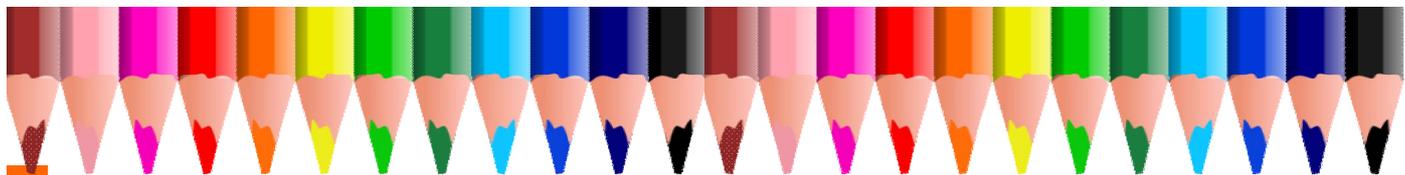# The CALLI Bridging Program

Clinician Assisted Language and Literacy Impairment Bridging Program

A bridging program designed by Speech Language Pathologists and Educational Therapists to put struggling students back on track in a mainstream curriculum

(Age 7 to 12)

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Every child wants to do well

Life sometimes has its own plans and throws challenges for you and your child right from the very beginning. Some children may start to speak later than their peers. Some go on to have difficulties in learning how to read and write at the same pace as their peers. Some may have motor coordination issues that affect learning. A segment of the population would have a whole cluster of these challenges occurring simultaneously. All these inevitably contribute to the child falling behind in their grades. At the centre of developmental philosophy, it is recognised that every child wants to do well and will do their best to learn adaptive strategies to cope. Sometimes, however, after continuous failure to adapt, the child gives up with coping. Often, this happens after a few years of formal schooling - much to the detriment of their self-worth and psychological wellbeing.

## Maximising Potential – Square peg in a round hole

Calli Bridging Program was borne out of our therapists' own frustration in dealing with children who have great potential in learning but somehow had missed being equipped with the right skills to allow them a successful schooling experience. These children are often placed in a school that they are ill-equipped for. It is usually a dilemma for teachers to place these children, in terms of grade level, and the level of remediation that they would need.

Our mission is to maximize the potential of these students – by having them take on the unconventional route of taking one full year in training and working on the ***underlying areas of deficiencies that affect literacy and learning***. When these areas are remediated intensively, it is hoped that they would be more competent in meeting learning goals set forth by mainstream school. The next step then would be re-integrating them back into suitable school environment.

Target Group

This program is specially designed for language based learning deficiencies such as:

- Students with Specific Language Impairment
- Students with Auditory Processing difficulties and Dyslexia
- Students who have high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder, whose language difficulties are hampering them in their academics

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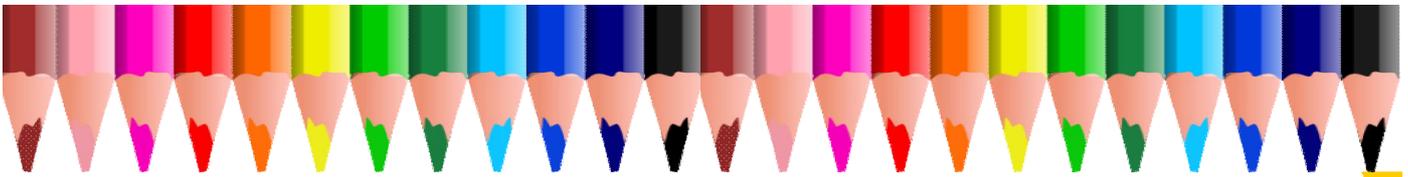
Developmental goals rather than age-driven goals

Would one put a five year old in a classroom setting with eight year olds and expect him/her to do well? Everyone goes through similar developmental milestones. Milestones are significant achievements that have to be in place in order to move to a new level of growth. Developmental milestones cover areas like play, gross motor, fine motor, cognition and language. A simple example is that a baby would need to achieve their crawling milestone before the walking milestone is achieved.

