

Enhancing Communication, Executive Function, and Social Skills Presented by: Letizia S. Hendrickson, MS CCC-SLP, ADHD-RSP 3/24/2025

# Letizia S. Hendrickson, MS CCC-SLP, ADHD-RSP

A practicing speech-language pathologist in the Los Angeles area for over 15 years and specialize in a sments of communication disorders clinical education and ADHD.

SPEAKER DISCLOSURES

- Relevant Financial Disclosures: Employed as Clinical Coordinator and Supervisor at The Learning Grove private practice serving pediatric and adult populations. Part of the West Coast University faculty for their CDS Masters program.

- Relevant Non-Financial Disclosures: Serve on the Board of Directors of CSHA: Secretary and Treasurer 2024/2025 President-Elect 2025-2026 Serve on the Education Committee of CHADD Member of ASHA and their SIG-01 & SIG-17 groups Clinical supervisor for SLPAs, CFs, and SLP graduate clinical externs Co-host of the podcast WTH ADHD.

# Learning Objectives

Learner Outcome 1

Identify the communication and executive function challenges commonly associated with ADHD

## Learner Outcome 2

Explain how speech therapy addresses social communication, language processing, executive function, literacy skills, self-awareness, speech production and voice disorders in individuals with ADHD

#### Learner Outcome 3

Describe evidence-based speech therapy approaches and strategies that support communication and executive function in individuals with ADHD

#### Learner Outcome 4

Recognize the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in ADHD management and how speech-language pathologists contribute to family-centered care.







- Speech and Language Processing

  Frontal lobe: speech production, inhibiting thereof
  Temporal lobe: comprehension, meaning
- Temporal lobe: comprehension, meaning
   Parietal lobe: associates language-related information from auditory, visual and sensory sources
   White matter pathways: connect areas in order to facilitate
- winte matter patiways, connect areas in order to facilitate communication
   Loft homics home primarily responsible for language process
- Left hemisphere: primarily responsible for language processing for monolingual adults. Children use both hemispheres during early development.

## ADHD and Communication

Brain regions and processes impacted in ADHD overlap areas vital for processing of receptive language, expressive language, motor speech, fluency, reading, writing and pragmatic/social language.

# ADHD and Communication Challenges

Difficulties related to communication stem from impaired cognitive processes of language processing, attention, memory, executive function and impulse inhibition

Comprehension: understanding language (e.g., verbal instructions, written narrative, multi-step tasks, abstract language)

Expression: language output (e.g., speaking, writing)

Fluency/stuttering: dysfluent speech (e.g., stuttering, cluttering)

Pragmatic language/social aspects: non-verbal communication (e.g., attending to body language, interpreting tone, "reading" communicative intent, conversational turns)

Volceand Prosody. vocal dysfunction, pitch modulation to convey meaning (e.g., nodules, hoarseness, monotone)

Literacy: reading, writing (e.g., decoding and attending to written information, generating written content)

Memory: remembering information (e.g., attention, verbal working memory and processing rate dependent)

Attention attending to stimuli (required for memory, comprehension, expression, pragmatic aspects of communication)

# The Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)

SLPs work to prevent, assess, diagnose, and treat speech, language, social communication, cognitive-communication, and swallowing disorders in children and adults.

SLPs Scope of Practice per the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA)

- Cognition Attention, memory, problem solving, executive functioning •
- Speech Production-Motor planning and execution, articulation, phonological (processes)
   Fluency-Stuttering, cluttering
- Voice-Phonation quality, pitch, loudness, alaryngeal voice
   Voice-Phonation quality, pitch, loudness, alaryngeal voice
   Auditory Habilitation/Rehabilitation-Speech, language, communication, and listening skills impacted by hearing loss,
- deafness, auditory processing

   Language Spoken and written language (listening, processing, speaking, reading, writing, pragmatics)
  - Phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics
    Pragmatics (language use and social aspects of communication)

  - · Prelinguistic communication (e.g., joint attention, intentionality, communicative signaling) Paralinguistic communication (e.g., gestures, signs, body language)
     Literacy (reading, writing, spelling)

# Speech-Langauge Pathologists – Where we work Early Intervention Via state developmental programs such as the Regional Center: one-on-one in-home services for speech and language or group settings to address early communication strategies and social/pragmatic language with a family centered approach. 120 Beed Schools Schools Provide pre-school push-in services, classroom-based strategies to teachers, teach compensatory strategies for difficulty with complex instructions, support gaps in knowledge base in a group setting or via a pull-out model in orde to access the core curriculum. Š Medical Provide one-on-one clinical therapeutic intervention addressing all domains impacted as it relates to communication to attain functional communication. ...... Private Practice Provide one-on-one therapy in a clinical or home setting to address communication difficulties related to activities of daily living in all settings including school, home, peer interaction, academic and work challenges.















# Speech Production and Fluency

Cluttering

patterns

Stuttering Increased instances in ADHD population Self-monitoring strategies help

Communication Anxiety Leads to avoidance behaviors SLPs address underlying concerns



Rapid, disorganized speech

Difficulty with speech clarity















# **Case Study Examples**







Elementary Student Improved classroom participation after pragmatic language therapy

Adolescent Enhanced academic writing through executive function support

Adult Better workplace communication through self-monitoring strategies



# Q&A Session





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# **References and Further Reading**

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| Journal of Attention Disorders         Research on communication<br>interventions           International Journal of Language<br>& Communication Disorders         Studies on pragmatic language in<br>ADHD           Journal of Speech, Language, and<br>Hearing Research         Evidence-based practice<br>guidelines   | American Speech-Language-<br>Hearing Association (ASHA)        | Position statements on ADHD                |
| International Journal of Language Studies on pragmatic language in ADHD<br>Journal of Speech, Language, and Evidence-based practice guidelines   | Journal of Attention Disorders                                 | Research on communication<br>interventions |
| Journal of Speech, Language, and Evidence-based practice<br>Hearing Research guidelines  | International Journal of Language<br>& Communication Disorders | Studies on pragmatic language in<br>ADHD   |
|  | Journal of Speech, Language, and<br>Hearing Research           | Evidence-based practice guidelines         |

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