

## Appendix I-1

## Information for Parents

**CENTRAL AUDITORY PROCESSING TIPS FOR PARENTS<sup>1</sup>**

1. Set aside specific times during the day to work with your child. Let these times be for you and your child alone.
2. Start with short work periods and gradually increase them. A good rule is to stop when your child is at the peak of success. Don't push him or her to the point of failure.
3. Be as objective and patient as you can. Speak to your child in a quiet, firm voice.
4. Make commands or directions short and simple.
5. If a task is too difficult for your child, move on to something easier. Then come back to the first task after changing it so that your child can succeed.
6. When your child is capable of doing a task, gently insist that he or she finish it.
7. Be aware of your child's abilities as well as his or her weaknesses. Don't continue using tasks that are too easy for your child. There should be some challenge to hold your child's attention.
8. Praise your child for even the smallest success. Do not emphasize failures.
9. Really listen to your child. Be there when he or she needs your help.
10. Relax with your child. Enjoy your time together.
11. Be honest with your child. Don't say there is nothing wrong. No one knows better than your child that something is wrong with the way he or she learns.
12. Take a positive approach: "There is help. You can learn. Learning might seem slow for a while. But I'm in this with you."
13. The latest and most important tip is this: Be easy on yourself: You didn't create your child's learning disabilities. You can't handle everything at once. You're human. Sometimes you won't have the patience to work with your child. Sometimes you'll feel like giving up. Don't. Ask for help when you need it. Go to your child's doctor, teacher, or school psychologist. Talk regularly with other parents of children with learning disabilities. Remember, *you're not* in this *alone* either.

**Specific Difficulties And Helpful Hints For Listening Problems**

- *"There's too much going on at once. It's hard for me to really listen."*
  1. Have your child tell you when a sound begins and ends. Stand behind your child and make a noise. Ask your child to raise a hand when the noise stops and to lower it when the noise begins again.
  2. Encourage your child to listen for the direction of a sound. While your child is sitting at a table with eyes closed, ring a bell or make another sound. Ask your child to turn toward the direction the sound is coming from. Begin the activity standing close and then move away to different parts of the room.

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<sup>1</sup> D'Antonl, et.al., (1978) *A Parent's Guide to Learning Disabilities: Understanding and Helping Your Child*. Continental Press, 1978, pp.22-29.

3. Hum a tune or play notes on a piano or other instrument. Have your child tell you when he or she hears a high sound, a low sound, a soft sound, a loud sound, a group of fast notes, or a group of slow notes.
  4. Cover small jars (such as baby food jars) with paper. Inside put various things to shake: coins, macaroni, salt, etc. Be sure the things make different sounds. Put a sample of each thing on a table. Then have your child shake each jar and match the sound with the correct sample.
- *"I can't remember what certain things sound like. And I can't tell if sounds are the same or different."*
    1. Have your child match sounds with the objects or people that make them.
      - a. Have your child listen to objects that make sounds, such as a doorbell, an alarm clock, or an oven timer. Imitate the sounds and have your child do the same.
      - b. Point to objects around the house that sounds, such as a faucet, a pocket watch, or an electric mixer. Ask you child to imitate the sound of each one.
      - c. On a table, place various objects that make noise. Have your child turn around while you use one of them. For example, blow a whistle, ring a bell, crumble paper, or hit a board with a hammer. Then have your child pick out the correct object and repeat the sound.
      - d. Ask your child to identify familiar voices on the telephone or on tape recordings.
    2. Have your child tell you whether two sounds are the same or different. Start with very different sounds, such as a clap and a whistle. Gradually work up to similar sounds, such as a pencil tapping against wood and a pencil tapping against glass.
    3. Help your child identify beginning letter sounds.
      - a. Say the beginning sound of a letter, such as "b". Have your child look through an old magazine to find three pictures whose names begin with the "b" sound.
      - b. Say three words (cow, pan, call) and have your child tell which two have the same beginning sound.
      - c. Say three words (tell, talk, run) and have your child tell which one has a different sound.
    4. Help your child identify word sounds.
      - a. Say a word, such as sun, and have your child repeat it. Then say three words (horse, play, sun) and have your child clap when he or she hears sun.
      - b. Say three words (barn, run, girl) and have your child clap when he or she hears a word that rhymes with sun.
  - *"I can't remember what I hear."*
    1. Tap out simple rhythm patterns with your fingers or clap your hands in a pattern. Ask your child to repeat the patterns. Gradually make the patterns more difficult.
    2. Read a short list of four words to your child. First ask how many words were in the list. Then read the list again and ask what words were in it. Start with related words (milk, apple, cake, bread). Gradually begin to use related words and numbers.

3. Have your child listen to a radio or television report and remember to tell you a specific item, such as the time, the weather conditions, the score of a game, etc.
  4. Go over the words of a short song or a poem very slowly. Ask your child to short phrases after you. Discuss the meaning of difficult words and sentences to be sure your child understands them. Help your child repeat longer phrases until he or she can say the entire song or poem.
- *"I don't always understand what words mean."*
    1. Try to face your child when talking. Your expressions will help him or her understand what you mean.
    2. Talk with your child about the meaning of jokes and riddles.
    3. Read a story with your child every day. Ask questions about the story, letting your child tell you about his or her favorite part, the funniest part, the scariest part, and so on.
    4. While reading a familiar story to your child, occasionally insert nonsense sentences or sentences that have nothing to do with the tale. Ask your child to listen for the sentences that do not belong and to tell you about them.
  - *"I can't follow directions."*
    1. Tell your child how to do things instead of *showing* him or her. Use simple, familiar words in your directions and allow enough time for your child to respond. Begin with one direction at a time, building up slowly to a series of directions: "Toast a piece of bread. Spread butter on it. Sprinkle it with cinnamon and sugar."
    2. Have your child write simple directions as you give them: "Open the door." "Turn on the light." "Carry out the trash." This exercise will help your child write homework assignments in school. If your child cannot write yet, have him or her draw simple pictures of the series of directions. Then have your child carry them out.
    3. Play "Simon Says" with your child. Tell your child to move a certain way (to hop on one foot, take two steps forward, and so on). If you say "Simon Says" first, your child should follow your directions. If you do not say "Simon Says," your child should stand still.
  - *"It's hard for me to make my sentences make sense."*
    1. Emphasize associations by having your child finish incomplete sentences: "I carry an umbrella when it \_\_\_\_\_." "I clap with my \_\_\_\_\_." "I went to the grocery store and bought \_\_\_\_\_."
    2. Really talk with your child for a few minutes each day. Give him or her your full attention and listen carefully. Ask questions about what your child likes and dislikes, what happened in school, what games your child plays. Remember to encourage the use of complete sentences.
    3. Have your child describe the objects and people he or she sees while riding in a car or bus: "Look out the window and see if you can find anything that's big. Tell me in a sentence what you see that is small."