

THE CENTER FOR SPEECH EXCELLENCE

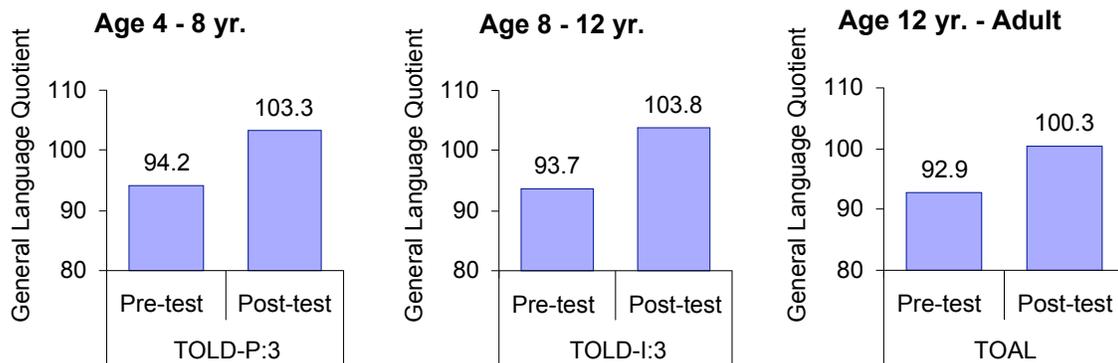
Our Center's Research May 2002

Children with spoken or written language problems of all ages show statistically significant improvement on language tests, tests of auditory perception, and auditory processing tests after only six to eight weeks of Fast ForWord therapy in our office.

When your child has been diagnosed with a speech, hearing or language problem, how do you know which type of therapy will work best? We all want a therapy approach that is effective, efficient and as economical as possible, while still providing the best skills for your child.

I have recently begun to look at pre- and post-test results for approximately 50 of the children and adolescents that have completed the Fast ForWord program in my office. I am interested in evaluating this therapy approach for my particular clients. I am very encouraged by the results, and I find that my results are similar to or better than the data reported nationally.

These graphs represent the mean pre- and post-test overall quotient scores for the language tests most frequently given for children age 4-8 years, for children age 8-12, and for adolescents and adults. The TOLD-P is for children age 4-8 years, the TOLD-I is for children age 8-12 years, and the TOAL is for adolescents and adults. Further analysis of test data is in the works. While I have not done longitudinal studies in my office, national studies show that these improvements remain and continue to make learning easier.



I first began using Fast ForWord in my office as a therapy technique in 1996. I had been following the research on language disorders and temporal processing disorders for some time. Dr. Paula Tallal was the keynote speaker of the Society for Neuroscience in 1994 where she reported on her 20 years of study into the differences of language-impaired children as compared with children who are not language impaired. Then she and Dr. Michael Merz nich, who had been doing research in brain plasticity, combined forces and found that children with language disorders typically were slow to process sounds but with an intensive program of carefully designed exercises they could learn to process sounds faster. This skill of processing sounds

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faster led to higher scores on language tests and improved ability in reading and written expression. They developed the Fast ForWord Computer therapy program so we clinicians could use it with our clients.

My philosophy for my clinical work has always been to try to know as many techniques as possible and to apply the proper technique to the particular problem a person exhibits. That is why I do not use any particular clinical technique exclusively for a particular type of problem. In addition to Fast ForWord, I use many other tools and traditional therapy approaches to help our children and adolescents become competent communicators.

As time goes on, there will be other computer-based programs that will be proven effective in treating communication disorders. Right now, however, there are no other packaged programs on the market with the same rigorous research behind it that Fast ForWord has. When one comes along, I will certainly want to have it available for my clients.