

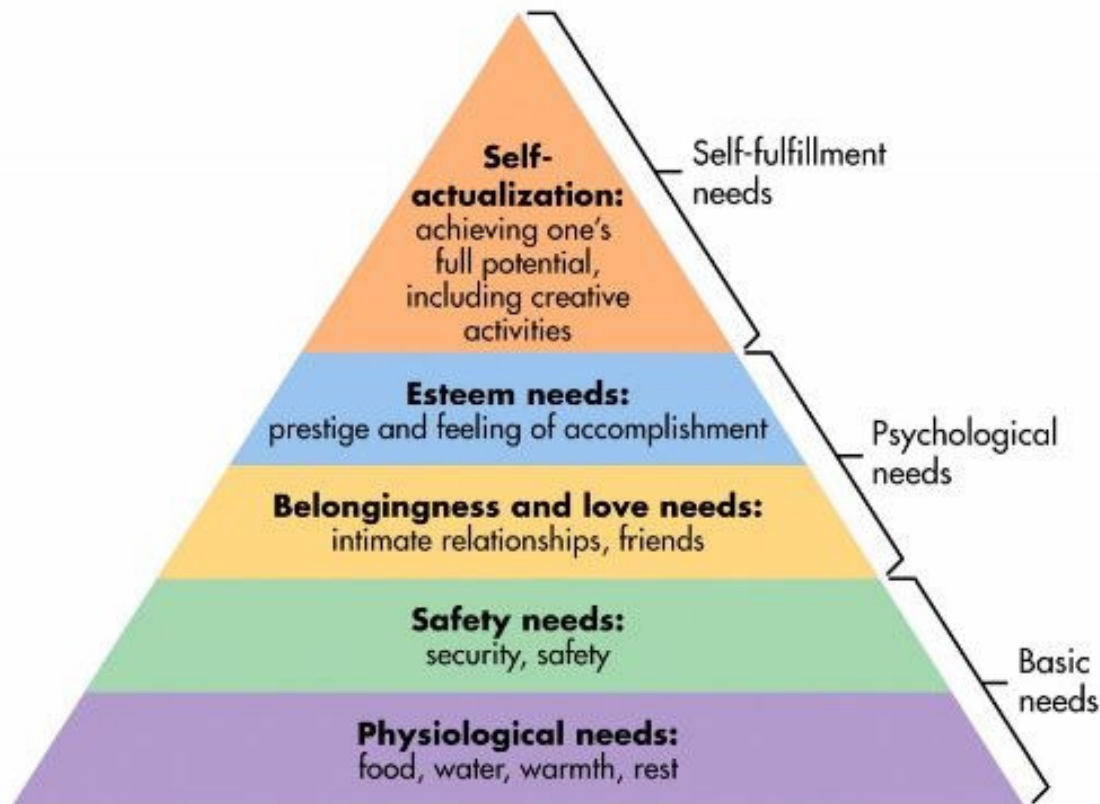
SPEECH SOUND THERAPY FOR CHILDREN WITH ATTENTION DIFFICULTIES (INCLUDING AUTISM)

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The Speech Therapy Solution

www.SpeechAndLanguageKids.com

Mazlow's Hierarchy of Needs

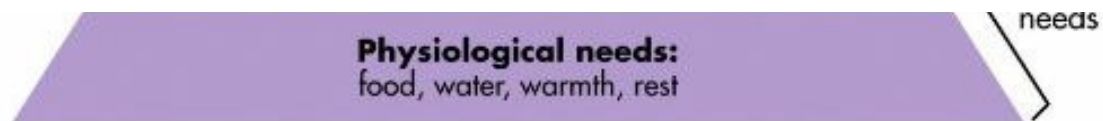


- Must meet the bottom tiers before they are ready to learn
- Children with attention problems are often stuck down at the bottom
- Children may be in different level each day. Adjust accordingly

Graphic link: <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Address Physical Needs

- Basic physiological needs met:
 - Is the child hungry?
 - Thirsty?
 - Cold/hot?
 - Tired?



