How AVT supports communication strategies

Auditory Verbal therapy integrates the development of listening and talking into all aspects of the child’s social, emotional, cognitive, and cultural experiences, so that listening becomes an integral part of his or her life (Estabrooks, MacIver-Lux, Rhoades & Lim, 2016)¹.

Parent Coaching:

Throughout the first year of life infants learn language in the context of infant-caregiver interactions (Levine, Strother-Garcia, Golinkoff & Hirsh-Pasek, 2016)². It has also been shown that optimal language acquisition depends upon engaged parents (Topping, Dekhinet & Zeedyk, 2013)³. Parent coaching is an evidence-based interactive and developmental process that facilitates adult learning and competencies (Friedman & Woods, 2012⁴; Hanft, Rush & Shelden, 2004⁵). The AV practitioner promotes the parent’s ability to reflect on their actions, and coaches them in developing and refining them to promote the child’s listening and spoken language skills and general developmental outcomes (Rhoades & Maclver-Lux, 2016)⁶.

Play:

Through play-based therapy sessions, parents are given the tools – Auditory Verbal techniques and strategies – to develop their child’s listening and spoken language.

Play teaches children to be creative, solve problems, make choices, negotiate, use ideas, experiment, set goals, and explore emotions. Consequently, play stimulates and coaxes children into new learning. As the child becomes immersed in various auditory, visual and social environments, play provides a platform for the development of vocabulary, language structures, attention span, and motor skills (Maclver-Lux et al., 2016)⁷.

Listening & Spoken Language Strategies:

There are essentially six goals that the AV practitioner typically addresses in the planning and delivery of every AV session:

- Create a listening environment
- Facilitate auditory attention
- Enhance auditory perception of speech
- Promote knowledge of language
- Facilitate spoken language and cognition
- Stimulate independent learning

(Rhoades, Estabrooks, Lim, & Maclver-Lux, 2016)⁸

Further examples and descriptions of Auditory Verbal Strategies to Build Listening and Spoken Language Skills
Collaborative working:

Each member of the family’s team brings a unique set of skills. The fostering and maintenance of the interprofessional relationships on the team helps families to achieve the positive outcomes they want, as efficiently as possible.

Audiologists and AV practitioners’ joint goal is to ensure that the best access to auditory information is available to the child’s brain in order to develop and cement neurological connections for the growth of spoken language, literacy, and social/communication skills. Collaboration and providing feedback between professionals is crucial in order to achieve this. Collaboration between professionals in local teams, CI centres and schools is imperative for Auditory Verbal practitioners to be able to share their skills, information, knowledge and experience where appropriate, for the benefit of service users and carers.

See Auditory Verbal UK’s policy on Co-working

Literacy:

Reading and writing are thought processes associated with and dependent on listening and speaking. The active construction and communication of meaning are the purposes of literacy; knowledge of the spoken language is the pre-requisite for becoming literate in that language. Phonological awareness provides the building blocks for literacy. This is an auditory skill as it requires the abilities to hear rhyme, syllable structures and letter sounds. Auditory-Verbal approach provides excellent preparation for literacy acquisition as it helps children to establish a solid foundational knowledge of spoken language and sounds on which to build a lifetime of discovery and learning of language and content (Robertson & Wray, 2016).

Frances Clark and Louise HÖnck from AVUK have developed a resource called Turning Pages Through the Ages: Engaging Children through Books about books to use at developmentally with activity and language ideas.

Theory of Mind:

Theory of Mind (ToM) is the ability to attribute mental states – beliefs, intents, desires, pretending, knowledge, etc. – to oneself and others, and to understand that others have beliefs, desires and intentions that are different from one’s own (Premack and Woodruff, 1978). Children with hearing loss have been found to have significantly delayed ToM compared to children with typical hearing (Schick, De Villiers, De Villiers & Hoffmeister, 2007). Executive functioning, language competence, learning through social interactive experiences and increased exposure to mental state vocabulary are all important underpinnings for the developing sequence of ToM. These underlie the ability for a child to make and keep friends (De Villiers, 2005; Peters, Remmel & Richard, 2009; Peterson & Siegal, 1995; Scholl & Leslie, 2001). A child with hearing loss has reduced opportunities to overhear the conversations and social-interactive experiences of others in their environment (Moeller & Schick, 2006) and so misses out on many opportunities to learn how others are expressing their feelings. An AV practitioner is able to scaffold ToM development in AV sessions by providing parents with a systematic framework of how to introduce and use mental state vocabulary in their everyday conversations and through play with their baby/child (Maclever-Lux et al., 2016).
For further information, Hearing First has developed an information sheet all about Theory of Mind: What it is and how your child can develop it.

References

