

# **APD 1.0 An Application For Parents and Professionals On Auditory Processing Disorder**

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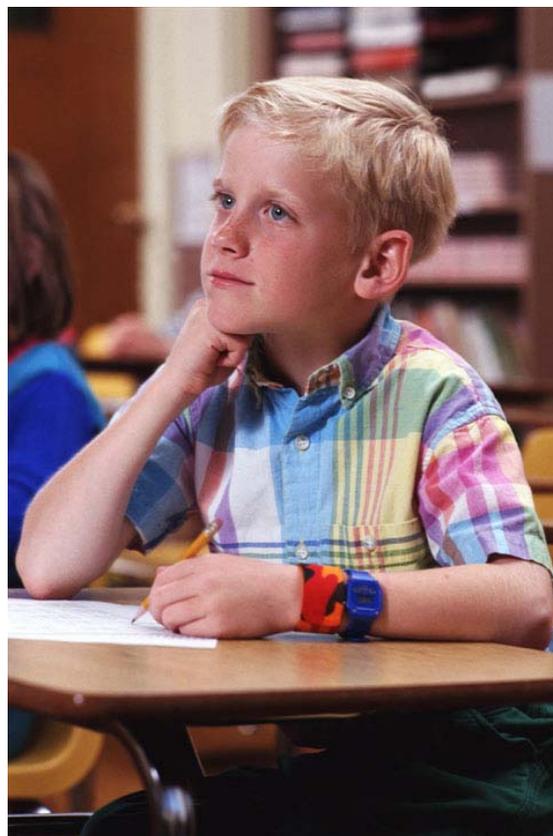
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Abstract

Audiologists increasingly find themselves in the position of answering questions about auditory processing disorder, APD. For instance: “*How does APD differ from ADHD?*” “*What are personal FM systems and how do they work?*” and “*What types of tests and procedures are involved in diagnosing APD?*” are common questions from parents and other professionals. That people are asking questions means that audiologists are succeeding in raising the level of awareness for this disorder. The Internet provides an opportunity for audiologists to educate about APD. APD 1.0 is an interactive software program designed to help audiologists answer these questions and educate parents and other professionals about APD. The software is free and can be downloaded from the Internet. Once installed on the computer, the program can be run directly from the computer without returning to the Internet. High-resolution printable fact sheets in portable document format, pdf, are used summarize the information as well.

## An Application For Parents and Professionals On Auditory Processing Disorder

When a child hears normally but has difficulty interpreting auditory information, we suspect an auditory processing disorder, APD. We have no control over how parents and other professionals will react when we present this information. For parents, denial and doubt are common emotional responses to learning that their child has a problem with how the brain interprets what the ear is hearing. Other professionals may be unfamiliar with APD because the disorder lacks a federal definition with regard to eligibility for special education services. Also, other disorders such as ADHD, SLD, and LD share some of the same behavioral characteristics as APD and are often confused with APD. Audiologists are faced with the need to educate these parents and professionals about APD. Today many parents and professionals immediately turn to the Internet when confronted with new or unfamiliar information. The Internet provides audiologists with an opportunity to educate parents and professionals. Since we have no control over what information is available to them, audiologist need to prepare our own materials to guide them in understanding APD.



APD 1.0 is an interactive stand-alone software program designed to help audiologists, parents, and professionals understand APD. *See figure 1.* The tool contains three major sections:

