

Information Resources

American Speech Language Hearing Association

www.asha.org

Michigan Speech Language Hearing Association

www.michiganspeechhearing.org

Stuttering Foundation

www.stutteringhelp.org

Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America

www.apraxia-kids.org

Northern Michigan Helping Hands

www.nmhelpinghands.org



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**Speech-
Language
Services**

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**Special Education
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Speech and Language Services

Who is a Speech and Language Pathologist?

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) are professionals who specialize in evaluating, diagnosing and treating speech and language disorders. For eligible students, SLPs provide therapy to address the following skills:

Language: The area of language is broad. It includes both receptive and expressive language skills. Receptive skills are the ability to understand spoken language. Expressive skills are the ability to use spoken language to communicate.

Articulation: The production of sounds that make up words is called articulation. Students who have difficulty making sounds correctly or substitute one sound for another may be hard to understand.

Fluency: When people speak "fluently" their speech flows easily. A dysfluency is a break in the smooth, meaningful flow of speech, and may be referred to as stuttering or cluttering.

Voice: Misuse of the voice can cause serious problems for a student. If the voice is misused it may lead to a constant hoarse voice or partial loss of voice.

In addition, SLPs can assist students with severe communication deficits through Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies such as gesture systems, visual aids and communication devices.

Who is Eligible?

Students who demonstrate speech and/or language deficits that interfere with their ability to benefit from education may be eligible for services.

How is Eligibility Determined?

If a parent or teacher has concerns about a student's speech-language development, these concerns may be discussed at a child study or student assistance team meeting. The school SLP can share information on speech-language development and suggest strategies to enhance communication skills at home and school.

If difficulties persist and interfere with education, a speech-language evaluation may be recommended. This evaluation typically includes formal and informal assessments, classroom observations, and input from parents and teachers. When the evaluation is completed, an Individualized Education Plan Team (IEPT) meeting is held with parents and teachers to determine if the student is eligible to receive speech-language services.

Credentials of a Speech and Language Pathologist

SLPs are college graduates with a masters degree and training in schools, hospitals and/or clinics. School-based SLPs are certified by the Michigan Department of Education and/or the American Speech Language Hearing Association.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do school-based speech-language services differ from hospital or clinic-based services?

To receive speech-language services at school a student's disability must adversely effect educational performance. School-based services are designed for and aligned with learning and accessing the school curriculum.

How can speech-language deficits affect a student's education? Learning takes place through the process of communication speaking, listening, reading and writing. Speech and language skills are critical to success at school and can effect a student's ability to:

- Be understood by others
- Understand what is being taught
- Acquire adequate literacy skills
- Develop positive social interactions and self-esteem
- Maintain grade level progress in all areas of the curriculum

How are speech-language services provided at school? If a student is found eligible to receive services through an IEP, direct and/or indirect speech-language services can be provided. Direct services may include individual, small group or classroom-based therapy. Indirect services may include consulting with teachers, conducting classroom observations, working with parents, and participating on student assistance teams.