

Ideas for a parent of a toddler entering speech therapy...

Finding speech therapy

It may take you several calls to find pediatric speech therapy in your area. And many places may even have waiting lists. Go ahead and sign up for the waiting lists while you keep looking. Because you'll want to start the therapy as soon as possible. That's because you will keep hoping and wanting to communicate with your toddler!

Paying for speech therapy

Many insurance plans won't pay for this unless it's caused by an "organic" problem. Our son has tongue surgery at 1 year and the insurance co did not want to pay for speech therapy. We could have contested it and taken it to a review board, but luckily Nick was accepted into an Early Intervention program. So until he is 3, and while they have state funding, they will pay for his therapy.

Group vs individual speech therapy

Group didn't work for us, it was too distracting when the other kids had transition problems and tantrums. But I can see how a mellow group would have been a good learning experience.

What time?

If your child is in daycare, this is tough. You need to ask for the first or the last appointment of the day. Because your child will not be happy if you take him back to daycare after therapy.

How to help the therapist

I find it helpful to record at home the communication progress that Nick is making. See the next section, a communication diary. I start a new page after every class. That way the therapist can see at a glance what he's been doing since last session. I also find it helpful to bring along any toys that he has been saying the names of recently, for example a turtle figure or a book about animals. Whatever he's been verbalizing.

A communication diary

starts on page 2

Child's name

"New or Notable"

Dates (ie Thus 8/2 to Tue 8/7)

*means firsttime

Expressive

A communication diary- "New or Notable"

Child's name: _____

Dates (ie Thus 8/2 to Tue 8/7)_____

*means firsttime

Expressive

llll.....turtle (tu-tul)

l.....banana (nana)

llll llllcar

llll llll*house (how)

etc

Responsive

lll.....do you want morewater?

lllllll.....go outside?

lllll.....go get shoes, you need shoes for outside

etc

Sounds or mimic'ing

big bird (bi bir)

eeyore (e-oh)

etc

Actions or gestures

"move on back" gesture (part of wheels on the bus)

writing hatch marks with sidewalk chalk on about 20 different places

* lining up cars to push one by one off the coffee table

eating

* half grapes

etc