

# WHAT TO EXPECT DURING AN LSL INTERVENTION SESSION

Are you about to start early intervention for your child with hearing loss? Well, like most parents, you may not know what that even means what you should expect, or what your role will be. Well, if you want your child to listen and talk, you'll enroll in listening and spoken language, or LSL early intervention. Let's talk about what that looks like.

Hi, I'm Dr. Teresa Caraway with Hearing First, we're here to support and help families just like yours, who have a child with hearing loss. We want to empower you as your child learns to listen, talk, read, and thrive, just like kids with typical hearing.

Well, first, let's define what is early intervention. Think of it as support for parents of little ones who need extra care or attention. Early intervention focuses on coaching parents on what to do with their little one to teach them critical new skills while their brain is primed to learn, during that important window between zero and three years of age. Early intervention tracks the baby's progress in all areas of child development, to support them in reaching their important milestones. Early intervention is all about equipping you as a parent, because you know your baby best and spend the most time with them. You'll learn strategies and techniques you can use in everyday moments at home. You are your baby's first and most important teacher.

If your child is deaf or hard of hearing, and you want them to learn to listen and talk, you'll attend LSL early intervention. LSL stands for listening and spoken language. In these sessions, you'll work collaboratively with your interventionist. There's an exchange of knowledge happening between you and that interventionist. They're teaching you what to do and you're teaching them all about your baby.

So where do sessions happen? Well, they can happen as a home visit or you may go to an office or a clinic. You may even attend virtually through Tele-intervention, and wherever your session occurs, you'll play an active role. Now let's walk through what you might expect when you're first getting started, and then we can explore what those weekly sessions could look like.

When you're getting started with early intervention, it's a lot of information gathering. Your LSL specialist is helping to lay the foundation for your journey. During this process, the interventionist will gather important information about your child's hearing loss, family history, and developmental milestones. They'll want to hear about what everyday moments and activities look like at home for your family. You'll share what you like to do with your baby and what your little one likes or doesn't like. Tell them about favorite books, snacks, or songs you both enjoy. In these early intake appointments, they'll explain what the path ahead might look like and begin to share some of the available resources that will assist your child in learning to listen and talk. Together, you'll set goals for your child's language development. You

and your LSL interventionist will collaborate to establish specific targets tailored to your child's unique needs, strengths, and interests.

As you're getting started working together, make a plan to share information with all the members of your child's professional team. It's so important that the professionals who work with your little one are all on the same page about what's happening and your goals for your child. Don't hesitate to ask how they plan to collaborate together. Remember, you are the captain of this team.

Once you begin attending sessions regularly, you'll settle into a rhythm together. Often the sessions will follow a similar format.

You might start by sharing what's happening at home or in your family. You'll also share updates from any audiology appointments or medical appointments or other specialists since your last visit.

Then you'll discuss progress, concerns, or questions you may have. For example, if you were working on the Hear It Before You See It strategy, you can share about your baby's responses when you tried it at different moments and what you observe. When was it successful? What did your baby do? How did they react? When did you feel like it wasn't working well? This is important information your early interventionist needs to know.

During your session, you and your interventionist will target specific goals for your little one. This helps you know what comes next developmentally, so you can help your child with specific next steps. Your interventionist will help you to continually raise that bar of what to expect from your baby as your baby grows and changes.

Together, you'll decide the focus of the session. Your interventionist might show you an LSL strategy or technique and explain the why behind it, why it's important. Then you'll practice it together in the session and once you feel comfortable, you'll be ready to start using it in everyday moments throughout your day at home.

As you spend time with your interventionist, you'll learn all about yourself as well. Share how you like to receive information and learn. Maybe you like to observe and process the strategy before you try it yourself or would you prefer just to jump right in and get started and learn by doing? Perhaps you prefer videos or handouts or like having both, but be open and honest about any questions or concerns you may have. Your early interventionist wants to know how they best can support you in learning new information. They are here to empower and equip you, and soon you'll be a natural at using LSL strategies and techniques and you may not even notice that you're doing them.

Remember, early intervention can look a little different for every family because it's part of your family's unique home life, routines, cultures, and traditions. As a parent, you're your child's first and most important teacher, no one can connect and support your baby like you can, and the skills you're learning will naturally integrate into your life and become something your family does easily and often. You're well on your way to living the LSL Life.

We have great handouts and information linked below. These will help you build a strong partnership with your professional team, so you can help your child learn to listen and talk. I hope this video was helpful as you head to your early intervention session. Wherever you are on this journey and how you may be feeling, you are not alone. Hearing First is here to help you every step of the way. If you'd like to

connect with other families with a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, click the link below to join the Facebook group and be sure to subscribe to the YouTube channel for new videos and tips and advice. For more resources and support, be sure and visit [hearingfirst.org](https://hearingfirst.org).