



## HOW SPEECH THERAPY HELPS CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability that can affect a child's ability to identify speech sounds. Typically, dyslexia affects a child's ability to read printed language. These language-based challenges are caused by neurobiological factors, not visual problems or lower levels of intelligence. In fact, with the right intervention, children with dyslexia can make incredible gains in spelling and decoding skills (American Speech-Hearing-Language Association).



If a child shows characteristics of dyslexia, speech-language pathologists will work with the team of parents, teachers, and caregivers (or other professionals) to provide a diagnosis and treatment plan. To evaluate whether a child has dyslexia, a speech-language pathologist will examine many factors. These factors might include whether a child correctly identifies and writes letters, pays attention to written instructions and materials in the classroom, correctly holds a book, follows along during reading activities, and more. The speech-language pathologist will also conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the child's speech and language that includes other areas, such as articulation (American Speech-Hearing-Language Association).

Following the full evaluation, the speech-language pathologist will develop a treatment plan that focuses on the specific aspects of reading and writing that pose challenges for the child. In order for the child to make the greatest gains, speech-language pathologists will develop a customized plan that targets individual goals and academics. For example, a speech-language pathologist may incorporate readings and homework assignments into sessions to help the child develop the necessary language skills to be successful at school (American Speech-Hearing-Language Association).

**References** – American Speech-Hearing-Language Association. (n.d.). *Language-Based Learning Disabilities (Reading, Spelling, and Writing)*. Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/LBLD.htm>



## IS YOUR CHILD HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE /N/ SOUND?

As your child moves through speech and language milestones, you may notice he or she has difficulty articulating certain sounds. If you notice your child has difficulty producing the /n/ sound, there are strategies you can use to help. Typically, children begin to acquire the /n/ sound around 2 years, and they master the sound around 3 years (George, n.d.).

The /n/ sound is one of the three nasal sounds in the English language, meaning air passes through the nasal cavity, or nose, during production, rather than the oral cavity, or mouth. The nasal sounds include /m/, /n/, and /ŋ/. To produce the /n/ sound, you must place the tip of your tongue against the ridge just behind your front teeth, which is known as the "alveolar ridge." In comparison, you produce the /m/ sound closer to the front of the mouth with the tongue tip touching the lips and the /ŋ/ sound (or "ng") toward the back of the mouth (George, n.d.).

**...Continued On Page 2**



### SIDE THIS ISSUE

p.2 Ask A Therapist  
p.2 Cover Story  
p.3 Spotlight

p.3 Additional Copies  
p.3 Schedule a Screening  
p.4 About Us

# ASK A THERAPIST



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PICTURE EXCHANGE COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS?

If you find your child is struggling to meet early language milestones, you might find a picture exchange communication system (PECS) beneficial. Using the PECS system, a child uses pictures to effectively communicate his or her wants or needs. For example, if a child wants to request an apple for a snack, he or she will point to the PECS card with a picture of an apple (George, n.d.). This method of communication helps children who are working to develop spoken language skills. Children who may benefit from this system may have autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or another disorder that affects communication skills (George, n.d.).

Speech-language pathologists may incorporate the PECS system in treatment plans if they feel the child would benefit from this form of a communication system. Some children may use the PECS system as a primary form of communication, while other children may use PECS for a short time as they work to develop natural speech (George, n.d.).

When a child begins using PECS, he or she will start by pointing to the card to communicate his or her want or need. The program also includes more advanced stages that include other variables (e.g., new objects or places), choices, creating sentences, and communicating with multiple people using PECS. PECS may also be effective in helping your child to build verbal communication skills (George, n.d.). As you observe PECS during your child's speech therapy sessions, you may also begin using PECS at home to help your child build communication skills.

## APP OF THE MONTH:

**ArtikPix**



**Ages 4+**

**Target Skills**

**Education**

### About The App

This app helps children practice producing a variety of tricky speech sounds!



## Is Your Child Having Trouble with the /n/ Sound? Continued...

It is not uncommon for children to experience challenges with articulation as they develop speech and language skills. However, if you notice your child is still having challenges with the /n/ sound when they reach the age of 4, it may be beneficial to seek out a full evaluation with a licensed speech-language pathologist. During an evaluation, the speech-language pathologist will assess your child's speech and language to determine whether your child would benefit from ongoing speech therapy sessions (George, n.d.).

Parents can also play a significant role in speech and language development. If you notice your child has trouble creating the /n/ sound, there are many strategies you can use at home to help.



