

The Missing Link of Aural Rehabilitation: Introducing Auditory Life Skills Training

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Abstract

Auditory Life Skills Training (ALST) is a **functional and auditory based, person- and family-centered approach** to aural rehabilitation. ALST is designed to help individuals with hearing loss achieve **real-world listening and communication success** across the lifespan. Traditional aural rehabilitation focuses on hearing technology and speech perception tests, manuals with progressive drill-based exercises and/or computer assisted aural rehabilitation programs/apps. However, many older children, teenagers, and adults continue to struggle to turn audibility into **confident, effective and enjoyable listening** in daily life.

This presentation introduces ALST through three **core, connected concepts: functional auditory access; emotional hearing wellness and enjoyable and meaningful listening experiences** that support skill development

ALST emphasizes that hearing sounds is necessary, but **not enough**. Emotional responses to listening and motivation to engage in meaningful experiences are critical for how people use and develop their hearing and listening skills over time.

Participants will learn how ALST helps clinicians and listeners to: **verify functional auditory access; support and strengthen emotional hearing wellness**, including listening confidence, fatigue management, and self-efficacy; and **incorporate positive, meaningful listening experiences** to promote active listening, persistence, and engagement

Through case examples with older children, teenagers, and adults who use hearing aids or cochlear implants, this session demonstrates how ALST **bridges the gap between technology and real-world listening**, especially for those who have adequate audibility but still struggle in complex environments.

This presentation is intended for audiologists, speech-language pathologists, educators, and hearing health professionals who want a **structured, evidence-informed framework** that integrates auditory access, emotional hearing wellness, and motivation-driven listening to improve participation and quality of life.

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. **Define and describe the principles and core concepts of ALST.**

2. **Explain the role of functional auditory access** in supporting listening, and identify clinical signs that hearing technology may not provide sufficient access, even with “acceptable” audiograms or real-ear measurements.
3. **Identify key components of emotional hearing wellness**, including listening confidence, listening effort, fatigue, and self-efficacy, and describe how these affect listening performance and outcomes.
4. **Recognize the value of enjoyable and meaningful listening experiences** in motivating active listening, persistence, and skill development.
5. **Explain how auditory learning can be scaffolded** through meaningful listening experiences that gradually increase in complexity as confidence and skills improve.
6. **Apply ALST strategies** that integrate auditory access, emotional hearing wellness, and positive listening experiences for older children, adolescents, and adults with hearing loss.
7. **Articulate how ALST complements hearing technology**, helping individuals translate audibility into sustained engagement, communication participation, and improved quality of life.

Biography — Karen MacIver-Lux, MA, Aud(C), Reg. CASLPO, LSLS Cert. AVT

Karen MacIver-Lux is an audiologist and a certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialist (LSLS Cert. AVT) with extensive experience in aural rehabilitation, auditory learning, and professional education. She is the **President and CEO of SoundIntuition**, a Canadian company providing continuing education, training, and consulting for professionals working with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. She also serves as **Director of MacIver-Lux Auditory Learning Services** in Toronto, offering auditory learning and rehabilitation services across the lifespan.

Karen’s clinical expertise is complemented by her contributions to the professional literature. She has **co-edited and contributed to major texts**, including *Auditory-Verbal Therapy: Science, Research, and Practice*, and has authored book chapters and articles on auditory-verbal therapy, aural rehabilitation, and functional listening outcomes. Her work integrates evidence-informed practice with practical clinical application, emphasizing emotional hearing wellness and meaningful listening experiences.

In academia, Karen is a **course instructor for Aural Rehabilitation (SLP 1516) and Clinical Laboratory in Hearing Disorders (SLP 1532)** in the Master of Health Science, Speech-Language Pathology program at the **University of Toronto**, where she provides both theoretical instruction and hands-on clinical training in aural rehabilitation to graduate students.

Her professional influence extends globally. Karen has guest-lectured at multiple universities, including the University of Western Ontario, Central Michigan University, and Dalhousie University, conferences, and has played a key role in developing training and certification programs such as Auditory Life Skills Training (ALST). She has served on the boards of professional organizations, including Auditory-Verbal International, and currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors for **VOICE for Children Who are Deaf and Hard of**

Hearing. Her early advocacy and leadership were recognized when she was named one of **Maclean's Top 100 Young Canadians**.

She has served on boards of professional organizations, including Auditory-Verbal International, and continues to advocate for individuals with hearing loss. Early in her career, she was recognized as one of **Maclean's Top 100 Young Canadians** for her leadership and contributions to the field.

Karen's work focuses on **bridging best-practice audiology, auditory-verbal approaches, and functional listening outcomes**, supporting individuals with hearing loss to achieve participation, confidence, and quality of life.