Often, the children who have certain disorders such as Specific Language Disorder, Cognitive Deficiencies or Autism Spectrum Disorder would achieve their learning milestones later than their peers. The range of difficulties they have would also mean that they would need time for therapists to work on those underlying processes first before they attempt formal elementary/ primary school. Sometimes, this can be overlooked. It becomes more complicated as we move into higher elementary without these fundamental skills.

Neuroplasticity of the Brain

The good news is that we are getting so much research that shows how much the brain has the capacity to change itself through experiences and new targeted learning. Although every child is different in the pace at which they make changes, we are expecting that with intensive, tailor-made programs, students will make gains that they would not have otherwise achieved under a non-intensive, conventional situation.

Ingredients of our program

Systematic language processing remediation - Language, cognition and learning have a symbiotic relationship. That is why targeting the underlying weaknesses of the students in language processing will have an overall impact of improving all round performance in social awareness, communication and cognition. To do this, we will gauge the child's ability at baseline and build up the foundation from there. An SLP individual plan, an OT individual plan and an ET individual plan would be devised for each child.

Consistent Yearly Assessment – The program is designed on a yearly basis. At the end of each year, a re-assessment is done, in collaboration with psychologists to determine suitability of the child to be re-integrated into a mainstream school setting. Evaluation would include looking into:

- Suitability of school curriculum and program
- Arranging for meetings between professionals to ascertain placements

Desired outcome

The desired outcome is more than a year's worth of growth in language, cognition and social skills. The clinician will endeavor to work closely with different schools and psychologists to ascertain re-integration of the child back into grade level successfully.
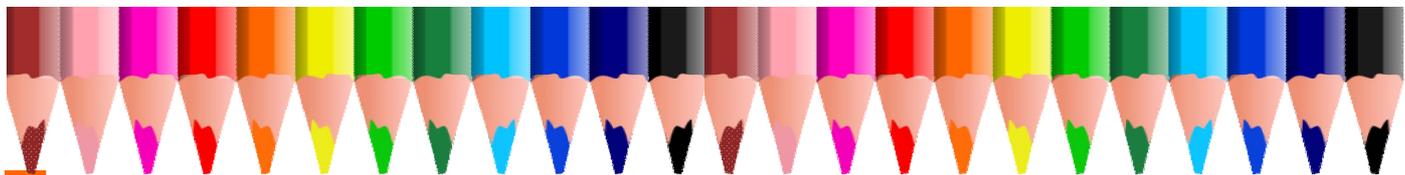
Approaches to Intervention

Language Intervention

Once a baseline has been established, the speech language pathologist will work towards re-mediating language by setting language based goals. Yearly goals are specifically broken down to more detailed objectives so that these are attainable in a hierarchical manner. Focus is placed on achievement of goals and building resilience and confidence so that the child becomes an effective inquirer of the world around them.

Our approach to language:

- **Cognition —** use language stimulating strategies with the child's level of cognition in mind.
- **Mediated Scaffolding** — bridging gap between current level and goal and providing the just-right level of challenge so that the child meets the next level of objective without resistance.
- **Building Resilience** — as language goals become more complex, and the child moves towards being an active participant in the world around them, we are expecting him/her to continuously build upon their resilience so that they become more ready for the real world challenge.
- **Weaving into curriculum —** as our goal is to ease the child towards mainstream school settings, we will be building, as the child meets competency, the anticipated curriculum vocabulary of their next placement, into our goals.

Literacy Intervention

Remediating literacy is actually more complex than one would envisage for those with severe impairment in acquiring literacy (ie. Severe Dyslexia affected). If the child has co-occurring issues (i.e. impairment in Phonological Awareness and Auditory Processing Difficulties), a multi-pronged approach would be necessary so that one targets Auditory Discrimination and Phonological Awareness – and all this while helping the child connect what they learn at speech level and auditory level to sight word representation. This approach, although highly essential, is often difficult to manage and coordinate when intervention is too infrequent.

Our approach to literacy:

- **Big Ideas —** where we aggressively target phonological and sensory motor issues, and possibly working memory and auditory processing simultaneously.
- **Mediated scaffolding —** bridging gap between current ability and goal.
- **Strategic integration —** of phonological and alphabetic tasks
- **Conspicuous strategies —** made explicit, by modeling of steps – with "think aloud" and questions.
- **Primed background knowledge —** connection between previously learned and new skills
- **Judicious review —** need for practice or review of skills during program.

