

Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)

Good web site: www.apraxia-kids.org

Neurological motor speech disorder

- Praxis = planned movement
- Brain doesn't learn and remember movements of lips, tongue, jaw, soft palate
- Articulators don't send the signals for feedback (auditory and proprioceptive) for speech to become automatic
- Can be hereditary or caused by disease or trauma, but usually idiopathic (no known cause)

Characteristics:

- Inconsistent errors with consonants and/or vowels (especially in longer words)
- Difficulty moving from syllable to syllable – may pause a lot or try to position articulators
- Unusual prosody (stresses, pauses, intonation)

Therapy:

- Usually 3 – 5 times a week to begin
- SLP will give instructions to parents for carryover at home
- Practice and repetition with actual speech (sounds, syllables, words, phrases), not just exercises
- Cueing – pointing to and touching throat (k, g,) and lips, finger cueing of bilabials (p, b, m, w)
- Verbal instructions with feedback on how close the child is coming to making the sounds correctly
- Use of rhythm (with voice and/or clapping) and prosody (rhythm and melody) (like melodic intonation therapy)
- Focus on words frequently used (hi, bye, mama) and words with sounds that are easiest for child
- Some therapists introduce signing and/or iPad apps for communication until child is better verbally
- Some children will need work on sentence structure (grammar) and phonemic awareness (knowledge of sounds in words – necessary for reading)

Also check out CASANA (Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America)