

# Evidence-based intervention for preschool children with primary speech and language impairments: Child Talk – an exploratory mixed-methods study

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## Plain English summary

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## Plain English summary

Primary speech and language impairments affect 7.4% of primary school children. Early intervention by speech and language therapists (SLTs) is crucial to lessen their impact on these children's life chances; however, there is wide variation in how families are assessed and interventions implemented.

The aim of the research was to improve speech and language therapy services by developing a framework that speech and language therapists could use to inform the clinical decisions they make regarding which interventions to use with children. The framework was developed from published evidence, experiences of children and families and knowledge of the practitioners.

The research was carried out in six sites in England, representing a range of demographics. A variety of methods was used to collect data including online surveys, regional and national meetings and focus groups with SLTs, parents and workers in early years settings. In addition, a thorough search for published evidence was undertaken.

This research programme has identified nine themes that encompass the practice of speech and language therapy, such as 'comprehension' and 'speech'. For each theme we have mapped the activities that SLTs use, the views of families and children and research evidence to create the framework. To support the use of this, a toolkit has been developed that lists assessment tools, outcome measures and key data that should be routinely recorded by services to capture the resources that they use.

Further research is needed to assess the effectiveness of this framework in improving outcomes for children with primary speech and language impairment and its cost-effectiveness.

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