

SPRING 2017

“PEOPLE FIRST”

Molly Stepaniak, M.A., CCC-SLP

During the first few weeks of graduate school, I remember learning about "people first" language. It was something I had not thought about before, but it immediately grabbed my attention. People first language "emphasizes the person first not the disability" according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To use it, you must start with the words "a person who" or "a child who" (e.g., "a person who uses a wheelchair") in order to emphasize the human aspect prior to noting the disability (e.g., "a wheelchair bound person"). See www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/freematerials.html for more information and examples of people first language. Other examples of person first language include: a child with autism (rather than autistic child), a person with a developmental disability (rather than disabled person), a person who is deaf (rather than deaf person) or a child with a communication disorder (rather than mute child).



About a week ago, I was looking at some materials that I had not used before to see if I could adapt them to address a perspective taking goal for an older client. The first scenario I read happened to include a child with a disability. I was immediately taken aback by the negative phrasing I saw, especially considering that the material listed a copyright date of 2002. I would have been embarrassed if the child had seen it during the treatment session.

This experience with the insensitive word choice reminded me why I continue to use people first

HAVE YOU HEARD?

SPG's Camp Super Communicators starts in July. Watch for an email with details soon.



Our next Communicate with Care support group is scheduled for March 29, 2017.

language in my verbal and written communication with families and other professionals daily. As a speech-language pathologist, I work with children who have many different types of delays or disorders. As a provider of early intervention therapy services, I am often one of the first professionals to work closely with children with communication challenges and their families. In some instances after recent diagnosis of disorder or delay, I hear firsthand from families of uncertainty, sadness or panic regarding their child's communication abilities and future. I do not take this role lightly. I know that while I only play one small part in the life of a child who has communication challenges, framing goals in a strengths-based manner and using people first language can set the tone for the child's future therapy, both in my treatment room and later on in life. People first language allows me to acknowledge that all children are first and foremost individuals with preferences, strengths and other unique attributes - regardless of any delay or diagnosis.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Dr. Seuss

Jill Walson, M.S., CCC-SLP

As a Speech-Language Pathologist, I am always trying to find creative ways to work with children. March is National Reading Month. On March 2nd we got to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Seuss. This is a perfect month to think about how books can be used in therapy sessions, at home and at school:

- Expose children to receptive language skills such as identifying nouns, verbs and adjectives ("Where is the big boat?" "Show me who is climbing?").
- Help your child follow directions when looking at books together ("First touch the bumpy starfish then touch the shiny fish.").
- Help your child learn language skills such as quantitative concepts ("Show me all the puppies on the page," "Point to three hats.").
- Expose your child to prepositional phrases such as ("The boy is walking over the bridge, the girl is under the tree, the squirrel is on the fence.")
- If your child has goals based around articulation then use books to emphasize the target sounds ("I see a RRRed shirt," "The LLLion is LLLarge."). You can also do awareness activities ("Can you find all the pictures with the /r/ sound?").
- Rhyming is a great way to expose your child to word families ("Cat, hat, and bat all rhyme and have the same ending sound.").
- Pop up books and flap books are fun for cause and effect concepts and object permanence.
- Books about feelings and being a good friend are fun to review social skills.



The library in your community allows kids to sign up for their own library card. You can check out a

number of books at a time. Public libraries typically have story time too.

If you are in a play group encourage each child to bring a book to swap and have fun looking at different books.

A fun and colorful birthday party theme is Dr. Seuss and children can sign a book for the birthday boy/girl.

Looking at picture books together or reading together can be such an enjoyable learning experience!

For more information, see the NEA's website at www.nea.org/readacross

RESOURCE FAIRES

Join SPG at San Ramon Valley's Special Needs Summer Programs Resource Faire:

Wednesday, March 22, 2017, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Iron Horse Middle School
12601 Alcosta Blvd., San Ramon, CA
No RSVP necessary!



Come see SPG at Seed's Resource Faire on Wednesday, April 26, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. Seed is a Lafayette based program supporting children with special needs.

Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building
3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, CA
No RSVP necessary!