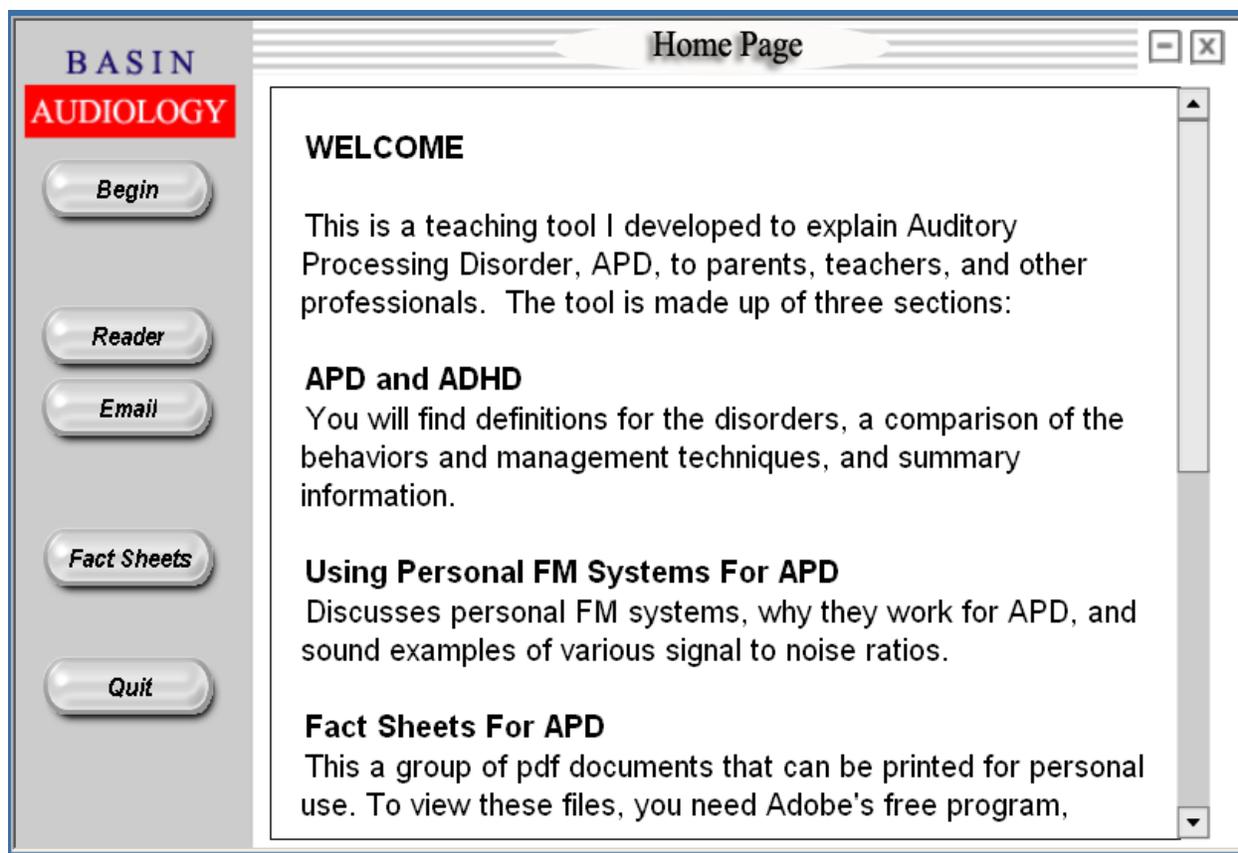


Figure 1 Startup Screen for APD 1.0

- The tool begins by defining what is an APD. See Figure 2. The disorder is then compared and contrasted with ADHD. Each disorder is defined by looking at their behaviors and management. A summary section is used to emphasize that APD is separate disorder and that not all children with ADHD have an APD.

