

1. What population do you specialize in?
 - Infants to adults who have any degree of **hearing loss**.
 - Both those with and without amplification.
2. What are the signs/Symptoms of hearing loss in babies?
 - Inconsistency in awareness to sound
 - Lack of startle to loud sounds
 - Baby is not localizing sounds after 6 months of age
 - Lack of babbling/first words by 1 year of age
 - Baby does not appear to recognize familiar voices

**If a child presents with any combination of these symptoms, a referral to an audiologist is recommended for a full hearing evaluation.
3. What **services do you provide**?
 - I provide **aural habilitation** services according to each family's selected mode of communication (signing, total communication, listening & spoken language). Aural habilitation involves teaching infants/children the auditory skills necessary to understand and produce language. For families whose goals for their child include listening and speaking, I provide therapy following an **Auditory Verbal** model.
4. What is Auditory Verbal Therapy (AVT)?
 - **Auditory Verbal Therapy** is an "auditory only" approach that focuses on the development of spoken language, acquired exclusively through the use of aided residual hearing. The expectation is that the child be completely integrated into the community of spoken language and will be mainstreamed.
 - AVT follows 10 principles involving **early intervention**, state of the art amplification, and heavy caregiver involvement.
 - Therapy involves training caregivers to incorporate listening during daily activities so that listening becomes a part of everyday life.
5. Who benefits from AVT?
 - AVT therapy is for those who are maximizing their hearing through amplification, and are devoted to using listening and spoken language as their means of communication.
 - Caregivers must be fully committed in order for AVT to be most beneficial.
 - A mainstream classroom without an interpreter, surrounded by hearing peers is the ultimate goal for these children.
6. How does AVT differ from "regular" speech therapy?
 - Like speech therapy, AVT addresses speech and language as well as:
 - the hierarchy of auditory skills needed to comprehend speech and language
 - social/pragmatic skills necessary to integrate into the "hearing world"
 - cognitive skills needed to succeed in the mainstream classroom

- AVT can begin as soon as a child has been diagnosed with a hearing loss (this includes infants)
- Auditory verbal therapy uses specialized techniques in order to maximize hearing as the primary sense responsible for learning language.
- Parent training and coaching is a primary pillar of this therapy.
- Auditory skills are constantly monitored in order to provide the highest quality of hearing technology in collaboration with the child's audiologist.

7. Does AVT work?

- 95% of children with hearing loss are born to hearing parents
- In one study conducted by Dornan, et al (2010) researchers found 79% of children with hearing loss were within normal range or above in language after 50 months of AVT therapy
 - no gap was noted between chronological age and language age
 - "CHILDREN EDUCATED IN AN AVT PROGRAM CAN PROGRESS AT THE SAME RATE AS CHILDREN WITH NORMAL HEARING OF THE SAME INITIAL LANGUAGE AGE."

8. Who provides AVT?

A person providing auditory verbal therapy is certified through the Alexander Graham Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language

There are two options of certification:

- **LSLS Certified Auditory-Verbal Therapist (LSLS Cert. AVT):** Works one-on-one with children and families in all intervention sessions
- **LSLS Certified Auditory-Verbal Educator (LSLS Cert. AVed):** Involves the family and works directly with children in individual, group or classroom settings

Certification Requirements:

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|---|------------------------------------|
| • Degree in audiology, speech language pathology, or deaf education | • 20 hours of direct mentorship |
| • 3-5 year process | • Parent letters of recommendation |
| • 80 hrs. of continuing education | • Examination |
| • 900 hours of experience | |

9. In what setting are services provided?

- Typical therapy options include an intensive listening/language group, individual session, or a combination of group and individual sessions.

10. How can I get more information about your services?

- You may call 423.622.6900, email awebster@speechhearing.com, look online www.speechhearing.org, or come by our offices to observe a therapy session (advance authorization required).