



Talking EBP: Information Updates for Virginia School SLPs Vol. 4, Number 1. Spring 2014

In honor of May being "Better Speech and Hearing Month" our focus for this issue is improving clinical practice:

"...improving clinical services across the entire discipline can only happen through the actions of each individual clinician...Improving clinical practices is an inside job. It begins here." (p. 91)

Hoffman, L. M. (2014). Prologue: Improving clinical practice from the inside out. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*. 45, 89-91.

Need to Know:

Roberts, M. Y., & Kaiser, A. P. (2011). The effectiveness of parent-implemented language interventions: A meta-analysis. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 20(3), 180-199.

This systematic review summarizes scientific, peer-reviewed evidence and shows that parent-implemented language interventions are an "effective approach" (p.180) resulting in significant language benefits for preschool children. Training parents once per week improved receptive and expressive language skills for children with and without intellectual deficits. Aspects of effective parent training included social interaction, daily routines, and modeling specific linguistic forms.

Test Your Knowledge:

- 1) True or False: Findings from a national survey found that school-based SLPs read a sufficient number of peer reviewed journal articles to support evidence-based practice.
- 2) True or False: Results of a recent meta-analysis revealed clear support for only one form of stuttering therapy for children and adolescents.
- 3) A video-based webinar about _____ is currently available online at the VDOE web site on the Speech-Language Impairment web page.
 - a) assessing narrative microstructure
 - b) balancing work and family responsibilities
 - c) calculating IEP goal completion data
 - d) determining matrix values for children with motor speech disorders
 - e) evaluating bilateral motor and visual coordination in children who stutter

Practically Speaking:

Kim, Y-S., Al Otaiba, S., Folsom, J. S., Greulich, L., & Puranik, C. (2014). Evaluating the dimensionality of first-grade written composition. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 57(1), 199-211. doi: 10.1044/1092-4388(2013/12-0152)

This research article provides scientific evidence to support the evaluation of early elementary students' written language skills. Analysis of writing samples from 527 multi-ethnic first grade students revealed four important components of beginning writing skills:

1) substantive **quality** (ideas, organization, word choice, and sentence fluency), 2) **spelling and writing conventions**, 3) **syntactic complexity**, and 4) **productivity** (number of words, number of different words, and number of ideas). SLPs may use this information to guide **artifact analysis** during **comprehensive assessment** and **treatment** planning.

Working With Data:

Psychometric properties of published assessment instruments should guide the selection of standardized, norm-referenced tests to ensure valid and appropriate examination of students' communication skills as part of a comprehensive evaluation. An analysis of SLP practices revealed that the only test characteristic associated with the use of 55 tests was the year of publication. Psychometric properties, including sensitivity, specificity, reliability, and validity, were documented to be unrelated to frequency of use by SLPs. To improve clinical practices, **choose current tests with sensitivity and specificity values of at least .80, preferably higher.**

Betz, S. K., Eickhoff, J. R., & Sullivan, S. F. (2013). Factors influencing the selection of standardized tests for the diagnosis of Specific Language Impairment. *Language Speech & Hearing Services in Schools, 44*(2), 133-146. doi: 10.1044/0161-1461(2012/12-0093)

More to Explore:

The April 2014 issue of *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools* is a clinical forum on improving clinical practices for children with language learning deficits. Alan Kamhi wrote the central article encouraging practitioners to examine practices in school settings in light of current understanding in cognition, learning, and typical development. Seven articles by leading clinical practice researchers further explore Kamhi's assertions. Pamela Hadley describes a new approach for facilitating sentence production with preschool children. Geraldine Wallach applies three factors to update familiar school intervention scenarios. Cheryl Scott explains three intervention priorities for older children and Marilyn Nippold gives practical suggestions for facilitating complex discourse with adolescent students. All authors summarize research to support their recommendations.

Answers to Test Your Knowledge: (Full references and additional information can be found in the Fall 2013 issue of *Talking EBP*, available at <http://curry.virginia.edu/TalkingEBP>.)

- 1) False.
- 2) True.
- 3) A. http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/speech_language_impairment/index.shtml

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