

Dyslexia & Sound Therapy

The problem

Dyslexia, meaning “reading difficulty” was originally called “word blindness” and thought to be a visual problem. One of the earliest writers on the subject, Dr Hinshelwood, was an eye surgeon, which may account for the initial emphasis on visual difficulties. Many more recent studies point to language and auditory problems as the fundamental cause. Listening is the most basic skill required for verbal communication and a weakness in listening ability may hinder the development of a strong language base.

Consequently, the child encounters problems when it comes time to approach the more complex linguistic tasks of writing and reading. If the sounds of speech have not been accurately heard, they cannot be accurately conveyed by symbols.

The left hemisphere of the brain is the main centre for processing language. In order for speech sounds to reach the brain efficiently the right ear must take a leading role in listening because the right ear communicates most directly with the left hemisphere.

Dr Tomatis contends that children with dyslexia have failed to achieve right ear dominance and that therefore the order in which they hear sounds becomes jumbled.

If they sometimes use the left and sometimes the right ear as the directing ear, sounds may reach the brain at different speeds, so letters will be jumbled. This accounts for errors of reversal, such as writing “was” as “saw” or pronouncing “spaghetti” as “pisghetti”.

How Sound Therapy may help

The balance between the two hemispheres of the brain is of fundamental importance in overcoming dyslexia.

Both hemispheres play a role in processing language, but the roles they play are different. The eye must combine with the power and quality of the ear to make sense of the written sounds. This co-ordination happens easily when the left hemisphere deals primarily with audition and the right hemisphere deals primarily with vision.

In dyslexia, the route which allows for phonic analysis has been damaged. Sound Therapy may help restore the functioning of this route and eliminate the cause of the problem. Tomatis says “We read with our ears ... the ear is the organ of language, the pathway to language assimilation, the key that controls it, the receptor regulating its flow.” Sound Therapy stimulates and exercises the ear, encouraging it to receive and interpret sound in an efficient manner. Music is a highly organised series of sounds that the ear has to analyse. Therefore, listening to music is an excellent way for a child to learn how to perceive sounds in an organised fashion, or in other words, to listen. The higher volume of sound to the right ear, which is built into all Sound Therapy recordings, means that the right ear is educated to be the directing ear. When this right ear dominance is achieved, the problem of reversal may disappear.

What it may achieve

Children with dyslexia often have feelings of inferiority after repeated failure. It is unfair that they must try many times harder than anyone else to achieve only mediocre results.



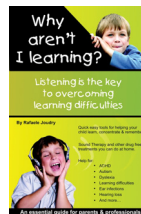
Sound Therapy may offer immediate emotional relief because it is a method of treatment that requires no extra effort from the child. A therapy that does not require the child to struggle with the problem area of language enables him or her to feel let off the hook for once and enjoy a treatment that is not a constant reminder of his or her own inadequacies.

The basic cause of the language difficulties may be remedied by Sound Therapy. Once the child is able to receive and interpret sound accurately and easily, his or her ability and motivation to communicate is greatly increased. Thus the problem learner is transformed into a receptive and motivated learner.

How to use it

A child with dyslexia should listen to Sound Therapy every day for 30 to 60 minutes or more if desired. Listening can be done during sleep, play, homework or travel. If the child wishes to listen at school, parents can ask for the consent of the teacher. This will likely be granted as listening in the classroom will often help the child to concentrate and perform better. The reading aloud exercise while holding an imaginary microphone in the right hand as described in the book: *Why Aren't I Learning?* has been particularly helpful for children with dyslexia.

For more information on the Sound Therapy program it is recommended that you read the book *Sound Therapy: Music to Recharge your Brain* by Patricia Joudry and Rafael Joudry or the new book *Why Aren't I Learning?* by Rafael Joudry available from good bookstores or from **Sound Therapy International Pty Ltd.**



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