

## **SPEECH PATHOLOGY REPORT**

**NAME:** Tamsin Colley **MRN:** 149 4960  
**DOB:** 10/09/2002  
**AGE:** 2.4 years  
**ADDRESS:**  
**REPORT DATE:** 18/01/2005

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### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Tamsin is a 2.4-year-old girl who has been seen for regular speech pathology intervention since June 2004. Tamsin had a posterior fossa pilocytic astrocytoma removed on 31/03/2004. She has significant ataxia and is receiving physiotherapy and occupational therapy at SCH.

When initially seen, aged 21 months, Tamsin presented with above average language comprehension and play skills (ie symbolic play, but still had obvious motor difficulties in play). Tamsin had severe speech sound difficulties, but her extended use of signs and gestures indicated that her expressive language system was reasonably in tact. Tamsin was producing only 7 words frequently, and this was due to difficulty coordinating the movements of her speech musculature. An update of skills is below.

### **ARTICULATION (SPEECH SOUNDS)**

Tamsin has worked hard and made steady progress with her speech sounds, but this remains an area significant weakness. Her speech clarity remains poor and she is unintelligible to most people outside her family. Producing speech requires very precise and quick movements. Tamsin has marked difficulty coordinating the movement of the lips, tongue, jaw, palate, larynx, and respiratory muscles to produce clear speech. She requires extra time to initiate, change, and cease the movement of her articulators.

As a result, the general pattern is one of slow, exaggerated, poorly controlled, imprecise, and sometimes inconsistent movement. The addition of another movement or sound greatly increases the difficulty for Tamsin. This is why she cannot put sounds on the ends of words, has a lot of difficulty with 2 syllable words, and prefers the simplest word structures, eg consonant-vowel combinations, such as, 'go', 'bye', 'poo'.

Tamsin has difficulty with individual sounds that are more motorically more complex, for example, where voicing, nasality or airflow also need to be controlled, or the placement of the articulators is more complicated. Tamsin's current, predominant speech patterns are as follows:

- There are some sounds that Tamsin cannot make yet. Tamsin's best sounds are the lip sounds /m/, /b/, /p/, /w/. Her ability to consistently say the tongue sounds /t/, /d/, /n/, /k/ and /g/ is improving. Tamsin cannot say most fricative or 'air' sounds, such as /s/, /f/, /sh/, but can now say /h/ (the easiest air of these types of 'air' sounds). There has been marked improvement in the range of Tamsin's vowel sounds. Previously all vowels were pronounced as /aah/, but Tamsin can now imitate all the simple vowel sounds on their own.
- Tamsin leaves the sounds off the ends of words. This is because it requires a lot more coordination to put another sound on the end of the word (ie saying 3 sounds is much harder than saying 2 sounds). For example, 'cup' becomes "gu"; 'wipe' becomes "wa"; 'mum' becomes

“mu”. Even when Tamsin can make the sound on its own, or at the beginning of a word, she still cannot put the sound on the end of the word.

- Tamsin finds longer words, such as 2 syllable words, difficult, preferring to say the first syllable. Tamsin can now say some 2 syllable words with the same sound in them, eg ‘moomoo’, ‘bubba’, but struggles when there are different sounds, as in words like ‘water’, ‘doggie’, ‘horsie’ After much work, Tamsin is just learning to do this, but her rate and speech rhythm are disordered (ie slower rate and even stress pattern on both syllables).
- Tamsin’s speech productions can vary. This means that one time she may pronounce ‘knife’ as “ma”, and the next time she may say “na”. Or she may pronounce ‘duck’ as “gu” the first time, then as “da” the next. This variability is part of Tamsin’s speech disorder. As her speech improves, the productions will become more stable. The words she knows best will be quite consistent, but her attempts at new and more difficult words will continue to vary.
- Tamsin has difficulty with the timing, rate and rhythm of speech. She struggles to not only initiate sounds, but also to turn them off quickly (for example if you are saying the word ‘up’ and you don’t make ‘u’ short, and don’t make the ‘p’ light and quick, then the word sounds like ‘aabaa’). You also need to be able to switch sounds on and off quickly so you can start the next one.

### **SUMMARY**

Tamsin is an interactive 2.4-year-old girl with above average comprehension, play skills, and attention levels for her age. Her verbal expression is limited, and her speech is unclear. This is primarily due to her severe articulation difficulties, caused by her speech motor movement disorder. Tamsin is saying many single words, some 2-word phrases, and occasionally imitates 3 word phrases. Presently, her clarity decreases in longer utterances.

Tamsin is sociable, keen to interact, and works very hard in therapy and at home. Her progress is steady, but she will require long-term intensive intervention for her speech difficulties. At present Tamsin will continue regular therapy at SCH, but may need to access other services in the future. She attends Day Care twice a week, and speech pathology liaison with Day Care is ongoing. A neuropsychological assessment would be helpful for Tamsin in the future.

### **ONGOING THERAPY GOALS**

1. Continuing to build Tamsin’s repertoire of single sounds, especially fricative air sounds /f/ and /s/.
2. Teach Tamsin to put the new sounds she has learnt into a wider range of CV (consonant-vowel combinations), with a focus on increased accuracy of the vowels and consonants.
3. To teach Tamsin to put sounds on the ends of words (starting with easy sounds such as /m/ and /p/).
4. To expand Tamsin’s ability to produce 2 syllable words with a range of consonant contrasts.
5. An overriding goal with all of the above will be to work on rate and rhythm where possible. Frequently, we have had to work primarily on getting the sound, and then later fine tuning rate, rhythm and control.
6. Expand Tamsin’s language by teaching her useful and frequently occurring verbs, eg ‘want’, ‘put’, ‘do’, ‘get’, ‘have’, and practise putting them in short sentences. The focus in these activities is not primarily on accuracy and clarity, but on expression of the key words in a phrase.

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