

# EVIDENCE-BASED, EFFICIENT MODEL OF SPEECH THERAPY AND PARENT EDUCATION SERVICE PROVISION IN THE SCHOOL SETTING FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

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## ABSTRACT

Speech-language pathologists (SLP) play a pivotal role in determining service delivery methods for students with speech, language, communication, and literacy challenges. Often SLP providers work independently through individual or small-group treatment sessions. However, the contemporary collaborative whole language approach emphasizes evidence-based practices to design and deliver a range of service delivery models that facilitate students' participation, inclusion, social interaction, and parent education. Educating families of children with special healthcare needs has been an ongoing, evolving area. How to operationalize such education in a meaningful yet objective way brings its own challenges. Borrowing from standard business practices and evidence-based research, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threat (SWOT) analysis combined with provider and parent inputs was used by iBRAIN's speech department to identify its areas of growth and define an evidence-based model of speech therapy and parent education services within the school setting for parents of children with traumatic brain injury. Speech materials, resources, and brochures were developed to educate families through evidence-based counseling, motivational interviewing, provider-authored data tracking forms, and therapy materials, with the end goal of implementing an innovative methodology for meeting students' needs for speech services at school and at home. This evidence-based and standard business practice methodology implemented by the speech department will become the blueprint of how all iBRAIN's departments will evaluate their current status and improve their outcomes.

**Keywords:** Speech language pathology, Communications sciences and disorders, Traumatic brain injury, Alternative and augmentative communication, Parent education and training, Special education

## INTRODUCTION

The perspectives of the children with Speech, Language, and Communication Needs (SLCN) and those of their parents are essential parts of the collaborative service delivery method. The Better Communication Research Program (BCRP) projects have explored children's and parents' views: the children with SLCN valued their connections and fun times with family, friends, teachers, pets, and people who help them. The children were also proud of their achievements and expressed individual aspirations for the future. They would like their peers not to tease them and would like adults to listen more and not shout. Students acknowledged areas of difficulty, including their feelings and emotions. An appreciative inquiry study by Gallagher et al. published similar conclusions in their study to identify ideal speech and language therapy services for children with Developmental Language Disorders (DLD) [1]. Gallagher et al. found that children with DLD were mainly concerned with social inclusion, participation, and achievements in the school. However, children with SLCN rarely spontaneously raise