



What is speech therapy?

Speech therapy is a professional service to help individuals with communication skills. Hospital based speech therapy may also include feeding and swallowing.

Speech therapy is supervised by highly qualified speech-language pathologists (SLP), who have a graduate degree in the field and have received years of special training. Speech therapy itself may be implemented directly by the speech pathologist, or by a licensed SLP-Assistant.

Within the school setting, the most common areas of speech therapy include:

Articulation: Students who are incorrectly pronouncing developmentally appropriate speech sounds may receive speech therapy. This therapy focuses on teaching correct tongue, lip, and mouth placement.

Language: Students who struggle with age appropriate vocabulary and grammar (not due to a second language) may receive speech therapy. This therapy may include direct instruction in asking/answering questions, learning new words, using correct grammar, and/or retelling stories with correct sequence of events.

Pragmatics: Students with Autism or other social language difficulties may need speech therapy to work on social skills, taking turns in a conversation, learning appropriate ways to interact with others, and problem solving.

Communication: Students with profound communication difficulties, such as the inability to use verbal words, need speech therapy to help others understand them. Alternate communication may be taught including sign language, use of a communication board, or even technology.



How to help your child in speech therapy

My goal as a speech therapist to help your child be independent in their speech and language skills! As a coach, I can only teach the initial skills and provide feedback. Your child must practice these skills daily until they are mastered. Imagine a basketball coach. The coach can tell the players how to shoot the ball, but the players must spend hours, days and sometimes years practicing.

How to help your student with their speech homework:

Many students receive weekly homework. If you find speech homework in their backpacks, practice aloud and check off each item that you did. Then sign and have your child return the homework to me for "speech money." The goal of the homework is to foster practice at home and incorporate these good practices into daily family life. In case you are wondering if your child has been turning in his/her homework, just ask. I keep track of who has returned the assignments.

Additional ways to help your child's speech and language skills:

1. Model good speech and language all of the time. Overemphasize the sounds that your child is working on.
2. Use higher level vocabulary and then explain what the word means.
3. Read aloud with your child and make comments about what you think might happen, or what you are thinking about the text. Ask them open-ended questions such as, "Why do you think he did that?" "What do you think will happen next?" At the end of the story, have them retell the story.
4. Give wait time. Do not expect your child to answer a question right away. Count slowly in your head. Some children require up to 10 second of thinking time before they answer!
5. Have as many face to face questions as possible. Don't put a screen between you and your child. Tell them about your day and encourage them to speak up.



25 ways to ask kids about their day

1. Tell me something exciting that happened today.
2. Who are three people that you talked to today?
3. What did you (will you) eat for lunch/snack today?
4. What did you play at recess?
5. If I walked into the classroom, what would I see?
6. What was one thing you wish your teacher did differently?
7. What made you laugh today?
8. Tell me about something that made you angry today.
9. Who was nicest to you today?
10. Tell about one thing the teacher said today.
11. How many people have you talked to today?
12. Tell me a story about today.
13. If you could play more at recess, what would you do?
14. Tell me about one paper that you had at your desk.
15. Name two teachers that you saw today.
16. Where did you walk to within the school today?
17. Tell me something you did outside today.
18. Did you use markers or crayons today? What did you do?
19. When were you bored today?
20. What made you mad today?
21. How many times did you wash your hands today?
22. What happened today that made you feel frustrated?
23. What classroom jobs did you have today?
24. If you did today over, what would be different?
25. What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

Why do I need to practice my speech every day?

A handout for students, teachers, and families

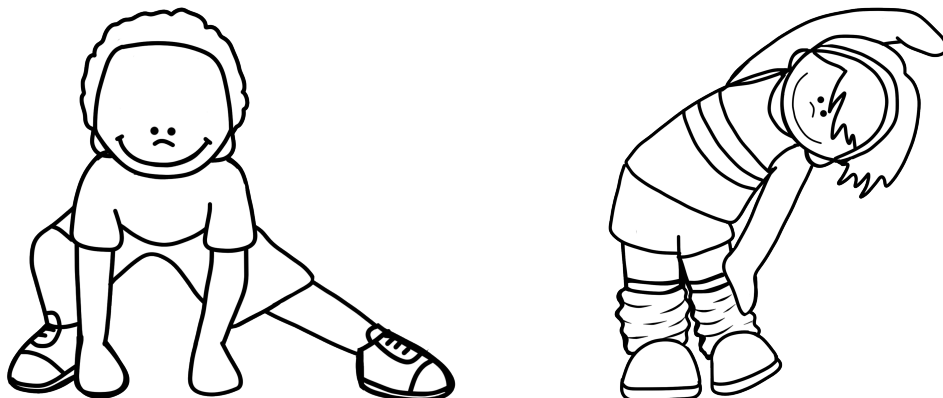
Learning to speak requires the use of many important parts of your body including your brain, nerves, and muscles. It took you a long time to learn how to talk and it may take a while to learn how to correctly say your sounds. Only YOU can help this process go faster and smoother.

Imagine that you are training for a sport. You have a coach and you practice one or more times per week. Your coach wants you to improve and get better, but they cannot follow you around all day correcting your walking, posture, and strength. Only you can do that. That is your job as an athlete! The more you practice, the better you will become! Champion athletes practice for hours every single day.

Like a coach, the speech therapist's job is to teach you how to make your sounds correctly. However, only you can practice these sounds every time you speak. Each time you correctly practice your new skill, you are teaching your brain and muscles how to make this sound! Soon it will become as natural as walking! The speech therapist wants you to become the champion athlete of your sound. That means that you must practice every single day!

What will happen if you don't practice? If you don't practice it will take your brain and mouth muscles much longer to learn how to use your correct sounds. Learning a new speech skill (just like an athletic skill) takes time, energy, patience, and PRACTICE.

You can do it! Train like a champ and get those sounds up to champion standards!



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Learning to speak requires the use of many important parts of your body including your brain, nerves, and muscles. It took you a long time to learn how to talk and it may take a while to learn how to correctly say your sounds. Only YOU can help this process go faster and smoother.

Imagine that your teacher is teaching you how to add numbers. She tells you that $5 + 5 = 10$ and you repeat it back to her in class. Then you go to the playground and home and tell everyone that you know that $5 + 5 = 12$. You are not practicing your new knowledge at all and are making the learning process much more difficult. Now imagine that you instead tell everyone you know the correct answer. Soon, that will be automatic and you will no longer need to think about it at all! You have learned a new skill and it automatic for you now!

Like a teacher, the speech therapist's job is help you learn the new skill of speech sounds. However, only you can practice these sounds every time you speak. Each time you correctly practice your new skill, you are teaching your brain and muscles how to make this sound! Soon it will become as natural as adding $5 + 5$! The speech therapist wants you to be a star student of your sound. That means that you must practice every single day!

You can do it! Practice like a star with people at home and school and soon your sounds will be simple for you!

