



What is Speech Therapy?

Speech–Language Therapy focuses on receptive language, or the ability to understand words spoken to you, and expressive language, or the ability to use words to express yourself. Speech Therapy also deals with the mechanics of producing sounds or words, such as articulation, pitch, fluency, and volume. For children, Speech Therapy generally involves pursuing language milestones that have been delayed. Speech–Language Pathologists work to find fun activities to strengthen a child’s abilities while working on their areas of weakness.

Who are the Alternatives For Children Speech–Language Pathologists?

Educated at the Masters or Doctoral level, certified by the American Speech–Language–Hearing Association, and licensed by NYS, our Speech–Language Pathologists are trained to address all areas of speech and language development. Our Sequential Oral Sensory trained Speech–Language Pathologists are able to utilize this program for the treatment of problem eaters. Our PROMPT trained Speech–Language Pathologists use a multidimensional, multi-sensory therapeutic system that is recognized for its use of tactile – kinesthetic articulatory cues that help to develop or restructure speech production.

Speech/Language Developmental Milestones

From 3 Months on – The first thing to look for – even before children become toddlers – is eye contact and strong social skills.

By 6 Months – a baby should be babbling, carrying on and having conversations in "baby talk".

By 9 Months – parents should hear the changing consonants in the baby’s speech.

By 18 Months – children should be using 10–20 words and should be able to follow directions, such as "get the ball," and be producing short sentences.

Common Issues Addressed by Speech Therapy

<i>Articulation</i>	<i>Stuttering</i>
<i>Phonology</i>	<i>Apraxia</i>
<i>Language Disorders</i>	<i>Feeding Issues</i>
<i>Swallowing Issues</i>	<i>Phonemic Awareness</i>
<i>Cleft Palate</i>	<i>Aphasia</i>
<i>Pragmatic Language</i>	<i>Voice Disorders</i>

Speech–Language Pathologists also treat children with hearing loss.

Speech–Language Pathologists work with children who are nonverbal using picture systems (PECS) and other Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC) systems.

What are feeding and swallowing disorders?

Feeding disorders include problems organizing food in the mouth and getting ready to suck, chew, or swallow. For example, a child who cannot use their tongue to move food around the mouth or stuffs too much food into the mouth, may have a feeding disorder. Children with a severely limited food repertoire and/or aversion to entire food groups may have a feeding disorder. Swallowing disorders, also called dysphagia can occur at different stages in the swallowing process.

To address feeding and swallowing disorders a Speech-Language Pathologist will focus on interventions that may include the following:

- **Making the muscles of the mouth stronger**
- **Increasing tongue movement**
- **Improving chewing**
- **Increasing acceptance of different foods and liquids**
- **Improving sucking and/or drinking ability**
- **Coordinating the suck-swallow-breath pattern for infants**
- **Altering food textures and liquid thickness to ensure safe swallowing**

What is a language disorder?

A language disorder is any difficulty in the ability to understand and/or use words in context, both verbally and nonverbally. Children with learning disabilities or developmental language delays may have trouble getting others to understand what they are trying to communicate. They may also have difficulties understanding what others are saying to them.

Some characteristics of language disorders include:

- **Improper use of words and their meanings**
- **Inability to express ideas**
- **Inappropriate grammatical patterns**
- **Reduced vocabulary**
- **Inability to follow directions**
- **Poor development of wh questions – use and comprehension**
- **Word retrieval difficulty**

What is a speech disorder?

Speech disorders refer to difficulties producing speech sounds or problems with voice quality. They might be characterized by an interruption in the flow or rhythm of speech, such as stuttering, which is called dysfluency. Speech disorders may be problems with the way sounds are formed, called articulation or phonological disorders. Or, they may be difficulties with the pitch, volume or quality of the voice. There may be a combination of several problems. Listeners may have trouble understanding what a child with a speech disorder is trying to say or communicate.

**For information, or if you have questions about Speech/Language Therapy
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