Address Sensory Needs

- Talk to occupational therapist if one is on the team
 - Sensory diet/strategies? Sensory triggers?
- If no OT, observe the child and try to figure out what needs the child has
- Look for times of the day that the child has better or worse attention
- Ask teachers/parents about other strategies that have worked for this child
- Try changes in sensory input and record how behavior changes



Ideas for Sensory Changes

- Visual changes: lighting, fewer toys out, more or less-stimulating visuals
- Auditory changes: decrease background noise, more or less-noisy toys, listen to calming music at beginning of session
- Tactile changes: different seating, ask about comfort in clothing, different textures in materials, sensory table/play, fidget toys
- Vestibular changes: swinging or spinning activities before or during sessions, sit on floor instead of at tall table, jumping and active activities during sessions, movement breaks
- Proprioception changes: weighted blankets or compression vests, squeezing/hugging before session, movement breaks, rolling/crawling activities, give footstool when sitting

Address Security/Order Needs

- Set up a structure for the session
 - Visual schedule
 - Predictable routine
 - Shorten the work → reinforcer schedule if necessary
- Help them understand what's happening next
 - Talk about the schedule
 - Give warnings
 - Talk about expected upcoming behavior (predirect)



Set up environment for success

- Reduce distractions
 - Put curtains/sheets over shelves with materials
 - Have fewer things out on the table
 - Less-distracting materials like simpler toys or worksheets
 - Reduce background noise
- Have limited choices for materials/activities/etc.
- Stick with items that the child finds highly motivating



Build Relationship

- Spend some time on relationship-building activities so the child likes and trusts you
- If the child seems to be having a bad day emotionally, stop and talk about it
 - Validate his feelings
 - Provide emotional support
 - Offer to help if the child wants a fix (though he may just want someone to talk about it with)
 - Offer a hug or physical support if the child wants it



