

# Glossary

## Auditory Processing Disorder

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Auditory processing disorder (APD) can be defined as difficulties with hearing or listening despite performing at normal or near-normal levels in tests of hearing acuity. The term APD derives from the assumption that the brain is not processing sounds in the normal way.

Children with auditory processing disorder have been described as having difficulty responding to sounds, understanding things they're told, concentrating, and expressing themselves in speech. Reading and spelling may also be affected.

APD is a controversial diagnosis and different professionals may hold contrasting views, meaning that the same child might be given a different diagnosis depending on which professional they see. A speech and language therapist, for example, might diagnose underlying language difficulties and an audiologist APD, causing endless confusion to both professionals and parents.

APD is not included in the most recent edition of the diagnostic framework DSM-5. A systematic review of research concluded that the listening difficulties observed in children diagnosed with APD might reflect underlying cognitive, language and/or attention problems rather than a discrete auditory processing deficit.

### References

**American Psychiatric Association** (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*. (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing. <https://psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/educational-resources/dsm-5-fact-sheets>

**Bowen C and Snow P** (2017) *Making Sense of Interventions for Children with Developmental Disorders: A Guide for Parents and Professionals*. Croyden: J & R Press Ltd

**Dawes P and Bishop D** (2009) Auditory processing disorder in relation to developmental disorders of language, communication and attention: a review and critique. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders* Vol.44, 4, 2009

**deWit E, Visser-Bochane M I, Steenbergen B, van Dijk P, van der Schans C P and Luinge M R** (2016) Characteristics of auditory processing disorders: a systematic review. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, 59(2), 384-413

**NHS** (2015) *Auditory Processing Disorder*. <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/auditory-processing-disorder/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

**Please note: Afasic does not hold copies of any referenced material. These publications should be available at academic libraries.**

## **Organisations that can help**

British Society of Audiology (BSA)

Blackburn House

Redhouse Road

Seafield

Bathgate

West Lothian EH47 7AQ

Tel: 0118 9660622

Email: [bsa@thebsa.org.uk](mailto:bsa@thebsa.org.uk)

[www.thebsa.org.uk](http://www.thebsa.org.uk)

## **Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists**

RCSLT

2 White Hart Yard

London SE1 1NX

Tel: 020 7378 1200

<https://www.rcslt.org/>

The professional body for speech and language therapists

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