



LITTLE ORCHARD CHILDREN
Speech & Language Therapy

How the pandemic has affected children's Speech & Language development: **what we can do to help**

www.littleorchardchildren.co.uk

PLAN

- LOCSALT
- Impact of the pandemic
- Importance of Speech & Language skills
- Scale of the problem
- Why Speech & Language skills have been affected
- **What we can do to help**



What to Expect



About LOCSALT



JANE WILSON
**SPECIALIST INDEPENDENT SPEECH &
LANGUAGE THERAPIST**

LITTLE ORCHARD CHILDREN
Speech & Language Therapy

Work mainly with Early Years Practitioners & settings to give them the skills, knowledge and confidence to support all children's Speech & Language skills.

I hold a very small caseload of private 1 to 1 therapy clients.



WHAT I DO..

Free Facebook group: Early Years Professionals
Signature online workshops
Plastic free Speech Therapy Resources
Private Speech Therapy
Parent / practitioner consultations
Team LOCSALT (new in 2022)

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LITTLE ORCHARD CHILDREN
Speech & Language Therapy

How the pandemic has affected children's Speech & Language development

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**COMMUNICATION
IS ALL ABOUT
CONNECTION**

Pandemic has resulted in

Many children interacting much less than usual with others; teachers, childminders, friends, extended family members....



LESS INTERACTION & LESS OPPORTUNITIES

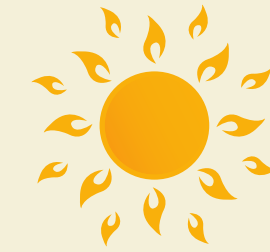
LITTLE ORCHARD CHILDREN

THE LANGUAGE TREE

Interaction



Opportunity



Sentences



Speech Sounds



Vocabulary



Understanding



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Attention & Listening



Play & interaction



How has the pandemic affected school starters?



EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION REPORTED;

- 76% of children starting school in 2020 needed more support than in previous years
- Children struggling with
 - Communication & Language development
 - Personal, social & emotional development
 - Literacy



Pre-Pandemic

ALREADY CONCERNS WITH CHILDREN'S SPEECH, LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Particularly in areas of deprivation



Pre-Pandemic

"THE PANDEMIC HAS
EXACERBATED EXISTING ISSUES..."

**ALREADY CONCERNS WITH CHILDREN'S
SPEECH, LANGUAGE &
COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Particularly in areas of deprivation



The pandemic has exacerbated issues...

APPROXIMATELY 50% OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOME SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS HAVE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SKILLS THAT ARE SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THOSE OF OTHER CHILDREN OF THE SAME AGE



WHY IS SPEECH, LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION SO IMPORTANT?





WHY IS SPEECH,
LANGUAGE &
COMMUNICATION SO
IMPORTANT?

**A
FUNDAMENTAL
LIFE SKILL**

Speech, Language & Communication skills
impact on all aspects of development





Speech & Language Skills

IMPACTS ARE FAR REACHING



Social, emotional & mental health



Educational Attainment



Life chances

THE IMPACT OF SLCN ON CHILDREN'S LIFE CHANCES

Just 26% of young children with SLCN made expected academic progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Just 15% of pupils with identified SLCN achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of their primary school years

81% of children with emotional and behavioural disorders have unidentified language difficulties.

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Bercow, J. (2008) The Bercow Report: A review of services for children and young people (0-19) with speech, language and communication needs.

(2018) Bercow - 10 Years On report

THE IMPACT OF SLCN ON CHILDREN'S LIFE CHANCES

Young people referred to mental health services are three times more likely to have SLCN than those who have not been referred.

Children with poor vocabulary skills are twice as likely to be unemployed when they reach adulthood.

60% of young offenders have low language skills.

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Bercow, J. (2008) The Bercow Report: A review of services for children and young people (0-19) with speech, language and communication needs.

(2018) Bercow - 10 Years On report

WHY SPEECH & LANGUAGE SKILLS HAVE BEEN AFFECTED?





