



## **Getting Speech Started: Critical Skills to Support Echoic Behavior**

*Barbara Esch PhD, BCBA-D, CCC-SLP  
Esch Behavioral Consultants LLC*

Successful echoic repertoires support speech acquisition. However, many professionals are unsure of the basic vocal skills that must be in place for speech to move from early random speech practice (i.e., babbling) to multisyllabic utterances that can be reinforced as verbal operants. As a result, it may be challenging for practitioners to select appropriate topographies for VB training. Dr. Esch will discuss these early vocal skills needed for speech learning and how to use the Early Echoic Skills Assessment (EESA, Esch, 2008) to inform speech program planning.