- Learning by example is a great way for children to practice articulating different sounds. Try producing the /n/ sound clearly and slowly for your child so they can hear your speech as an example. You can produce the /n/ sound on its own, as well as in different words. Let your child hear how /n/ is produced at the beginning of words (e.g., "no"), at the end of words (e.g., "ten"), or in the middle (e.g., "banana").
- When you produce the /n/ sound, have your child pay close attention to your mouth to see how you create the sound. Then, have your child hold a mirror in front of his or her face so they can try to recreate the same sound. This real-time feedback can help your child understand the oral movements required to pronounce the /n/ sound.
- The /n/ sound is voiced consonant, meaning the vocal folds vibrate during production. If your child is having trouble creating voiced sounds, ask him or her to touch their throat as you create this sound to feel the vibration.
- If you find your child is having difficulty finding the correct placement for his or her tongue when creating /n/, try placing peanut butter on the right spot. Tell your little one to try licking this spot (the ridge directly behind the front teeth). This practice will help train his or her tongue on the proper positioning to create the /n/ sound (George, n.d.).

**References** – George, K. (n.d.). *How to Teach the N Sound* by Chicago Speech Therapy [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://www.chicagospeechtherapy.com/how-to-teach-the-n-sound-by-chicago-speech-therapy/>

George, K. (n.d.). *Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS): How Can It Help My Child Communicate?* [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://www.chicagospeechtherapy.com/picture-exchange-communication-system-pecs-how-can-it-help-my-child-communicate/>

# SPEECH THERAPY SPOTLIGHT

## SHANNON JOHNSON

### About Shannon Johnson

Shannon Johnson, M.A., CCC-SLP graduated with distinction from California State University, Fresno earning her Bachelor of Arts degree and her Master of Arts degree in Communicative Sciences and Disorders. She is a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and has been awarded the Certificate of Clinical Competence. She is licensed by the Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology Board of California. Shannon has earned the ACE Award from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Shannon has vast experience providing diagnostic and therapeutic services for children, adolescents, and adults with a wide variety of diagnoses including apraxia, articulation and phonological disorders, autism, dysphagia, fluency disorders, pragmatic disorders, and receptive and expressive language delays. Shannon is a knowledgeable Speech-Language Pathologist with over 15 years of experience. She is a preceptor for future Speech-Language Pathologists and enjoys sharing her passion for the profession with the graduate students she mentors. Shannon is a dynamic therapist that finds joy in working with her clients at Aspire Speech and Learning Center. She is married to her college sweetheart and has two wonderful sons.



### Three words Shannon uses to describe herself

*Compassionate, Positive, Dedicated*

### Why Shannon loves being a speech therapist

I feel honored to get to know amazing people and help them achieve success in reaching their goals. I want all my clients to be happy and successful communicators and I absolutely love to make that happen!

### Shannon's favorite things

I enjoy having fun with family, traveling and experiencing new adventures, and getting lost in a great book.

### What people are saying about Shannon Johnson

*"Mrs. Shannon has helped our son a lot in the last 2 years. She is amazing!"*

*"I cannot express just how amazing Mrs. Shannon is with my son. She is always so cheerful and helpful. Our lives have been changed for the better since having her in it!"*

Would You Like Additional Copies of this Newsletter to give as a **FREE** Resource?



**If so, email us at:**

[Grow@AspireSpeech.com](mailto:Grow@AspireSpeech.com)

Please include the address of your office & how many additional copies you would like.



**Concerned About Your Child's Speech or Development?**

**Call us today  
for a free consultation  
(559) 228-9100**

## About Aspire Speech & Learning Center

Aspire Speech and Learning Center, formerly Center for Communication Skills, is a premier provider of speech therapy services and academic support in the greater Fresno area. Kathryn Wage and her team of experienced speech therapists have a long-standing and well-deserved reputation for providing services that improve the lives of their clients. The therapists are well known for supporting parents in improving optimum functional outcomes for their children. The practice has grown rapidly since moving to the California Learning Connection and provides services through a wide range of payer options, both public and private, and receives referrals from top pediatrician practices and elite preschools around Fresno. We offer free consultations to prospective clients to help determine the best fit for our offerings.

**Contact Aspire Speech & Learning at [Grow@AspireSpeech.com](mailto:Grow@AspireSpeech.com) or call (559) 228-9100**



# Aspire Speech & Learning Center

## California Learning Connection Office

2505 West Shaw Avenue, #101  
Fresno, CA 93711-3334

**Phone** (559) 228-9100  
[Grow@AspireSpeech.com](mailto:Grow@AspireSpeech.com)  
[www.AspireSpeech.com](http://www.AspireSpeech.com)



### Schedule Your Evaluation Now!

Call us today to schedule an appointment: (559) 228-9100  
Or go to our website: [www.AspireSpeech.com](http://www.AspireSpeech.com)



### We Appreciate All of Your Referrals

Aspire Speech & Learning Center values your referral!  
It helps us know we are doing a good job.



### Contact Us Today!

Do you have thoughts or feedback? If so, we would love to hear from you.  
Just email: [Grow@AspireSpeech.com](mailto:Grow@AspireSpeech.com)



**ASPIRE SPEECH**  
& LEARNING CENTER



AMERICAN  
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-  
HEARING  
ASSOCIATION

Certified Member