Impact of lockdowns

**REDUCED
OPPORTUNITIES
REDUCED EXPOSURE TO
VARIED VOCABULARY**

MASK WEARING

**NO OR LITTLE
OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY
WITH PEERS**

**NO OR LIMITED
ACCESS TO THERAPY**

REDUCED INTERACTIONS





FEWER ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE

REDUCED OPPORTUNITIES

**RESTRICTIONS SEEING
EXTENDED FAMILY**

SETTING CLOSURES

**REDUCED
OPPORTUNITIES
AND REDUCED
EXPOSURE TO
NEW
VOCABULARY**



LIP READING NOT POSSIBLE

**DAMPENING EFFECT ON
SOUND PRODUCTION**

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

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**MASK
WEARING**

NO PLAY DATES

SETTING CLOSURES

**RESTRICTIONS SEEING EXTENDED
FAMILY**

NO SOCIAL GATHERINGS

**PARKS AND PLAYGROUP
CLOSURES**



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**62% OF CHILDREN THAT NEEDED
THERAPY RECEIVED NONE DURING
THE FIRST LOCKDOWN**

LIMITED IN PERSON SESSIONS

DISCREPANCIES

**LONG WAITING LISTS
LIMITED THERAPY
ADVICE ONLY**



**ACCESS TO
THERAPY**

7 modules / 3 weeks support / 4 weeks access

Speech Sound Support Workshop

Confidently identify, screen & support children
with unclear speech

Speech Sound Support Workshop

www.littleorchardchildren.co.uk/products/speech-sound-support-workshop





**Working With Words
Speech & Language
Workshop**

Working With Words Workshop

www.littleorchardchildren.co.uk/products/working-with-words-workshop



Team **LOCSALT**



Are **YOU** ready
to accelerate
Speech &
Language
outcomes?

NEW 2022!

SPEECH & LANGUAGE MEMBERSHIP FOR THE EARLY YEARS

Team LOCSALT

www.littleorchardchildren.co.uk/team-locsalt

WHAT WE CAN DO!



**MEET
THEM
WHERE
THEY ARE
AT**



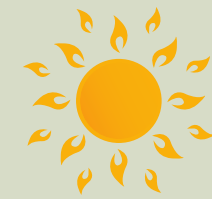
MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE AT

LITTLE ORCHARD CHILDREN THE LANGUAGE TREE

Interaction



Opportunity



Sentences



Speech
Sounds



Vocabulary



Understanding



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Attention & Listening



Play & interaction



WHAT WE CAN

DO

~~REDUCED~~ INCREASE
OPPORTUNITIES AND
EXPOSURE TO VARIED
VOCABULARY

~~LIMITED INTERACTIONS~~
AND OPPORTUNITY TO
PLAY WITH PEERS

LET THEM
PLAY!!

~~MASK WEARING~~

GET DOWN TO THEIR
LEVEL, LET THEM HEAR
YOUR VOICE & SEE YOUR
FACE

~~LIMITED OR NO ACCESS TO~~
THERAPY

ACCESS TO THERAPY
SERVICES FOR THOSE
THAT NEED IT



"Play is the work of childhood"

LET THEM PLAY

Play is directly linked to so many important skills, including Speech & Language



VARIED VOCABULARY

Not only varied vocabulary, but
repeated exposure to vocabulary
in different situations



Words from different categories



- **NOUNS**
Object words like cat, ball & cup
- **ADJECTIVES**
Describing words like cold & wet
- **VERBS**
Action words like walk & sit
- **PREPOSITIONS**
Location words like in & on
- **SOCIAL WORDS**
Like hello & more



Language learning is at its best when...



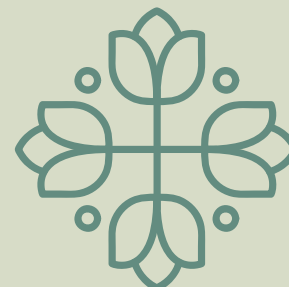
The senses are triggered; see, hear, smell, taste & touch



The child is engaged and connected



Language is in context



Language is experienced in different situations

LET THEM SEE YOUR FACE



Get down to their level
Make your voice interesting
Follow their lead
Be present in the moment
Smile!!



