bite·sized beginnings
SPEECH THERAPY

PARENT GUIDE

Language processing

Small supports for everyday moments

Language processing difficulties can involve understanding words and sentences or expressing ideas. The phrase is used in different ways; an SLP can explain your child's specific strengths and support needs.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES ≠ AUDITORY PROCESSING DISORDER

APD concerns how the central auditory nervous system processes sound. Signs can overlap. An audiologist evaluates APD; an SLP evaluates language. Missed directions alone do not identify either condition.

Try one small change

1. **Make room to listen**
   Reduce competing noise. Check readiness; eye contact is not required.
2. **Say one step, then pause**
   "Put your shoes on." Allow time before adding the next step.
3. **Show the message**
   Point, demonstrate, use a photo, or write key words if useful.
4. **Repair with kindness**
   Rephrase or show instead of repeating louder. Try "Show me what comes first."
5. **Welcome every way to communicate**
   Model "Please show me" or "I need more time." Accept speech, gestures, writing, or AAC.
6. **Build on a shared moment**
   Explain one new word or retell a familiar event using "first, then, last."

Our small plan

Routine: _____ Support to try: _____

What helped / what my child shared: _____

Ask for support when difficulties persist or affect everyday life.

Bring examples to an SLP; discuss hearing with your pediatrician or audiologist. Ask: "What was assessed? What helps? What should home and school try?" Keep using your family's home languages.

Stephanie Mulholland, M.S., CCC-SLP | Bite-Sized Beginnings

General education; not an individualized evaluation or treatment plan.

Sources: NIDCD: DLD · ASHA: CAPD · ASHA: Childhood Language Disorders | Reviewed 10/27/2026