



# Outcomes Project Update

December 2008

Issue 5

## PROJECT PROGRESS

The NSW LOCHI team held an open day at NAL Chatswood, on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August, leading up to Hearing Awareness Week. 13 families attended, including LOCHI study participants, parents, grandparents and siblings. Families met other families in similar situations (some for the first time) and participated in the day's events.



### Highlights of the day!

- Teresa gave an update on the progress of the study (the presentation slides are on the LOCHI website under 'progress' [www.outcomes.nal.gov.au](http://www.outcomes.nal.gov.au)).
- Harvey Dillon, NAL Director, presented attending participants certificates to recognise their contribution to the project.
- Parents discussed their experiences with their children:



- How they felt finding out their child had a hearing loss. One parent said "*I wasn't fussed ... no real dramas from my end*", while another said "*I didn't handle it (well) at all*".
- Another hot topic was strategies parents used to keep hearing aids in their young child's ears. Some parents reported their strong reaction to an audiologist's suggestion to use double sided tape to keep their child's hearing aids on, but another parent said that being shown how to do this would have been very helpful.
- Some parents praised audiologists, teachers and professionals for "*bending over backwards*" to be helpful. Other parents expressed their exasperation due to difficulties accessing services, particularly families not based in metropolitan regions.

While parents were chatting, the children had a wonderful time being entertained by magicians and many activities to keep young hands busy. A tour of NAL, given by Harvey, and a scrumptious afternoon tea wrapped up the day.



Our thanks go to the Rotary Club of Balmain, SNAP Printing in Help Street Chatswood and Australian Hearing for their generous sponsorship of the day. Many thanks also to the NAL staff and their family and friends and other professionals who volunteered on the day.



# SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND LISTENING

## Foundations for Literacy

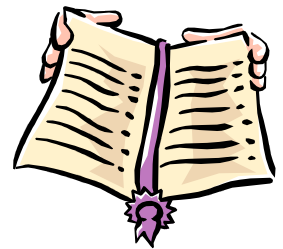


Literacy is the ability to read and write – skills that begin to develop long before children go to school. When children begin school they already have ideas about the value of reading and writing from the people around them, especially their family. Here are some ideas on how to encourage your children to appreciate written language.



### Read and write in front of your children in everyday situations

- Read newspapers and magazines
- Write a shopping or 'to do' list
- Use your calendar or diary



### Point out writing to your children in your everyday environment

- Read a restaurant menu or TV guide together
- Make a game of recognising road signs or reading car number plates
- Look at the captions on TV and DVDs



### Read aloud with your children

- Read to your children as part of your daily routine
- Look at the pictures in books and talk about them together
- Younger children love stories with repetition so that they can tell part of the story themselves

### Create opportunities for your children to 'read' and 'write' on their own

- Give your children access to paper, pencils, crayons and books
- Visit the library and let your children choose books to take home
- A child's early 'writing' may look like scribble but it means something to him/her. Ask your child to tell you what they have written



### Make your own books together

- Make books about your child's experiences and ideas; or about everyday things like going to the park, a birthday party or a story about an animal
- Include writing, drawings, photos, stickers etc
- Read these books together to develop language and an appreciation of reading and writing

There are almost 40 different languages used by families on the LOCHI study. Reading and writing in any language are good foundations for literacy.



# TEST PROFILE

## Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test

In this edition we are explaining a test used in the LOCHI study to assess children's understanding of words – the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, or PPVT.

The PPVT-4 is designed to see how well people understand English words, i.e. it is a test of receptive vocabulary. Designed to be used with children from 2½ yrs of age to adults aged 99yrs, this test starts with common words such as 'cat' and 'balloon' and concludes with words that are rarely used in everyday speech such as 'nidificating'.



The PPVT book has four different pictures on each page. The speech pathologist says a word and the child points to the corresponding picture. For example, when the speech pathologist says "Show me *baby*" the child needs to look at the four pictures on the page – a baby, some lollies, a car and a fish - and point to the baby. This is a practice question. When your child shows he/she knows what to do, the test begins.



As the test continues the speech pathologist gives encouraging feedback regardless of whether your child's response was correct or incorrect. This is done to keep your child motivated to continue the task. It is also very important that the adults in the room do not repeat any of the words or give any clues. If this happens, the word must be scored as incorrect, even if your child pointed to the correct picture.

The test has many words divided into lists of 12 words each. The test finishes when your child has made 8 or more errors in a list. Therefore it is important to encourage your child to keep going with the test even if you think he/she does not know the vocabulary – sometimes children surprise you with their knowledge.

For more information about the PPVT please visit the LOCHI website ([www.outcomes.nal.gov.au](http://www.outcomes.nal.gov.au)) or contact a LOCHI research speech pathologist in your state (contact numbers on the next page).





# TIPS FROM THE NAL TEAM

## Getting the most out of the LOCHI Study

As the LOCHI study progresses we need to constantly keep track of the children on the study. We would appreciate your help in keeping us up to date:

- **If you are moving** – so we know where to send mail and how to contact you
- **If your child gets a cochlear implant** – so that we can assess your child at the correct times
- **If your child uses a language other than English** – so that we can plan which assessments will be best for your child
- **If your child uses sign or alternative/augmentative communication** – so that we can plan which assessments will be best for your child and who will be best to assess him/her
- **If your child has additional needs** – so that we can plan the best possible assessment experience for you and your child
- **If you are working with one or more early intervention agencies** and/or would like your child's assessment results sent through to them. Telling us this information speeds up communication and may reduce the number of times your child is assessed

Do you have paper work from a previous assessment sitting at home? Maybe some demographic forms or multiple choice response sheets? The staff on the LOCHI study love the surprise when paperwork thought lost mysteriously arrives in the mail. If you have old paperwork sitting at home – make a researcher happy – post it to Kate Crowe.

### LOCHI'S STATS

469 participants!

337 hearing aid users  
 102 unilateral implant users  
 30 bilateral implant users



225 NSW  
 138 VIC  
 106 QLD



#### New South Wales (02) 9412 6800

Dr. Teresa Ching (Project Leader)  
 Kate Crowe (Speech Pathologist)  
 Sonya Cornick (Speech Pathologist)  
 Vivienne Martin (Speech Pathologist)  
 Samantha Youn (Information Manager)

#### Victoria (03) 8325 9014

Julia Day (Speech Pathologist)  
 Laura Street (Speech Pathologist)

#### Queensland (07) 3237 6841

Nicole Mahler (Speech Pathologist)  
 Cassandra Cook (Speech Pathologist)

### Change of Details – Return to Kate Crowe

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 New Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 New Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Early Intervention Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cochlear Implant Switch On Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Post all paperwork to

Kate Crowe  
NAL

126 Greville Street,  
Chatswood NSW 2067