REDUCE BACKGROUND NOISE
GET DOWN TO THEIR LEVEL
KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE
MODEL FUNCTIONAL WORDS
DON'T TEST
LABEL
WAIT
INTERPRET
REPEAT REPEAT REPEAT

**LET THEM
HEAR YOUR
VOICE**



**LET THEM HEAR
YOUR VOICE**

HELPING A CHILD WITH UNCLEAR SPEECH



**LET THEM HEAR
YOUR VOICE**

HELPING A CHILD WITH UNCLEAR SPEECH

**OVEREXPOSURE TO SOUNDS HELPS TO BUILD
A SOLID LISTENING FOUNDATION WHICH
WILL IN TURN SUPPORT NATURAL SPEECH
SOUND DEVELOPMENT.**



GENTLE SPEECH THERAPY



- Easy to weave into everyday play, routines, stories and songs
- Bathes children's listening skills with a target sound
- Perfect to get you started if you are waiting for therapy
- Perfect low pressure approach for little ones that find it hard to attend for a long time
- No expectation for repetition or for the child to "have a go", the pressure is off the adult



STRATEGIES

WHAT ELSE CAN
WE DO?



**CREATE MEANS, REASONS &
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR COMMUNICATION**





● MEANS

How; speech, signs, symbols, gesture, behaviour, vocalisations, eye contact

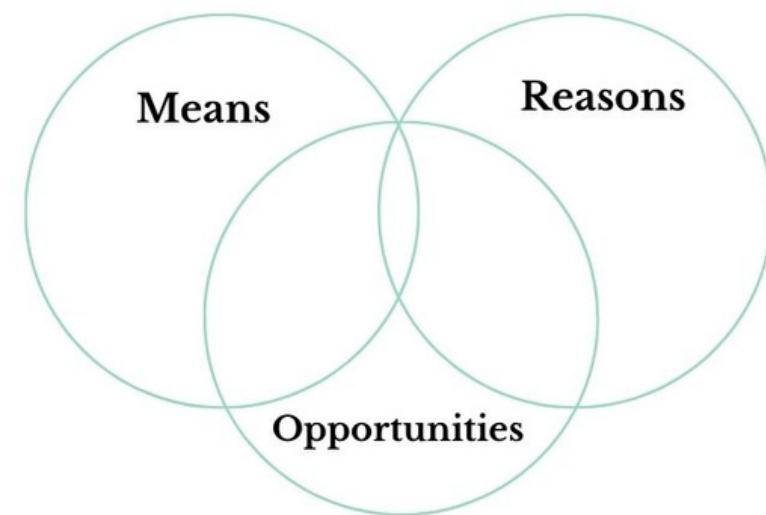
● REASONS

Why; basic need, attention, want, give, social interaction

● OPPORTUNITY

When, where, with who; time & space, choices, responsive people, shared language

Means, Reasons & Opportunities



LITTLE ORCHARD CHILDREN
Speech & Language Therapy



Create Means, Reasons, Opportunities for communication

Reference: Money, D. (1997) adapted by Little Orchard Children for Working With Words Workshop

STRATEGIES

WHAT ELSE CAN
WE DO?

MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE AT!

If pre-linguistic skills are not in place then we can not expect our little ones to understand words or begin to use functional language.

ABANDON YOUR OWN AGENDA

Follow their interests. Talk about what they are doing, what they touch, what they see. Don't test. Be present in the moment.
Connection is so powerful for language learning

WEAVE SPEECH & LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY

Talk about the "here and now". Utilise routines to repeat language models. Utilise routines for connection and turn taking.





WANT TO LEARN MORE?

www.littleorchardchildren.co.uk
jane@littleorchardchildren.co.uk

EARLY YEARS SALT COMMUNITY



With Jane Wilson
Speech & Language Therapist

Because every child
deserves a voice.



Working With Words Workshop

Confidently support children working towards their
first words and two words together



Team LOCSALT

Are YOU ready
to accelerate
Speech &
Language
outcomes?



FREE FACEBOOK GROUP

Early Years SALT Community For Early
Years Practitioners

WORKSHOPS TO EMPOWER & SUPPORT YOU

Speech Sound Support
Working With Words

JOIN TEAM LOCSALT W/L

littleorchardchildren.co.uk/team-locsalt

PLASTIC FREE RESOURCES TO GET YOU STARTED

littleorchardchildren.co.uk/products



THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR LISTENING

Jane x

Jane Wilson

Specialist Independent Speech & Language Therapist

littleorchardchildren.co.uk

