

Safe and Sound Protocol (SSP) Client Information

The **Safe and Sound Protocol**, developed by Dr. Porges, is a five-day intervention designed to reduce stress and auditory sensitivity while enhancing capacity for social engagement and emotional resilience. By calming the physiological and emotional state, a neurological doorway may be opened for improving communication and thus lead towards more successful therapy and learning.

The SSP is a research-based therapy that is showing significant results in the following areas:

- **Social and emotional difficulties**
- **Auditory sensitivities**
- **Anxiety and trauma related challenges**
- **Inattention**
- **Stressors that impact adversely on social engagement**

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

The SSP involves listening to a specially formulated sequence of filtered music for one hour on five consecutive days. The music is played through headphones on audio equipment (MP3 player) in a quiet and safe environment. The child having the SSP intervention is accompanied by his parent or other safe and supportive grownup. During the intervention hour, the two will not engage in any conversation, but they may choose to engage in a number of creative activities, either separately or together. A SSP trained member of the A Child's Song team will also be in the room to encourage the parent and child and monitor for any interruptions to the intervention.

*The music for the intervention uses familiar songs which have been specially filtered and modulated to remove high and low frequency wavebands, keeping the sounds to within the bandwidth of human speech (prosody) – specifically to the soothing frequencies which signal safety and calmness to the processes of neuroception (the neurological systems which are involved in detecting threat and safety). Effectively the SSP directly gives the body the cues for neurological safety.

This non-invasive intervention involves listening to filtered music* that has been processed specifically to retune the nervous system (regulating state) to introduce a sense of safety and the ability to socially engage. This allows the child to better interpret not only human speech, but, importantly, the emotional meaning of language. Once interpersonal interactions improve, spontaneous social behaviours and an enhanced ability to learn, self-regulate and engage socially are often seen.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Here's the science behind the approach!

Based on Dr. Porges' Polyvagal Theory, the program is derived from nearly four decades of research on the relationship between the autonomic nervous system and social-emotional processes. It is designed to stimulate nervous system regulation by exercising and systematically challenging the auditory system with specifically processed music.

The music trains the auditory pathways by focusing on the frequency envelope of human speech. As the child learns to process these speech-related frequencies, they improve the functioning of two cranial nerves that are important for promoting overall social behavior. Cranial Nerve VII (Facial Nerve) helps children focus on human voice and tune out irrelevant frequencies. Cranial Nerve X (Vagus Nerve) enables self-soothing and autonomic regulation.

Outcomes of the SSP Intervention

Emotional and physiological states are critical to how children approach the situation at hand. So, when a child has better internal state control, not only can she be more socially engaged, she is more open to therapy and to new learning.

Studies suggest that following successful completion of the intervention, children will be better able to focus in school, therapy, and everyday life and experience a calmed emotional and physiological state. Skills such as attention, state regulation and the ability to engage socially will be enhanced.

Additional Information:

Please arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled session. This allows time for the child to use the bathroom, get a drink of water and ask any questions they might have before putting the headphones on.

If there are items from home that you think would help our child remain calm and occupied while listening please check with our administrator for appropriateness. Some things that would be helpful are comfort items such as stuffed animals, dolls or blankets. No electronics are permitted during the listening time for parents or children.

More detailed information and research of the SSP intervention can be found at <https://integratedlistening.com/ssp-safe-sound-protocol/>

If you have any further questions about this intervention please feel free to contact the A Child's Song office at 604 562-8308 or by email info@achildsong.ca.

