LEVELS OF EVIDENCE

- **LEVEL ONE:** Level one evidence includes systematic reviews and randomized controlled trials that are reviewed by experts and published in professional journals. These research studies have a treatment group (the children receiving intervention) and a control group (the children not receiving the intervention). Research in this category has the highest level of control in their study (i.e. the researchers can control for variables that could effect the outcome of the study). Using chance to assign people helps to make sure the groups will be similar and that the treatments they receive can be compared without bias.

- **LEVEL TWO:** Level two evidence includes cohort studies (follows two groups over time) and nonrandomized clinical trials. These studies do include a treatment (the children receiving intervention) and control (the children not receiving intervention) group. Studies in level two have less control on outside variables affecting the outcome of the study. There is less confidence that the intervention under study truly caused the results.

- **LEVEL THREE:** Level three evidence includes case studies and perspective papers. These studies do not include a control group and have a weaker research design. Case control studies describe results from a group of patients who all received the treatment that is being investigated. (i.e. a review of several cases of children that received auditory integration therapy). Perspective papers are not based on research findings, but focus on "expert" opinion in the field.

Information adapted from:
Sackett, D.L., Straus, S.E., Richardson, W.S., Rosenberg, W., Haynes, R.B. (2000). *Evidence-based medicine: How to practice and teach EBM*. New York: Churchill Livingston.