



STRENGTH BASED APPROACH

Adopting a *strengths-based approach* means focusing on the strengths, skills and interests of our clients when we support them.

The goal of speech pathology support with our autistic clients is to encourage, embrace and promote the development of their authentic selves.

Rationale

We celebrate the child as a whole, acknowledging all that they are able to do, and building on the skills that they already have. This helps us to put the relationship first, and truly connect with the children we work with, not try to 'fix' them.

Deficits-Based

Traditionally, Speech Pathologists and other allied health professionals have seen their clients through a 'deficits' lens, referring to the process of identifying the areas that a child is 'lacking' or not achieving.

This does not negate the need for speech pathology input, as the world is not set up to support Autistics in the same way it supports Neurotypicals.

For example, a child who has limited verbal communication, will likely benefit from access to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) supports, including chat boards, communication books, and high-tech, dedicated speech output devices. Similarly, a child who has focussed interests in certain topics (e.g. Peppa Pig), will benefit from building language and literacy skills around their interest, rather than using their interest as a 'reward' to be earned.