



USING SIGNING TIME® WITH CHILDREN IN SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

Children with speech and language disorders have difficulty communicating their wants and needs, which leads to high levels of frustration. By using American Sign Language (ASL), children can overcome barriers to spoken language and successfully communicate. This success gives them a sense of empowerment, which can lead to increased self-esteem and confidence.

Signing is more convenient to use than a communication device – and it supports the development of receptive and expressive language skills. By using signs and speech together, you are giving children the opportunity to hear the word (when spoken), see the word (on both the lips and hands) and “do” the word by signing it. This multi-sensory form of communication helps children acquire vocabulary more quickly and efficiently.

Use signs in your therapy sessions to:

Elicit spoken responses

If you want a child to say the sentence “I see a book” aloud you can say, “I see a...” and then make the sign for BOOK to elicit the target word without saying it aloud.

Increase fluency

Teach the signs for target

words that trigger dysfluency. Secondary movements often help a child through a dysfluency.

Visually cue speech sounds

Use letter signs as a visual cue to help the child remember target sounds and produce them correctly.



Help build vocabulary

ASL signs can enhance a child’s understanding of a concept. The sign for GIRAFFE involves moving the hand up the neck, which shows how giraffes are different from other animals.

Encourage verbalization

When a child learns to sign a word, he or she is more likely to learn to say that word.

Reinforce desired behaviors

Using signs for GREAT JOB, WONDERFUL, YES, TRY AGAIN, and GOOD WORK to praise and encourage children can help you keep them engaged, motivated and focused during therapy.

Involve parents

Signing is a fun and easy way for parents to help support therapy goals at home.

SIGNING TIME RESOURCES FOR THERAPISTS

Signing Time programs and products have been developed for children of all abilities and can be used in a variety of ways to support your therapy goals.

Activities for Therapy

The Signing Time Classroom Edition has 16 units of themed activities for children from pre-school to age 8. These fun activities help children learn signs and word meanings together in a fun and interactive way and are ideal for use in therapy. The Classroom Edition comes with a set of DVDs and music CDs to support the curriculum. For more information, visit <http://www.signingtime.com/classroom-edition>

Products for Therapy

Children learn best when they are engaged in multi-sensory learning. The Signing Time product line includes DVDs for your visual learners, music CDs for your auditory learners and books and flash cards for your hands-on learners. For more information on products, visit www.signingtime.com



SUCCESS STORIES

We adopted our son from China at 18 months and he had never been exposed to English. We were told that he had a speech and language delay in Mandarin. He had lived in an orphanage for his entire life. Initially, the language barrier made it difficult for us to meet all of his needs. We began weekly speech and language sessions. He has a severe to moderate speech delay with the possibility of Apraxia and Velopharyngeal Insufficiency. At the suggestion of our speech and language therapist, we started signing, which ended up being the perfect vehicle for our son to communicate. Our son is not a fan of television, but we thought we would try the Baby Signing Time videos. He loves the videos and asks for them regularly. He will practice along with the video and even taught us a couple signs! Our family being able to communicate alleviated the frustration he had when he knew what he wanted, but couldn't tell us. The best part about the signing is that it accelerated his language skills. After just a few months of our family signing, our son is understanding and speaking nearly as well as his same age peers.

Angela Ludlum, Washington IL

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Abbey holds a Master's Degree in Speech Language Pathology from Gallaudet University. She worked in the elementary setting as a Speech Language Pathologist with Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and children with Multiple Disabilities for six years. She has been using American Sign Language with families and children her entire career and is a Certified Master Signing Time Instructor with the Signing Time Academy.

Kimberly Fries MA, CCC-SLP

Kimberly holds a Master's Degree in Speech Language Pathology from the University of Central Florida and is a licensed pediatric speech and language pathologist. She works in Early Intervention with children from birth to age three. Kimberly has been teaching American Sign Language to families for eight years and is a Certified Master Signing Time Instructor with the Signing Time Academy.



Speech and Language Bundle
SigningTime.com/speech-language