

READING AND LITERACY

KidTherapy offers individual literacy programs for students whose reading skills are emerging in Kindergarten and the early elementary grades, for those who are developing fluent reading skills as they progress through elementary school and for students advancing to develop proficient reading skills into middle school. The comprehensive program is individually designed to meet the needs of the student to address specific processing skills for auditory/phonological, visual/orthographic and language/comprehension.

We use a variety of approaches to meet the student's needs. We also use the Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing® program to teach the students phonemic awareness to improve word attack skills for accurate decoding and encoding. We use the Seeing Stars® program with students to train them to visualize letters for rapid word recognition to improve reading fluency and rate. Some students can read words accurately but struggle with reading comprehension to understand what they are reading. We use the Visualizing and Verbalizing® program to improve their skills to comprehend written material for critical thinking: to recall specific details and sequences, to make inferences and predictions, and to summarize. Development of these skills can also improve writing organization. Our program also addresses auditory and visual sequential processing and memory difficulties that are often experienced by children who are struggling with reading and writing.

Current brain research on individuals with reading disabilities and dyslexia has identified localized neural weakness within a specific component of the language system: the phonologic module. The phonologic module is the functional part of the brain where the sounds of language are put together from words and where words are broken down into their elemental sounds. Dyslexia involves a weakness within the language system, specifically at the level of phonological processing, word analysis and word form systems. Researchers have discovered how the disruption in these fundamental neural circuits for coding language gives rise to a reading impairment and affects not only how a person reads but a wide range of other important functions as well, including the ability to spell words, retrieve words, articulated words and to remember certain facts. (Shaywitz, Overcoming Dyslexia, 2003)

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Emerging Developmental Literacy: Focus on improving oral-motor-sensory and auditory skills to feel, hear, identify and manipulate sounds in words. Skill development will enable students to decode words and become self-correcting in reading and writing. The curriculum will target the following areas:

- Matching sounds of spoken language to letters
- Increasing awareness of the mouth to feel sounds within words
- Auditory sequential processing to sequence and order sounds in words
- Blending and segmenting sounds in words for accurate decoding and encoding

Skilled Developmental Literacy: Focus on improving skills for word recognition and visualization of orthographic patterns to improve rate and accuracy of reading and spelling. Skill development will train students to rapidly recognize regular and irregular orthographic patterns to improve reading and writing fluency. The curriculum will target the following areas:

- Improve visualization of letters and words
- Improve memory of visual patterns of words
- Establish sight word lists for reading and spelling
- Increase fluency for contextual reading
- Develop writing strategies

Advanced Developmental Literacy: Focus on improving reading comprehension and writing skills. Emphasis will be on developing "concept imagery" for comprehension to create a dynamic image of text. The focus is to improve the student's ability to recall details, sequence information, make inferences, make predictions, draw conclusions and to summarize information. The curriculum will target the following areas:

- Improve phonetic processing establishing visual imagery of words
- Review orthographic expectancies for reading, spelling and writing
- Increase fluency, rate and accuracy for contextual reading
- Develop skills to create an imaged gestalt to improve reading comprehension
- Improve reading comprehension for critical thinking
- Improve writing skills using specific organizational strategies