

## Therapeutic Listening®

### What is Therapeutic Listening?

Therapeutic Listening (TL) is a sound therapy program designed especially for your child. It uses music and sounds to exercise the muscles and nerves in the ears. It also stimulates the areas of the brain used in listening and processing sensory information. Therapeutic Listening helps the brain develop and can help improve listening, movement, and communication skills.

During Therapeutic Listening, children listen to compact discs (CDs) that are chosen to meet their individual needs. The CDs may contain children's songs, classical music, or nature sounds, which have been electronically altered.

### Who can benefit?

Therapeutic listening, used along with occupational therapy, may decrease the time needed to reach your child's treatment and educational goals in areas such as:

- attention and focus
- balance and motor planning
- self regulation and sensory sensitivity
- communication and social skills
- visual motor coordination and writing

**This home program should be used only under the guidance of an occupational therapist with special training in therapeutic listening.** The therapist, with your help, will plan and direct a program designed specifically for your child.

### Does my child need special equipment?

The Therapeutic Listening program does require the use of specific equipment. Your therapist will help you order it. It is important to use **only** the recommended equipment and use it as instructed by your therapist.

The headphones and CD player can be used to listen to other CDs that have not been electronically altered. Check with your therapist about doing this when your child is currently doing the Therapeutic Listening program.

- Head phones (type) \_\_\_\_\_
- CD player (type) \_\_\_\_\_
- Tune belt that holds a CD player
- Electronically altered CDs specifically chosen and ordered by your therapist

**Note:** The cost of equipment and CDs is the family's responsibility. It is usually not covered by insurance companies.

### How does the program work?

Children can listen to the CDs at home, at therapy, and other places, according to this schedule:

- 2 times a day, at least 3 hours apart
- 30 minutes at a time
- 5 to 7 days a week

The volume must be low enough so that your child can have a conversation with you while listening. Always test the headphones first and adjust the volume before putting them on your child.

While children usually listen to one CD for 2 weeks, the order of the music on the CD is programmed to change each time they listen, using a “shuffle” feature on the CD player.

The Therapeutic Listening program lasts from 6 weeks to several months, depending on your child’s needs. You may be asked to fill out an initial evaluation and weekly questionnaires to help the therapist best plan your child’s program.

### **What can my child do while listening to the CDs?**

Your child can listen to the CDs during many kinds of activities. Examples are:

- crafts or fine motor play such as coloring, bead stringing, or completing mazes and dot-to-dot activities
- mealtime
- playing on a playground
- playing board games
- sensory exploration play, such as playing at a rice table or with play dough
- playing with construction toys such as blocks or Legos®

**Avoid** listening to the CDs during:

- activities that involve intense focus, such as homework, TV, or video games. Your child may tune out the listening therapy.
- times when your child may already be feeling lots of vestibular input (motion), such as when riding in a car or flying in an airplane.

### **When should I call the therapist?**

- extreme or prolonged discomfort or fussiness
- complaining of pain and pulling the headphones off the ears
- ongoing negative change in activity level, such as becoming very hyperactive, very tired, or sluggish
- whenever you have questions about the way you are using the therapeutic listening program at home

### **Questions?**

**This home program is to be used only under the guidance of an occupational therapist.** If you have any questions, please call your therapist in the Developmental and Rehabilitation Services Department.

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Therapist signature

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Date

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Phone

For more information on Therapeutic Listening, visit the Vital Links Web site: <http://www.vitallinks.net/auditory.shtml>

For more reading material about this and other health topics, please call or visit the Family Resource Center library, or visit our Web site: [www.childrensmn.org](http://www.childrensmn.org).

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