Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS)

What is CdLS?
- A genetic condition that affects genes during prenatal development
- Physical features include: thin, connected eyebrows; long eyelashes; low-set ears; short, upturned nose; thin lips; cleft palate
- Two subtypes: classical and mild
- Also known as Brachmann de Lange Syndrome

Communication in CdLS
- Delays in language development often seen in expressive language skills, syntax, grammar, vocabulary
- Characterized by limited number of words used, attempts to communicate, turn-taking, eye contact
  - **Classical subtype:**
    - Mostly nonverbal
    - Can learn gestures and sign language
    - May benefit from augmentative and alternative communication
  - **Mild subtype:**
    - Often can learn to speak in sentences with speech-language therapy
    - Exhibit poor grammatical skills even with a high vocabulary
  - **Both subtypes:**
    - Are recommended to begin intervention services as early as possible
    - Have higher language comprehension than production

Common Medical, Behavioral, and Intellectual Difficulties

**Medical**
- Low birthweight
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), which affects digestion
- Heart defects
- Seizures
- Feeding difficulties
- Vision/hearing impairments
- Limb abnormalities

**Behavioral & Intellectual**
- Intellectual disability
- Anxiety/Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Self-injury
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Autistic behaviors

For more information, visit:
http://www.asha.org/
http://www.cdlsusa.org/
Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS)

Speech-Language Therapy for Children with CdLS

- Limited clinical research, but the following techniques are often used:
  - Enhanced Milieu Teaching: child-directed play that adapts the surroundings and toys the child has access to in order to facilitate communication
  - Augmentative and Alternative Communication: use of speech-generating devices, communication boards, or picture cards to facilitate communication
  - Broadcast talk: talking about what the child is doing in order to provide an appropriate model of language
  - Gesture integration: use of gestures to communicate basic needs
  - Positive reinforcements: objects like food and toys that are given when the child demonstrates appropriate behaviors

Therapy within Educational Setting

- Use of an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) with a multidisciplinary team to help the child receive support from multiple areas of intervention

- Important factors to consider:
  - Classroom modifications (e.g., use of a sound amplification system such as an FM system)
  - Curriculum modifications (e.g., simplified instructions, increased use of visual aids)
  - Playtime modifications that promote turn-taking and communication with peers

For more information, visit:
http://www.asha.org/
http://www.cdlsusa.org/