Confidence Levels of Recent Graduates in Speech Language Pathology and Audiology in Providing Assessment and Intervention for School-aged Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Taylor Tarka
Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND)
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Background

• Increased rate for diagnosis of ASD → increase demand on practitioners
• Increased importance that clinicians have confidence and knowledge
• Research indicates that there is a lack of confidence across disciplines
  • Audiologists and speech language pathologists are some of the first clinicians to treat children with ASD
Purpose

**Purpose statement:** There is a need to update the findings and determine the confidence levels of SLPs and audiologists who are working with school-aged individuals with ASD.

- **Underlying purpose:** To determine if graduate programs are preparing students to work with children with ASD

**Research Question:** What are the confidence levels for SLPs and audiologists, following recent graduation from the University of Connecticut, for providing assessment and intervention for school-aged children with ASD?
Methods

• Respondents were recruited via UConn Speech and Hearing Clinic emails provided by the program manager
• 21 question, online survey via Survey Monkey
  • 11 total respondents after exclusion criteria
• Follow-up email sent 3 weeks after initial email
• Analysis completed in Excel
• Main items of interest included;
  • Confidence levels in overall knowledge of ASD
  • Confidence levels of assessing children with ASD
Results - Demographics

- 11 respondents
  - 8 SLPs
  - 3 Audiologists
- All 0-5 years post graduation
- All currently work with children with ASD
- Majority (91%) took a course with ASD as a topic
  - 75% didn’t feel that taking additional coursework on ASD would have benefited them
- Majority (82%) had the opportunity to assess/treat individuals with ASD in their graduate program
How confident are you in your overall knowledge of ASD?

- Not at all confident: 2
- Not so confident: 8
- Somewhat confident: 1
- Very confident: 1
- Extremely confident: 5

How confident are you in assessing children with ASD?

- Not at all confident: 5
- Not so confident: 1
- Somewhat confident: 5
- Very confident: 5
- Extremely confident: 1
How confident are you in determining appropriate intervention goals and objectives for children with ASD?

- Not at all confident: 1
- Not so confident: 1
- Somewhat confident: 4
- Very confident: 5
- Extremely Confident: 6

How confident are you in counseling the caregiver of a child who has a current diagnosis of ASD?

- Not at all confident: 1
- Not so confident: 1
- Somewhat confident: 4
- Very confident: 5
- Extremely Confident: 6

How confident are you in counseling the caregiver of a child who you are concerned may have ASD and should be evaluated for a possible diagnosis?

- Not at all confident: 2
- Not so confident: 2
- Somewhat confident: 1
- Very confident: 5
- Extremely Confident: 6

How confident are you in delivering effective, evidence-based services to children with ASD?

- Not at all confident: 1
- Not so confident: 1
- Somewhat confident: 4
- Very confident: 6
- Extremely Confident: 6

How confident are you in collaborating with other service delivery professionals (i.e., OT, PT, psychologist, etc.) who work with children with ASD?

- Not at all confident: 1
- Not so confident: 1
- Somewhat confident: 3
- Very confident: 2
- Extremely Confident: 6

How confident are you in providing training to enhance the knowledge and skills of other professionals who work with children with ASD (i.e., classroom teachers, paraprofessionals)?

- Not at all confident: 2
- Not so confident: 2
- Somewhat confident: 1
- Very confident: 5
- Extremely Confident: 6
Discussion

• Despite the majority (91%) who took classes in their graduate program on ASD and 82% who had the opportunity to assess/treat individuals with ASD in their graduate career, confidence levels still varied throughout the respondents.

• In terms of providing services and determining goals is “somewhat confident” acceptable?
  • More research is needed on graduate programs

• 73% of the respondents were “somewhat comfortable” with overall knowledge of ASD.
  • Future SLPs and audiologists would benefit from a LEND program to enhance education and therefore confidence with working with children with ASD.
References


Thank you!

Any questions?