Talking EBP: Information Updates for Virginia School SLPs
Vol. 2, Number 1. Spring 2012

In celebration of Better Speech and Hearing Month, this issue of Talking EBP is dedicated to the topic of **Service Delivery**. Let's take a moment to reflect on clinical practice because…

"Clinicians cannot rely on what they learned in professional school to carry them through a lifetime of professional practice."

Ratner, N. B. (2006). Evidence-based practice: An examination of its ramifications for the practice of speech-language pathology. *Language Speech & Hearing Services in Schools, 37*(4), 257-267. doi: 10.1044/0161-1461(2006/029)

Need to Know:

Cirrin, F. M., Schooling, T. L., Nelson, N. W., Diehl, S. F., Flynn, P. F., Staskowski, M., Torrey, T. Z., & Adamczyk, D. F. (2010). Evidence-based systematic review: Effects of different service delivery models on communication outcomes for elementary school-age children. *Language Speech & Hearing Services in Schools, 41*(3), 233-264. doi: 10.1044/0161-1461(2009/08-0128)

The findings of this systematic review revealed an **advantage for vocabulary** development when services were provided in the **classroom rather than pull-out** format. Acknowledging the limited availability of applicable published research, the authors stated that SLPs "must rely on reason-based practice and their own data until more data become available" (p. 250). In addition, the authors urge clinicians to "obtain information on changes in the type and amount of students' functional language abilities in daily classrooms activities" (p. 250).

Test Your Knowledge:

1) True or False: Recently published research revealed that three (C)APD screening tests were poor predictors of children's performance on diagnostic measures of APD.
2) Which of the following agencies offer online resources for SLPs regarding (C)APD?
   a) ASHA
   b) Virginia Department of Education
   c) National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
   d) All of the above
3) In 2011, a systematic review published by Fey and colleagues in JSLHR revealed "no compelling evidence that existing auditory interventions make any significant contributions to auditory, language, or academic outcomes of school-age children who have been diagnosed with APD or language disorder".   The authors recommended that:
   a) If using auditory interventions, also target academic language skills.
   b) Auditory screening should no longer be conducted.
   c) Therapy services should continue until compelling evidence is found.
   d) Academic outcomes are irrelevant for school based services.

Answers:
1) True. This 2011 JSLHR article, authored by Wilson et. al, was summarized in the Fall 2011 issue of Talking EBP which is available at http://curry.virginia.edu/TalkingEBP.

2) D. Links to these resources can also be found in the Fall 2011 issue of Talking EBP.
3) A. This systematic review was also summarized in Talking EBP, Fall 2011.

Practically Speaking:

Nail-Chiwetalu, B. J., & Ratner, N. B. (2006). Information literacy for speech-language pathologists: A key to evidence-based practice. *Language Speech & Hearing Services in Schools, 37*(3), 157-167. doi: 10.1044/0161-1461(2006/018)

This tutorial is exceptionally informative about the nuts and bolts of EBP for clinicians in schools, and upgrading information literacy skills. The authors clearly summarize how to efficiently find information online, select evidence, and use information legally and ethically. The sections on "How to evaluate a website" and "How to be a practitioner who gathers evidence" are particularly valuable.

The Virginia Department of Education has adapted information from one of the sources cited in this article and provides two tools to assist SLPs in the evaluation of websites. Download at: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/speech_language_impairment/index.shtml

Working With Data:

When reading research publications about intervention, it is important to think about more than statistically significant difference. If two treatments both result in improvement, there is likely to be a statistically significant difference for each form of intervention. That's certainly good to know…but which therapy resulted in the most change? **Effect sizes** report how much of a difference was made. Selecting an intervention that is reported to result in a large effect size might be preferable to implementing therapy that yields a small effect size. To learn more about effect sizes, read:

Meline, T., & Wang, B. (2004). Effect-size reporting practices in AJSLP and other ASHA journals, 1999-2003. *American Journal of Speech Language Pathology, 13*(3), 202-207. doi: 10.1044/1058-0360(2004/021)

More to Explore:

Assess, Track, and Treat with Lynn Adams, Ph.D. June 18, 2012 in Staunton, VA. Registration ($25) information at http://www.jmu.edu/ttac/training/wm_library/AssessTrackandTreat.pdf

The ASHA website has a page with several resources related to service delivery in schools, including information on integrative treatment models, inclusion, comparison of service delivery models, and making decisions about service delivery in early childhood programs. http://www.asha.org/slp/schools/prof-consult/service.htm

LinguiSystems offers a free EBP guidebook for clinicians. It is written in clear and concise language, and available at www.linguisystems.com/pdf/EBPguide.pdf

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