**Speech Sound Practice:**

Poor articulation may be the result of many causes. When working with your child on improving their speech sounds, parents do more teaching than anybody else. Most of your child’s speech patterns are formed before he/she even enters school. Parents can be instrumental in helping their child overcome the sound error(s). Here are the basis guidelines and hierarchy therapists use when teaching correct speech sound productions:

1. **Listening:** Help your child hear the difference between the way they make their sound and the way you make yours (ex: if they say “tow” for “cow”, say “Is that a “tow”, no it’s a “cow”)
2. **Seeing:** Help your child see the way they make their sounds. Using a mirror is key to show the differences in the way you make the sound and in the way your child makes their sound.
3. **Modeling:** See if your child can imitate you making the sound correctly. Start with sounds and progress according to hierarchy below.
4. **Repetition:** Continuous daily practice of listening and imitating is so important to their generalization of their speech sound use. Repetition helps them retrain their brains to correctly produce their speech sound.

**Speech Sound Practice Hierarchy:**

* + - 1. Isolation: Have your child produce their sound in isolation. They may need some oral motor or tactile stimulation along with a mirror to achieve this. Learning where and how to produce only the sound is important.
      2. Single Words: Practice working on your child’s speech sounds in single words. Work on the sound in the beginning of words than at the end of words than in the middle of words.
      3. Phrases/Sentences: Practice using their speech sound in short phrases. Start with ones that are repeated over and over. For example, “I see\_\_\_,” “I like\_\_\_\_,” “See\_\_\_,” etc. Gradulally increase the length of sentence. Putting their target sound at either the beginning or end of the phrases is the easiest. Gradually place targeted in the middle of sentences once they are successful with the production of the word at the end of the phrase/sentence.
      4. Conversation: Practice using their speech sounds in conversation. Good to use while playing a game that incorporates their speech sound. For example “Hi-Ho Cherry for /ch/, “Don’t Break the Ice” for /s/, “Go Fish” for /g/, etc.). Encourage your child to talk about the game/activity to assess whether or not they are using their speech sounds correctly.