

Normal Progression for Speech Sound Therapy

1. Usually the first step to teaching a child to correct a sound error is to produce the sound in isolation. For example, “make the /k/ sound.” Practice making the target sound in isolation several times before moving on.
2. After step one is done well, try getting the child to use the target sound in the beginning position in words. For example, “car.” Have a list or pictures of at least 10 - 20 practice words to practice daily.
3. Once step 2 is well done by the child, you want to put these words into short sentences either the child creates on their own or you have them repeat after you.
4. Once step 3 is completed, and can be done fairly well over a period of time, give the child words that have the target sound at the end of words. For example, “back.” Again give plenty of time to practice, then move into the sentence level as in step 3.
5. The next step is to use the target sound in the middle position in words. For example, “monkey.” Again after enough practice time, progress to the sentence level.
6. Finally, you work the target sound into blends, such as kl, kr, etc. Again ultimately you work toward the sentence level. Separating blends into the individual sounds (ex. k---l, or b---r) then decreasing the space between the two sounds may help to elicit correct production.
7. The ultimate goal is to produce these sounds into conversational speech, having the child self-correct, and generalizing the use of the sound in various situations with various people. It should become automatic with no need for hesitation or thinking before producing.

NOTE: Once you are past step 3 above, it is probably safe to begin correcting the child within everyday speech, especially when you hear words you have worked on. This needs to be considered on an individual basis though. Some children will be ready for this step sooner than others.

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