

**An examination of the validity of using SIFTER as a screening tool for
CAPD, using psychoacoustic tests**

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Abstract

It is thought that auditory processing problems may affect 1 in 20 children (Goldberg, 1998). It has been suggested that central auditory processing disorder (CAPD) is more prevalent than peripheral hearing loss (Chermak & Musiek, 1997). A precise definition of CAPD has been elusive, although the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) (1996) and more recently the British Society of Audiology (BSA) Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) interest group (2003) have produced consensus statements on the characteristics of APD. Identification of CAPD has proved to be difficult and confounding variables often complicate the diagnostic process.

This small-scale pilot study utilised a quasi-experimental research design on a sample of 19 'normally' hearing 8-11 year olds and five 'normally' hearing adults. Quantitative data was obtained using psychoacoustic tests: masking level difference (MLD) to test binaural processing and backward masking (BM) for temporal processing. Qualitative data was acquired from teacher observations using Screening Instrument For Targeting Educational Risk (SIFTER) and parental opinions using a questionnaire.

The aims of the study were to find if there was a correlation between the observations of the class teacher and the results from the psychoacoustic testing and thus comment on the efficacy of SIFTER as a screening tool for the identification of central auditory problems.