
Appendix 5: Ideas for working with younger and older children

The Nuffield Dyspraxia Programme is most suitable for children aged 3-7 years of age, but it can be adapted for use with older or younger children. The following pages provide some ideas of how this might be achieved.

Ideas for working with younger children

Oral or verbal dyspraxia may be diagnosed or suspected in a child of under 3 years of age. Therefore, activities suitable to the developmental level of young children will be required. Try the following:

Sound making

Use suggestions in the Early Sound Making sheets (Therapy Resources 1, p6) to encourage general sound making: babble, animal sounds, environmental sounds, expressive sounds, etc. Ideas for eliciting speech sounds may be tried with young children, but should be left if unsuccessful.

Speech sound work

Most children approaching their third birthday cope with the picture symbols, providing that they are introduced through games and that activities are fun. However, speech sound work can be introduced to younger children by modifying the approach slightly to match their developmental level. Ideas include: adapted picture presentations; real object presentations; social routine presentations.

Suggested activities

- Enlarge the single sound pictures to A5 or even A4 size and colour them. Introduce 2-3 only, at a time. Stick them on the walls and play "listening" games (running to the correct picture when you hear the sound) and "talking" games (saying the sounds in response to the pictures).
- Make a speech sound bag of toys that match the picture symbols e.g. a ball /b/, a toy motorbike /m/, a toy plastic snake /s/, a toy drum /d/, a toy camera /k/, a cuddly worm /w/, a toy crocodile /a/, a toy mouse /i/ etc. Play games matching the toys to the large pictures.
- Use puppets and soft toys to support sound work.
- Use the character names and carrier phrases to introduce vowels e.g. Arthur crocodile says /ah/; I can see with my "eye" etc.
- Use nursery rhyme tunes to introduce speech sounds e.g. to the tune of "One wheel on the bus"- "The bouncing ball goes bbb, bbb, bbb, the bouncing ball goes bbb, all day long."
- Make simple open the flap books, hiding the picture symbols under flaps which the child can open.