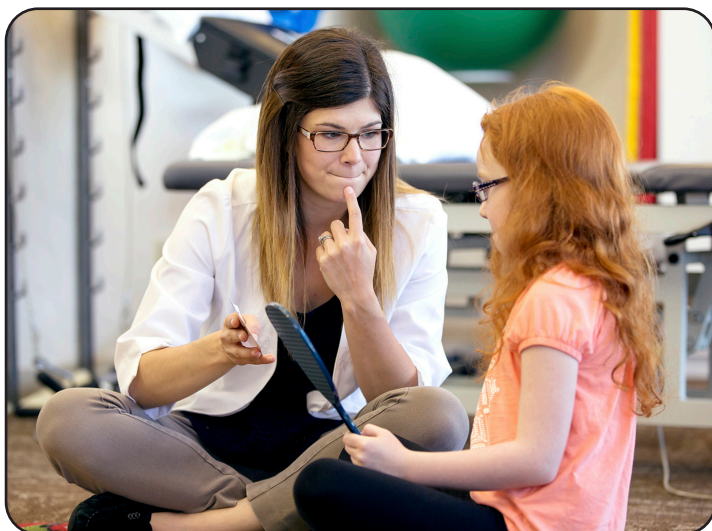


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The Cycles Approach

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The cycles approach, officially called the “Cycles Phonological Remediation Approach,” is one of the most common methods for treating preschool- and school-age children who use phonological processes, or error patterns, in speech. It was developed by Barbara Hodson and her colleagues and is based on research in cognitive psychology and developmental phonology.

Who is it for?

The cycles approach may be used for children who meet the following criteria:



- Highly unintelligible (difficult to understand)
- Frequently omit or leave out sounds
- Replace some sounds with other sounds
- Don't use very many consonant sounds

What does it look like?

The cycles approach is meant for children who use several different phonological processes, or error patterns. Each process, or pattern, is targeted for a short amount of time, and then therapy cycles through the other processes.

For example, the first process to be targeted in therapy may be initial consonant deletion, which might last for 6 weeks. Therapy would then cycle on to target fronting (when sounds like K and G, which are made in the back of the mouth, are replaced with sounds like T and D, which are made in the front of the mouth) for 6 weeks. When all processes have been targeted in therapy, the cycles start over again until each process is eliminated from the child's speech.

Each therapy session should have the same 7 steps:



1. Review: The target words used in the previous session are reviewed.



2. Auditory Bombardment: For 1-2 minutes, the therapist reads words that contain the target pattern for the current session. This provides the child with intense and repeated exposure to the phonological targets.



3. Target Words: The child is given an activity to introduce the 3-6 words that will be used during the session and repeats the words after they are modeled by the therapist.

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4. Play: While playing games, the child takes turns practicing the target words while the therapist provides correct models and tactile cues. The child should achieve 100% accuracy during this step.



5. Probe: The therapist asks the child to say a list of words that contain the target pattern for the next session. This will determine the target sounds for the next session (whichever sound is easiest for the child will be targeted).



6. Auditory Bombardment:
Repeat step 2.



7. Homework: This will consist of 2 minutes of auditory bombardment by a parent or adult every day. It may also include a list of target words for the child to practice every day.

Research has shown that the cycles approach works best with one-hour sessions, three times per week; however, this may be adapted to accommodate for time or financial constraints. Each cycle may last for up to 18 hours, so depending on the number of phonological processes a child has, it may take more than 40 hours of therapy to achieve intelligible speech.

Does it work?

The cycles approach was created to reflect the natural development of speech patterns in young children. Research shows mixed results on the efficacy of this cycles-based approach. Some studies claim that it improves intelligibility for highly unintelligible children at a faster rate than other approaches, while others show little improvement after using this approach. For more information about the cycles approach or to know if this approach might be appropriate for your child, please consult with your local Speech-Language Pathologist.



Resources:

"How to Treat Speech Sound Problems 1: the Cycles Approach," Banter Speech, accessed August 13, 2018, <https://www.banterspeech.com.au/how-to-treat-speech-sound-problems-1-the-cycles-approach/>

"How to Use the Cycles Approach for Speech Therapy," Speech and Language Kids, accessed August 13, 2018, <https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/how-to-use-the-cycles-approach-for-speech-therapy/>

"Speech Sound Disorders-Articulation and Phonology," ASHA, accessed August 13, 2018, https://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589935321§ion=Treatment#Treatment_Approaches

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