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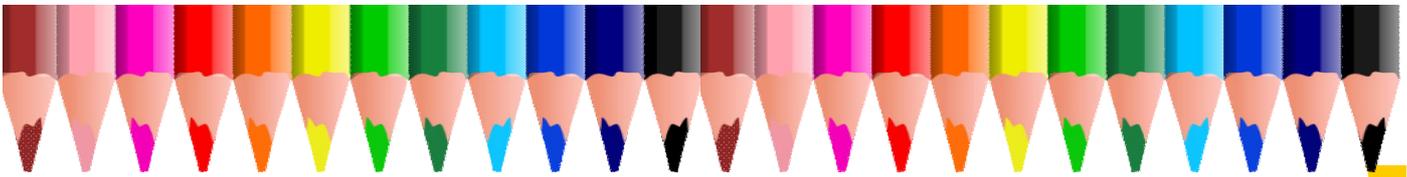
Numeracy Intervention

Remediation in numeracy begins with an appreciation of the mathematical sensibilities that children bring into the classroom and connect to their prior interests and experiences. Yearly goals are specifically broken down which aim to progressively develop both numeracy and problem solving skills. Many opportunities throughout the year are provided for children to **acquire, process, and express mathematical concepts in concrete, pictorial, and symbolic ways.** Opportunities for extension of children's thinking about mathematical ideas through questioning leads to a deepened understanding of concepts.

Our approach to numeracy:

- **Ongoing monitoring**

- **Meaningful learning experience** - acquire knowledge and skills to develop an understanding of mathematical concepts within one's own experience. Mathematics is more meaningful when it is rooted in real life contexts and situations.

- **Foster mathematical thinking** - build on intuition and concrete foundation while gradually helping children gain an understanding of abstract and symbolic understanding.

- **Creativity** – providing multiple avenues for acquiring content, making sense of ideas, developing skills, and demonstrating what they know.

- **Differentiated instruction** - making continual adjustments to meet the varying needs of individual children to engage in lesson content and to learn.

Working with Schools and Psychologists

This programme is conducted with the view of re-integration of the student in mind. As such, we will be working with psychologists and getting in touch with both Singapore and international schools to explore opportunities of having the student re-integrated into the right grade level. The professionals will work closely with parents to help them make informed decisions with regard to the next course of action.

Timetable

Daily Monday to Friday 9:00am to 12:30pm
The building blocks of school success are targeted. Daily immersion of the following in a hierarchical manner:

> Math Language
> Math Concepts
> Math Application
> Phonological Awareness
> Auditory Processing Training
> Receptive & Expressive Language Intervention
> Social Intervention*

Sessions conducted on a one to one basis by Speech Language Pathologists and Educational Therapists

* may be paired out in groups

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Administration

Intake

- All students need to be screened for suitability.

- Intake happens all year round. Because this is an individual plan, Intake start date will also be the date in which the therapy year ends, culminating in a re-assessment and evaluation on placement

Terms and Conditions:

- No replacement sessions for missed lessons

- Programme break on the months of June and December (for Singapore schools)

- Programme break on the months of June and July (for international schools)

- During the break, parents can opt to enroll their child on separate holiday programme (different fees apply) or continue with the CALLI full time arrangement

- Prepayment before the start of sessions

- Enrolment fee of $500 applies (non-refundable)

- A late charge of 3% applies if invoice is overdue by 10 days. A late charge of 5% applies if invoice is overdue by 20 days.

Assessment:

- An attached form accompanies this programme – which should be filled in by: Parents, Current Teachers and Our Therapists.

- A standardized assessment conducted by our SLP & Math trainers at the beginning of the term and the final term.

- Parents will be referred to our psychologist contacts who will work with us to consider future placements in school.

Payment:

CALLI PROGRAMME FEES $6,900.00 per month

   (Consolidated Speech Language Pathologists & Educational Therapists sessions of 15 hours per week)

*The Calli Programme fee reflects a 20% reduction of our regular fee.

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