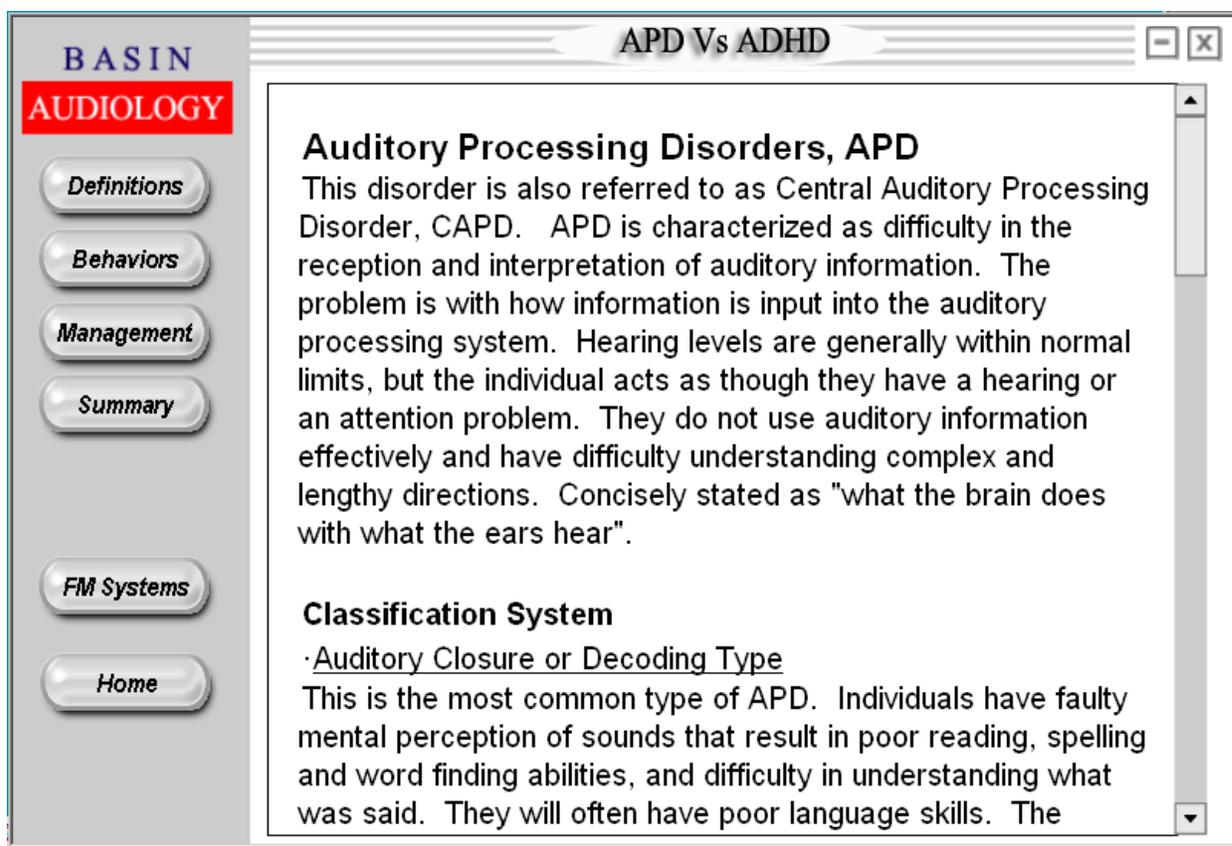
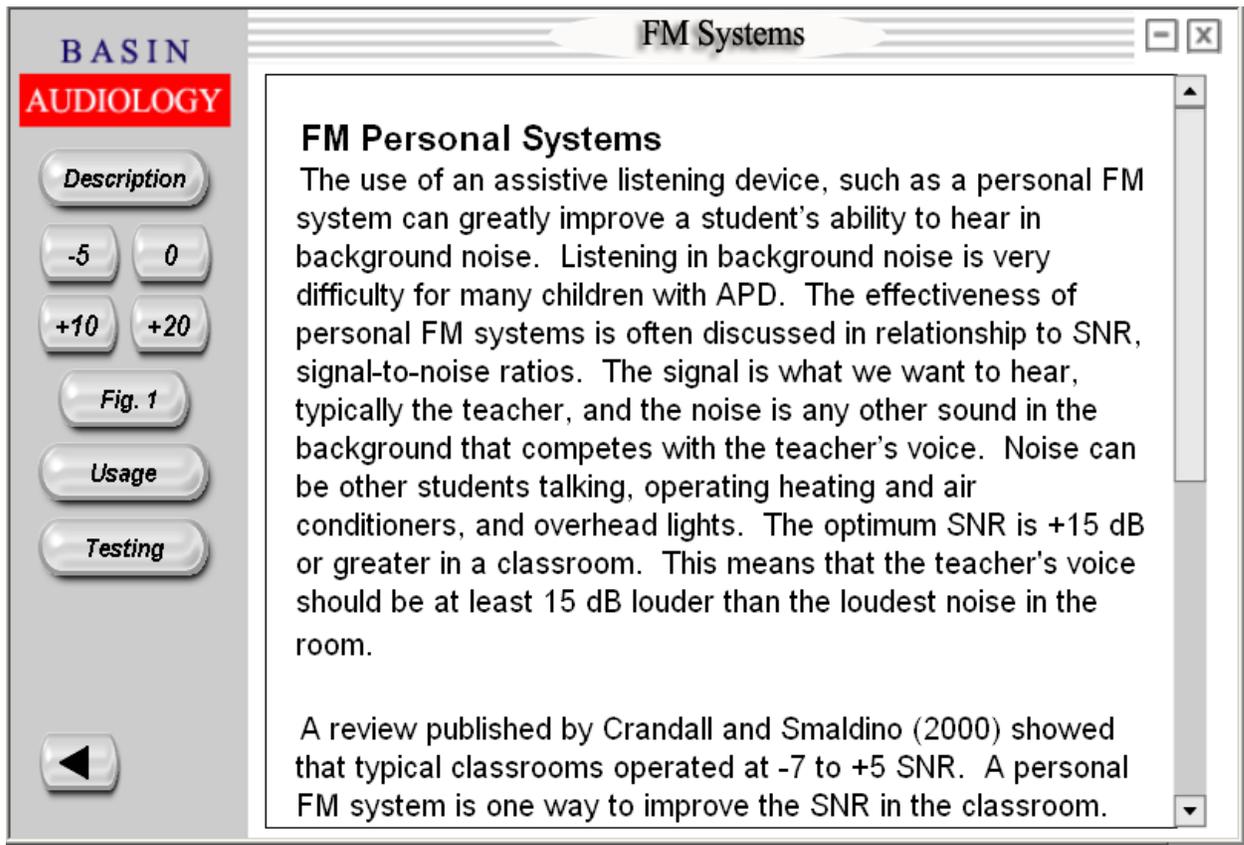


