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Check Your Listening

We cannot see listening, the only way to get at it is indirectly – through skills that are related to it in one way or another. This checklist offers a catalogue of such skills, and will enable you to identify issues related to yours, your child's or student's listening. There is no score, simply check as many boxes as you feel appropriate.

Receptive Listening

This is listening which is directed outward. It keeps us attuned to the world around us, to what's going on at home, at work or in the classroom.

- short attention span
- distractibility
- misinterpretation of questions
- confusion of similar sounding words
- frequent need for repetition
- inability to follow a series of instructions

Expressive Listening

This is listening that is directed within. We use it to control our voice when we speak and sing and our eyes when we read or write.

- flat and monotonous voice
- hesitant speech
- weak vocabulary
- poor sentence structure
- overuse of stereotyped expressions
- inability to sing in tune
- confusion or reversal of letters
- difficulty with reading
- poor spelling

Motor Skills

The ear of the body, which controls balance, co-ordination and body image, also needs close attention.

- poor posture
- fidgety behavior
- clumsy, uncoordinated movement
- poor sense of rhythm
- messy handwriting
- hard time with organization, structure
- confusion of left and right
- mixed dominance
- poor sport skills

Protection Issues

Listening is also the ability to leave out, or protect ourselves from “noise”, the information we don’t need. Difficulty at that level is often related to behavioral and social adjustment problems.

- oversensitivity to sound
- low tolerance or frustration
- poor self-confidence
- poor self-image
- difficulty making friends
- tendency to withdraw, avoid others
- irritability
- immaturity
- negative attitude toward school/work

The Level of Energy

The sensory system, and the ear in particular, are most instrumental in providing and regulating the energy we need to lead harmonious and fulfilling lives.

- difficulty getting up
- tiredness at the end of the day
- habit of procrastinating
- hyperactivity
- tendency toward depression
- feeling overburdened with everyday tasks
- low motivation, lack of drive

Developmental History

This knowledge sheds light on the possible causes of a listening problem.

- stressful pregnancy
- difficult birth
- adoption
- early separation
- delay in motor development
- delay in language development
- recurring ear infections