

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR FIRST SPEECH PATHOLOGY SESSION: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

How You Should Feel After a Good First Session

While every family is different, most parents and caregivers leave a strong initial session feeling:

- **Heard and understood:** You had the chance to share your story, ask questions, and talk about your child's or young person's strengths and challenges.
- **Respected as the expert on your child:** Your insights, preferences, and experiences were welcomed.
- **Reassured:** You gained clarity on your child's communication profile and what the next steps may be.
- **Included:** You feel like an active and valued part of the therapy process.
- **Empowered:** You have at least one practical idea, strategy, or perspective to take home.

You might also feel:

- **Tired:** Talking through concerns can be emotional and mentally draining.
- **Uncertain:** It's okay if you don't have all the answers yet.
- **Curious or cautious:** Building trust with a therapist takes time.

All of these feelings are completely normal. We are here to work with you at your pace.

What You Should Know by the End of the First Session

By the end of a thorough initial session, you should:

- Understand why you were referred or why you came in, and what speech pathology can offer
- Have shared your child or young person's developmental history and communication style in a way that felt safe and respectful
- Know what the next steps are (e.g., more sessions, further assessment, home strategies, referrals)
- Know how the therapist plans to support not just your child, but also you as the parent or caregiver
- Know how to contact the therapist or clinic with any questions

If any of this felt unclear, you're always welcome to ask for clarification at any time.

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Our Promise to You

We are here to:

- Affirm and support your child or young person's unique way of communicating
- Partner with you in a way that fits your values, preferences, and everyday life
- Offer therapy that is strengths-based, neurodiversity-affirming, and family-centred

After the Session: What Now?

You may want to:

- Reflect or journal about what stood out to you
- Observe your child or teen through a new lens, based on what was discussed
- Try a small strategy or activity the therapist suggested
- Reach out with follow-up questions if something arises later

There is no "homework" unless you ask for it – we believe in gentle, collaborative next steps.

In Case You Didn't Feel These Things

If you left the session feeling confused, dismissed, overwhelmed, or uncomfortable:

- Please know that feedback is welcome
- It may have just been the beginning of a longer conversation
- You deserve a therapeutic relationship that feels safe and supportive

We want to know how we can do better and work in a way that truly includes you.

You Know Your Child Best

We see you. We trust you. You are doing an incredible job by seeking support. The first step is often the hardest – and you've taken it.

Thank you for being here.