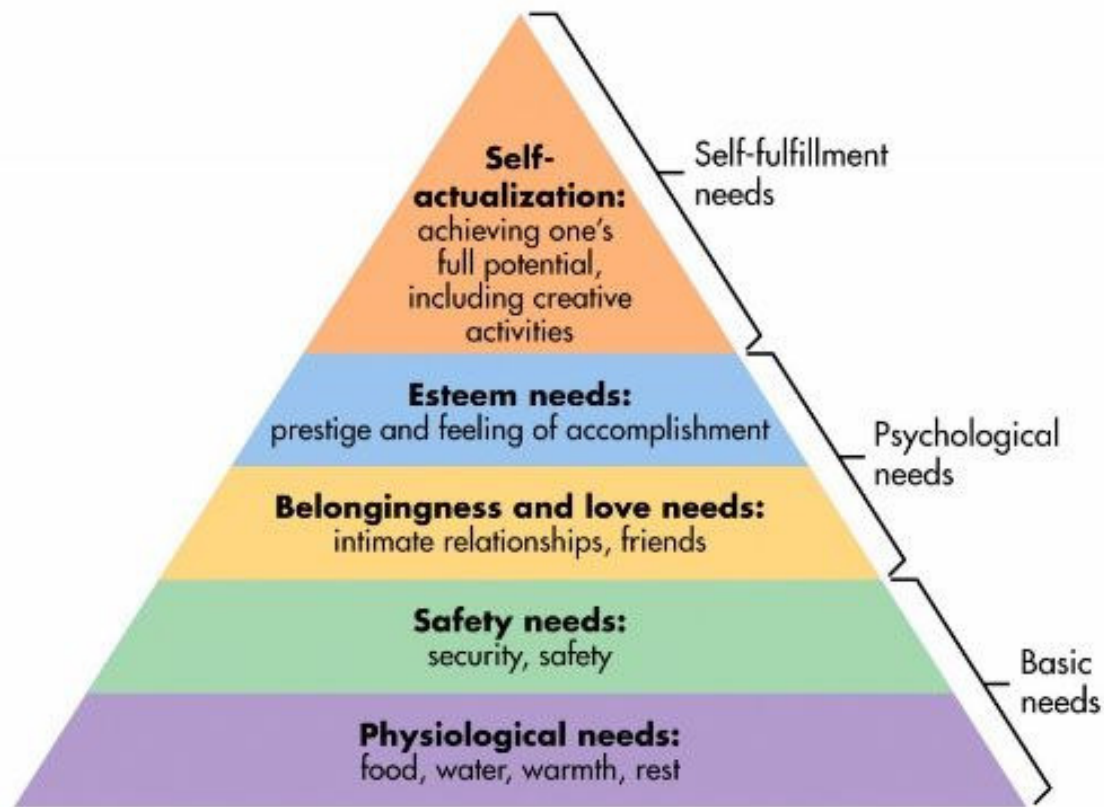
Easy wins

- Working on speech sounds is hard
- Use the same structure as you will for speech sounds, but target an easy skill that the child can already do (easier sound or a motor skill will work)
- When child starts to lose focus or motivation, throw in a few of these easier ones as well



The Speech Sound Work

- We made it! Now we can work on actual speech sound work. May still have limited attention but it should be better after all that.



Sample Activities

- Non-Verbal Children
- Minimally-Verbal Children and the Core Word Approach
- Stimulability Work
- Using Visuals
- Incorporating Movement

Non-Verbal

- Work on drawing attention to sound effects that you make
 - When eating, hold child's hand on your lips and say "mmm" before giving a bite of food. Later, do this and then put the child's hand on her own mouth and say it. Reinforce if she makes a sound.
 - Make car noises while driving cars, hold the car next to your mouth to draw attention to the sounds. Drive car across your chin while you make the sound, then drive on his chin
 - Blow bubbles, then wait until the child looks for more. Hold the bubbles up to your mouth and say "buh" several times before blowing again.
- Respond to non-speech babbling as if it were speech
- Use AAC to reduce pressure to speak
- Work on imitating actions and gradually move toward imitating sounds with mouth

Minimally Verbal/Core Word

Core Word Approach

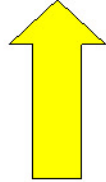
- Good for children with very severe speech problems (like severe childhood apraxia of speech) or those with limited attention for drill and practice. Also helpful for children who make very slow progress in speech or who only say a few words because of their speech problems
- A short list of common words that the child mis-pronounces is assembled
- These words are practiced in isolation and then the child gets to play with whatever he wants (as long as he will talk with the therapist). When those words come up in conversation, they are practiced with correct production

Sample of Core Word Sheet

Bob's Functional Words



yeah



up



uck



me



more



oop

- Child was working on CV and VC words
- Chose words that he could use functionally every day
- Chose sounds that he already had some success with in other words
- Child had suspected CAS and Down Syndrome

Stimulability Work

- Speech sounds that the child is stimutable for are more likely to generalize without direct intervention (Journal of Speech and Hearing Research, Volume 34, 1318-1328, December 1991)
- Engage in games that encourage the child to imitate sounds in isolation (work on the sounds that the child is not currently stimutable for)
 - Make an /s/ sound when playing with toy snakes
 - Make vowel sounds for different animals (“ooh ooh” for monkey)
 - Make a big monster/dinosaur say /k/ every time he stomps his big feet
 - Make a “sh” sound when taking care of a baby doll

Using Visuals

- First, Then Board:
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/First-and-Then-combined-with-the-token-reward-system-KindergartenAutism-2530828>
- Visual Schedules:
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Visual-Schedules-Discounted-Bundled-Pack-for-Autism-Program-1703156>
- Choiceworks Apps: <http://www.beevisual.com/>

Incorporating Movement

Use movement in your activities to keep children with limited attention engaged:

- Put artic cards on the wall and shoot them with a dart gun
- Put artic cards on the wall in a dark room, turn off lights, and have them look with a flashlight
- Hide artic cards in a sensory bin:
<https://www.pinterest.com/spechlangkids/sensory-table-ideas/>
- Hop scotch with words/sounds
- Hold yoga poses
- Obstacle course
- Bring cards from one side of room to the other
- Throw something heavy (like a beanbag) at words
- Heavy work before or during sessions:
<https://www.pinterest.com/spechlangkids/heavy-work-and-proprioceptive-activities/>
- Sensory Strategies for Paying Attention:
<http://theinspiredtreehouse.com/paying-attention-30-sensory-strategies/>

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