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Applied Behavioral Analysis
Music Therapy
Occupational Therapy
Physical Therapy
Speech/Language Therapy
Social Skills Groups

TOPIC: READING DYSFUNCTION; DYSLEXIA

AARIS READING PROGRAM OF CHOICE - LINDAMOOD BELL PROGRAMS

DEFINITION: According to the International association of dyslexia: *"Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge."*

CHARACTERISTICS:

- Difficulty with phonological awareness skills PK-2nd grade
 - Rhyming
 - If you have the word "bat"- take away the /b/ and put in an /h/- what is the new word?
 - How many sounds does the word "clap" have?
- Leaving letters off of words when reading (ex: shoes = shoe)
- Transposing letters in words when reading (ex: table - battle)
- Guessing words based on the first letter of the word (ex: father - far)
- Slower reading rate
- Poor comprehension (ability to answer questions about what was read)

A LITTLE ABOUT THE PROGRAMS WE OFFER:

Lindamood-Bell is a series of programs designed to incorporate sensory-cognitive functions into learning skills such as reading, spelling, language expression, and language comprehension. Sensory-cognitive functions are explicit development of imagery (pictures in the mind). These programs can be used for those diagnosed with the following, but not limited to: dyslexia, auditory processing disorders, expressive language delay, and receptive language delay.

Lindamood Bell's *Visualizing and Verbalizing®* program develops concept imagery - the ability to create an imagined whole picture (or "gestalt") from language. Developing this skill will aid in comprehension and higher order thinking skills, such as making inferences. This program improves listening comprehension, reading comprehension, memory, oral vocabulary, critical thinking, and writing.

The *Seeing Stars®* program develops one's symbol imagery skills - the ability to visualize sounds and letters in words. This program improves orthographic awareness, phonemic awareness, word attack, word recognition, spelling, and contextual reading fluency.

RECOMMENDATION FOR SERVICES:

- Schedule a screening with a speech-language pathologist, or discuss concerns with a primary care physician, so that proper referral can be made.

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- Only a trained professional in dyslexia (typically psychologists who are specialists in developmental disorders) can diagnose dyslexia. While our therapists cannot diagnose dyslexia, we can provide excellent programming so that your child improves his/ her reading fluency and comprehension skills- many times by 2 grade levels!

WHAT TO DO AT HOME:

- Read aloud to your child!
 - Model accurate decoding and reading with expression, with a “just right” rate.
 - Read material on topics of interest to your child.
 - Make connections between the text and real-life experiences as you read--pause and remember!
 - Stop at unknown words--reread the sentence, then use context clues or offer synonyms, antonyms, definitions, or say a different sentence using that unknown word in context, to help your child infer and learn the meaning of that word, to build their vocabulary!
 - Encourage your child to visualize, or “make a movie in their mind”, as you read the story. Ask them, “What do you picture for...?” as you ask about characters, setting, actions, etc.
 - Check for comprehension after difficult sentences, or between paragraphs--stop, reread the text in meaningful chunks/phrases, and rephrase/restate or “untangle” the language to be sure your child understands.
 - If your child is very young, point out the words in the book vs. the illustrations, and use your finger to track left to right and top to bottom on the page as you read, pointing to each word as you read it (if there are few words per page).
- Practice phonological awareness skills!
 - Phonological awareness is our understanding of the sound structure of our language, and our ability to hear, isolate, and manipulate words in sentences, syllables in words, and sounds within words.
 - Rhyming--read books with rhyming words (like Dr. Seuss), or poems and nursery rhymes, to your child. Repeat the words that rhyme--like “hat, cat”--and state that they sound the same at the end...they both end with ‘at’. Add more -at family words so your child can hear multiple examples: “hat, cat, fat, mat, sat, rat--they ALL end with -at! They all rhyme!”
 - Segmenting syllables in words: clap out syllables in words as you say them, or count the syllables on your fingers. Play “I Spy” and try to look for words with 3-, 4-, 5- and even 6-syllables!
 - Segmenting or blending sounds in words: break a word into its sounds, like “slam” = S - L - A - M...or, give your child the sounds of a word, one at a time, and ask them to say the word they hear, like “B - A - T” = bat! Do this while playing “I Spy”, too!
- Help your child understand morphology!
 - Morphemes are the smallest meaningful units in words. They include “morphological markers”/inflectional endings, such as plural -s and the verb tense endings -ing, -ed, and -s. They also include prefixes, suffixes, and base/root words.

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- When speaking with your child, or reading aloud to them, take time to notice and break down longer words in sentences. Point out those inflectional endings--like, "Hand me the blocks, please? Wait--did you hear the /s/ sound at the end of the word 'block'? That's called a 'plural -s'. It means 'more than one block'." Or, "Unbelievable--that's a big word! We can break it up into three parts--the prefix 'un' at the beginning of the word, the base or root 'believe' in the middle, and the suffix 'able' at the end of the word. 'Un' means 'not', and 'able' means 'able to be'...the this big word means 'not able to be believed'...when something is 'unbelievable', you're not able to believe it!"
- Help your child learn and remember sight words!
 - Be sure to learn which sight word lists your child's teacher is using.
 - Make learning multisensory--encourage your child to see the word, hear the word, touch/trace the letters of the word, etc.
 - Limit the number of sight words you teach to no more than 5-10 words per lesson/session.
 - Teach your child to visualize the sight word with their eyes closed or when looking up at a blank area on the wall opposite them; ask them what letter they see first, last, etc. Ask them to trace/write the word in the air--we call this "air-writing".
 - Drill and practice seeing/reading and hearing/spelling sight words, using visualization and air-writing as you practice.
- Help your child build their working memory skills!
 - Our working memory allows us to hold onto information briefly while we process it, and includes auditory working memory, for information we hear, and visual working memory, for information we see.
 - Reading--decoding and comprehending--requires both auditory and visual working memory.
 - Model for your child (and discuss with them how and why you are doing this) rereading, repeating and/or rephrasing information, chunking information to recall smaller meaningful parts, and using visualization to recall information that was heard or read.
 - Try to present information in shorter messages with simpler language.
- Help your child with organizational skills!
 - Executive function skills of attention and organization are important to reading and writing. Teach and assist your child in the use of schedules, graphic organizers, color-coding systems, etc.
- Advocate for your child in the school setting!