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Reading and Language Intervention for Children with Down Syndrome

This archive includes data from a randomised controlled trial of an intervention designed to teach reading and language skills to children with Down syndrome. The study was conducted by researchers at Down Syndrome Education International and at The Centre for Reading and Language at the University of York.

Archive contents:

- [readme.pdf](#) – description of archive contents and background to study (this file)
- [dse-rli-trial-data-archive.csv](#) – data at screening, t1, t2, t3 and t4
- [dse-rli-trial-data-archive-variables.csv](#) – description of the data included in dse-rli-trial-data-archive.csv
- [dse-rli-trial-rct-paper.pdf](#) – paper describing the study and reporting the findings, originally published in the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 53:10 (2012), 1044–1053 (doi:10.1111/j.1469-7610.2012.02557.x).

Background

The Reading and Language Intervention for Children with Down Syndrome (RLI) is an evidence-based programme designed to teach key reading and language skills to children with Down syndrome.

RLI is based on interventions that have been shown to be beneficial for other children experiencing language and reading difficulties, and incorporates the principles of best practice for all children as identified by current research and guidelines. It is designed for children with Down syndrome aged from 5 to 11 years with reading ages under 8 years.

RLI builds on previous work on reading and language interventions at The Centre for Reading and Language at the University of York by adapting teaching techniques found to be beneficial for other learners to meet the learning needs of children with Down syndrome.

Down syndrome is one of the most common identified genetic causes of learning disability, affecting an estimated 1.6 million children worldwide. The condition is associated with a variety of developmental delays and health risks. All children with Down syndrome experience significant speech, language and literacy difficulties.

Evidence suggests that targeted interventions can improve outcomes for other children experiencing language and reading difficulties. Evidence also suggests that teaching techniques can be adapted to better meet the specific learning needs of children with Down syndrome. RLI aims to improve outcomes by combining best practice in reading and language teaching and interventions for all children with best practice in teaching for children with Down syndrome.

Structure

The intervention includes a reading strand and a language strand, each of which includes several components. Daily one-to-one teaching sessions are expected to last 40 minutes (either as a single 40-minute or two 20-minute sessions). Teaching sessions follow a five day cycle, with new content taught on days 1-4, and revision and consolidation on day 5. The intervention follows a prescribed framework within which content and teaching are tailored to meet individual needs.

Evaluation

RLI was evaluated by researchers at Down Syndrome Education International and at The Centre for Reading and Language at the University of York in a randomised controlled trial, involving 57 children with Down syndrome attending 50 mainstream schools in two areas of the UK and funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

The primary findings were reported in a paper published in the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.

Additional information about the study is available on Down Syndrome Education International's web site at:

<https://www.dseinternational.org/resources/teaching/rli/introduction/>