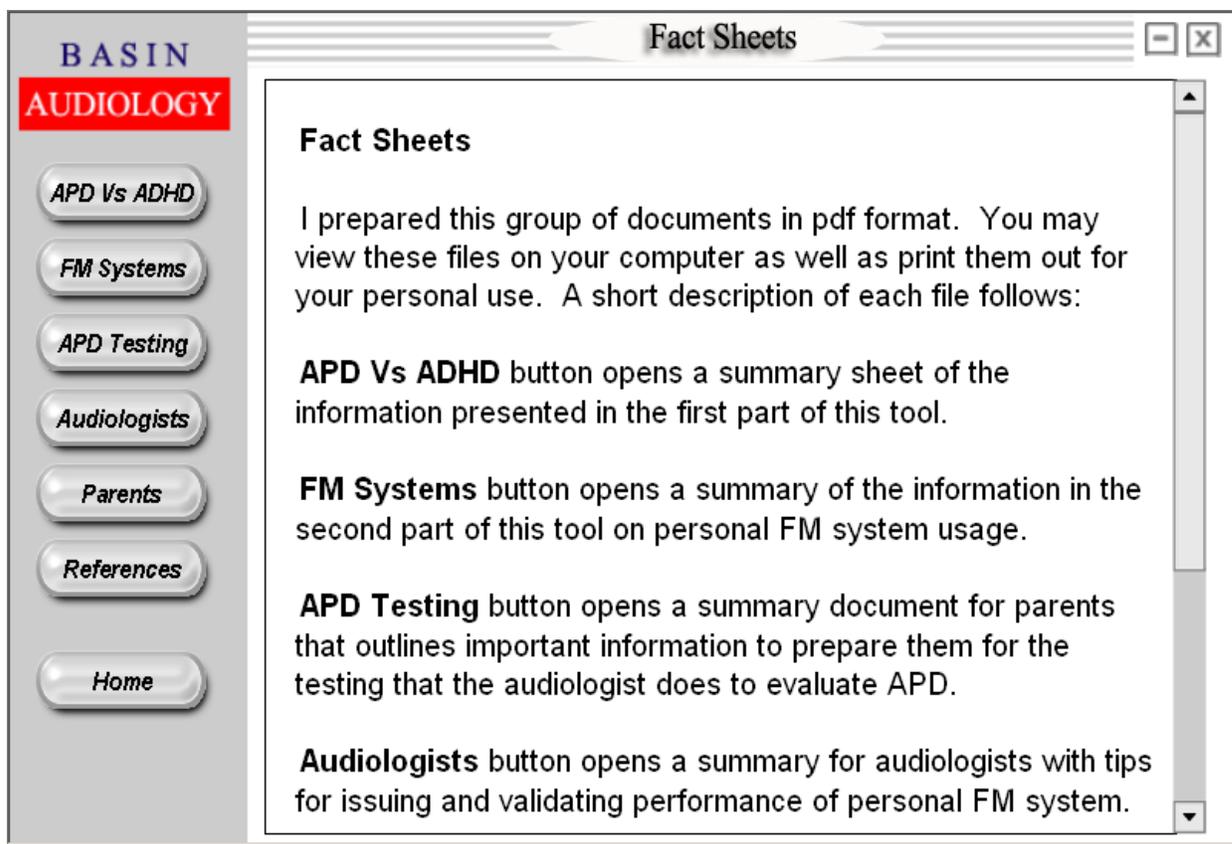
Figure 2 APD and ADHD defined.

