the concrete he thought about how his work would help children. He returned the next day and found foot and handprints in the concrete. He got really mad. One of his friends said, "I thought you like children". He responded. "I like them in the abstract not in the concrete."



TEACH ME LANGUAGE PRESENTED AT SUPPER CLUB



In a joint effort with our Autism lead support, MaryAnn Rocco, the October Supper Club members as well as teachers from UI#1's Autistic Classrooms were provided with an overview and training on the *TEACH ME LANGUAGE PROGRAM*. This program, created by Sabrina Freeman and Lorelei Dake, has been developed specifically to teach children with autism and related disorders and looks at the language skills needed in the educational environment as well as in life. *Teach Me Language* is

a step-by-step program with instructions, explanations, examples, games and cards that attack language weaknesses. If you were unable to attend the training and would like to review the PowerPoint presentation, go to the IU#1 Web Page and click on Special Education. Proceed to the Communication Disorders and Sensory Impairments link and click on Autism. The presentation can be found on this page. If you would like to borrow a copy of the program, contact Maryann or Marianne at faietam@iu1.k12.pa.us or pryorm@iu1.k12.pa.us.

Welcome Aboard

New Additions to Team 7

Kimberlee Sproul has joined Team 7 as a SLP serving classes in Greene & Washington counties. She can be seen in the Trinity, Jefferson-Morgan and Holy Family areas. Kim hails from Farmington, PA, where she resides with her husband and two sons.

Jeannine McCoy has joined Team 7 as an Itinerant Hearing Support Teacher. She services students in the Fayette, Greene and Washington counties. Jeannine hails from Ambridge, PA, where she resides with her husband and son and daughter.



HAPPY
HOLIDAYS



“ELFING AROUND

<http://www.elfyourself.com/?id=1214463596>



Another school year is off and running! Hopefully, so far, it has been a good one for each of you. It is hard to believe that the holiday season is upon us.

The LSTS (Maryann, Marianne, and Mary Ann), Karen and I have been hard at work – as have each of you – keeping TEAM 7 afloat. And as we all know – that is often not an easy job!

During our program visits and observations, we have seen good things happening out in the field as you provide services to your students. It is always great to see the dedication of our team members as you work so hard each day – often with the students most in need. Your willingness to always go “above and beyond” is truly appreciated!

I would like to take this time to also welcome our new staff members to the team – Brenda Cage, Kimberlee Sproul, Jessica Brunner, Jeannine McCoy, and Sue Klintegaard. It is great to have you on board!

Also, I would like to use this opportunity to again congratulate our Annie Sullivan Award recipient for the support staff – Niki Lamproplos, educational interpreter, and to the professional staff recipient, Marlene Kubina, a former SLP and now AT/Autism TAC member. Both very deserve recipients and we are proud of their connections to our team.

During the upcoming holiday season, take the time to relax and enjoy your family and friends – they are what it is all about!

Dennis