

American Academy of Audiology
Position Statement

Auditory Integration Training

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Auditory Integration Training (AIT)

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BACKGROUND

This position statement supersedes the 1993 position statement, *Auditory Integration Training*.

Audiologists have been approached by parents seeking advice on the efficacy of Auditory Integration Training in the treatment of persons with autism spectrum disorders and other individuals with presumed (central) auditory processing problems including those with dyslexia, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, bipolar disorder, and other disorders inappropriately attributed to the auditory system. Third-party insurance carriers also have a need to know whether these services should be covered under their policies. Because of the claims of the relative successes achieved by this technique, some parents and families of children with various types of disabilities are looking to Auditory Integration Training as means of recovery for children with severe communication and/or (central) auditory processing disorders. In spite of popular claims, there have been no rigorously designed, scientific studies indicating that this technique significantly improves listening ability, language, or learning ability. Because of the importance of this matter to consumers of services provided by audiologists, the Executive Committee was asked in 1993 to determine the Academy's official position on Auditory Integration Training. In 2009, the Academy's 1993 statement was reviewed by the Strategic Documents Committee Task Force on Auditory Integration Training, and the following position statement was adopted by the Executive Board.

WHEREAS

Over the past decade, there has been interest by professionals in communication disorders, parents, physicians, and others in the treatment of autism and other auditory disorders through a technique of auditory training called "Auditory Integration Training" developed by Guy Berard. Other methods (e.g., Tomatis and Clark) currently exist for auditory sensitivity training; however, for the purpose of this report, the term AIT is used to include all such methods. Many parents of autistic children are extremely hopeful, through claims of the technique's success, that their children will experience a cure.

This treatment has been reported to be successful with people who have dyslexia, learning disabilities, pervasive development delays, attention deficit disorder, bipolar disorders, tinnitus, progressive deafness, and hyperacusis. However, there is a lack of scientific, controlled studies supporting AIT's effectiveness.

Auditory Integration Training is completed in ten hours over a ten day period by listening to filtered, electronically modulated music. Audiometric testing (sometimes called an audiotest), often not performed by an audiologist, is conducted prior to and during this treatment. Cost of treatment is usually \$1,000-\$1,500.

In the past, some of the literature on this topic attributed treatment in auditory training to audiologists. However, most audiologists have chosen not to participate in the treatment process for several reasons. One such reason includes the lack of peer-reviewed studies using controlled populations or scientific methods demonstrating that the AIT program provides significant improvement.

In 2010, the American Academy of Audiology task force on Auditory Integration Therapy concluded that there were no recent scientific, controlled studies supporting AIT's effectiveness. AIT should be evaluated carefully, as must all other services provided by audiologists and other health-care providers. Pursuant to Principle 5 of the Code of Ethics, the Academy believes that the experimental status of this technique must be clearly explained to consumers before they are entered into treatment or charged any fees.

POSITION STATEMENT

Be it resolved that the American Academy of Audiology believes Auditory Integration Training (by any name) is investigational. The Academy believes that prospective, systematic research of this technique is needed to demonstrate its efficacy. The 2010 Task Force on Auditory Integration Therapy recommends that the American Academy of Audiology re-examine this position statement should scientific, controlled studies supporting AIT's effectiveness become available.