- The second section discusses personal FM systems. See Figure 3. Audiologists often recommend personal FM systems as part of the treatment for APD. Since not all children with APD benefit from a personal FM system, it is important that parents and professionals understand how this system work and how we can monitor the success or benefit of the system. Parents and professionals are confused by the terminology we use to explain signal to noise ration, SNR. This section provides pictures of a system as well as sound samples that demonstrate different SNRs. There are four fifteen second sound samples recorded at different signal to noise ratios using multi-talker babble. These samples can be played rapidly and demonstrate the benefit of improved signal to noise ratios



*Figure 3 Personal FM systems screen with sound samples and figures.*

- The final section is composed of printable high-resolution fact sheets in the form of pdf documents that can be viewed on the computer and printed out for personal use. See Figure 4. These include:



*Figure 4 Printable high-resolution pdf documents*

- Two documents for parents and professionals that summarize APD and ADHD, and the use of personal FM systems in the classroom. These documents summarize the information from the first two sections of the tool.
- One document that is intended for audiologists. This is a step-by-step guide for audiologists that wish to deploy a personal FM system in the classroom. This document talks about APD profiles and gives specific recommendations for tests and post treatment tools to insure personal FM system success in the classroom.
- A four-color brochure for parents with a child that is going to see the audiologist for APD testing. This document takes a step-by-step approach to informing

parents about APD testing and is an excellent source for preparing parents for the visit to the audiologist's office.

- A final document in the form of a parent tip sheet with strategies to use in the home. This is a general tip sheet and should be supplemented with specific instructions by the audiologist following the diagnostic APD evaluation.

There is a final reference section with appropriate citations for the material presented in the tool. The reference section will allow the user to browse the Internet to view the citation links when available.

This software is provided free of charge at the author's web site can be downloaded at the following link: <http://www.hearingoffice.com/badown.htm>. The file size is approximately 7 mb's and was designed to run on computers using the Windows 95x or higher operating system. A list of computer system requirements is also posted at the link. Check back from time to time for updates that will be added as needed.

*Louis Du Brey is a private practice audiologist living in southern Oregon. He is also the owner of the Hearing Office Software Company and creates software programs for the hearing health care industry. Presently he is completing the AuD degree through the distance-learning program at ASHS. This tool was created as part of project while enrolled in AUD 751, Assessment of Central Auditory Processing.*