



PHOENIX CENTRE

Speech-Language Therapy

An Information Handout

By Tarryn Stevens

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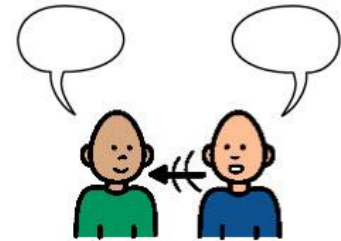
Speech-Language Pathologist and Audiologist at the school
BA Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology



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What is Speech-Language Therapy?

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs), often informally known as speech therapists, are professionals educated in the study of human communication, its development, and its disorders. All SLPs have to register with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).



SLPs assess speech, language, cognitive-communication, and oral/feeding/swallowing skills to identify types of communication problems (articulation; fluency; voice; receptive and expressive language disorders, etc.) and the best way to treat them.

In speech-language therapy, an SLP will work with a child one-on-one, in a small group, or directly in a classroom to overcome difficulties involved with a specific disorder.

Therapists use a variety of strategies, including:

- Language intervention activities
- Articulation therapy
- Oral-motor/feeding/swallowing therapy



When Is Therapy Needed?

Some children might require speech-language therapy for a variety of reasons, including:

- Hearing impairments: your child struggles to; follow verbal instructions, localize sounds in his/her environment, respond to voices, does not speak clearly etc.
- Cognitive (intellectual, thinking) or other developmental delays
- Weak oral muscles: your child's mouth hangs open in resting position, excessive drooling/spilling during drinking/eating, excessive coughing/choking during eating/drinking etc.

- Chronic hoarseness
- Birth defects such as cleft lip or cleft palate
- Your child has been diagnosed with autism, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome or any other syndrome/developmental delay
- Motor planning problems
- Stutter: sound repetitions, whole word repetitions etc.
- Respiratory problems (breathing disorders)
- Feeding and swallowing disorders
- Traumatic brain injury (TBI)



Therapy should begin as soon as possible. Children enrolled in therapy early (before they're 5 years old) tend to have **better outcomes** than those who begin therapy later.



Note: **Please** pay attention to the advice of your child's class teacher and their concerns. Seeking help is not a weakness. By addressing possible developmental delays or hearing difficulties as soon as possible, you are enabling your child instead of disabling them.

Parental involvement is **crucial to the success** of a child's progress in speech or language therapy.

Parents are an **extremely important** part of their child's therapy program and help determine whether it is a success. Kids who complete the program quickest and with the longest-lasting results are **those whose parents have been involved**.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to obtain more information about the above or discuss a possible concern that you have with regard to your child.

The actions you take NOW matter and help determine your child's future!