



The Clinician-Parent Partnership

In China there is an ancient adage which says that if the child has problems, work with the mother. Here in the West, political correctness as well as best clinical practice suggest that we work with the mother and father, and in many cases, with the family.

All parents whose children are receiving treatment at CSLOT are invited to take advantage of the opportunity to work with their child's therapists and gain an increased understanding of how to bring communication, movement, and social behavior to their child. Parent participation is requested in therapy sessions because our therapy goes farther when parents are there to learn to do at home what we do in the clinic. For children developing language, we know that language develops in imitation of the speakers in their environment. We also know that there are ways to speak to children which facilitate their language development. For children with motor and sensory needs, parents can be taught how to best support their children's needs for movement and how to help facilitate sensory regulation. For children with behavior challenges, parent participation in the therapeutic process can help assure the consistency needed across settings and partners.

With parents in the room, our therapists can teach parents how to communicate with their children, how to model targeted behaviors, and how to respond to their children. Children make greater progress with increased parent participation. For example, studies have shown that vocabulary targets taught to parents results in larger vocabularies in their children, earlier use of multi-word utterances, and earlier use of grammatical markers. In addition, other studies have shown that when parents respond verbally to their children by using language modeling techniques, they increase their child's frequency of communicative interaction. With parental support, we expect to make greater and faster progress while taking advantage of these early years in which language, motor, and behavior skills develop naturally and spontaneously.

Therapists see their role as supportive to parents and families, providing them with information, training, and hope. We know that very young children who receive clinical services often grow up to have learning problems in related domains. These typically manifest in the primary grades, and are more pronounced by Grade 4. Parents managing their child's educational future need additional professional support to confront the multiple problems posed by learning challenges and to negotiate the pathways to education and treatment, some of which may seem overwhelming.

We are available to consult with you as you embark upon this journey. Therapists are also available to consult with parents regarding present treatment plans, progress, case management, and planning for the future. Especially in this last regard, parents may need support to gain a sense of what is available, both privately and publicly, for their child's continued care after leaving CSLOT. Additionally, we keep your child's records for seven years following his/her transition from CSLOT. Should you need to return in the future for additional services, rest assured that we can provide the background to resume treatment and/or make appropriate referrals.