



WHAT IS SPEECH THERAPY?



Speech therapy in the schools usually includes evaluation and treatment for children with communication disabilities. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are trained medical and educational professionals with a masters degrees (or higher) and a specialized national certification.

Speech therapy is intended to be a therapy service that is provided in short intensive sessions (such as in a separate, small group), and then reinforced and practiced in the classroom and at home for carry-over of skills.

Communication disorders that the SLP evaluates and treats include:

- Understanding language – understanding word meaning, answering questions or following directions, knowing how words go together
- Expressing language – using appropriate vocabulary, combining words grammatically, stating word relationships
- Speech sounds – producing developmentally appropriate sounds and syllables
- Voice disorders – biological differences in the vocal cords
- Social communication – using socially appropriate skills in conversations and non-verbal communication
- Stuttering – repeating or getting “stuck” on sounds or syllables within words and sentences

Speech therapy is an important and often life-changing means of helping children communicate better and lead fuller lives.