

Speech-Language Pathology Services

Who are the professionals that make up Speech-language Pathology Services?

- The GECDsB has a staff consisting of a Supervisor of Psychological Services and Speech and Language Services, registered Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs) and Communicative Disorders Assistants (CDAs). CDAs are supervised by S-LPs.
- S-LPs are professionals whose practice is controlled in Ontario by the Regulated Health Professions Act and the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Act.
- S-LPs have specialized knowledge and skills in speech, language and communication development and disorders, and are key members of interdisciplinary educational teams.
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Why are Speech-language Pathologists necessary within an educational setting?

- Effective communication skills support students in accessing the curriculum, getting along socially with others, and participating in school. The ability of students to understand and use oral and written communication will affect their academic, social, and vocational success.
- Approximately 10% of school-age children have speech and language delays or disorders which vary in nature and severity. Speech-language disorders often co-exist with other disabilities such as autism, learning disabilities, developmental delays, behaviour difficulties, and hearing loss.
- S-LPs assist educators in understanding the communication needs of students and the interrelationships between listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Together with educators, S-LPs develop curriculum-based strategies to address the language-learning needs of students in the classroom.

How are the services offered?

- The S-LPs have regular scheduled times in schools and are integral members of the special education services team in schools.
- An emphasis by S-LP Services is placed on prevention and early identification of communication disorders as well as with students presenting with communication disorders in the kindergarten and grade 1 programs.
- The classroom educators, including the SLP, collaborate and determine which students might need collaborative support beyond grade 1.

What services do Speech-Language Pathologists provide?

With parental/guardian consent:

- Consultation with educators, parents, community agencies to assist students experiencing language, literacy, social communication, and speech difficulties at school.
- Assessment of a student including discussion with parent(s) and school staff, observation of the student, review of school records/history, and individual informal and formal (standardized) testing.
- Intervention services including individual and small group therapy, classroom-based support, and home/school practice materials.
- Collaboration with parents, school-based teams, administrators, professional learning communities, and community partners.
- Referrals to community agencies for specialized services.

When should a student be discussed with the Speech-language Pathologist?

A referral to S-LP Services is discussed at a school support team meeting so that a student's speech and language needs may be considered within the broader context of the student's educational needs. Please contact your teacher or school principal if you have concerns regarding your child:

- Following directions
- Understanding classroom conversations
- Understanding and retelling stories
- Playing and socializing with peers
- Organizing ideas sequentially
- Using appropriate vocabulary, word order, grammar
- Speaking on topic
- Learning sound skills necessary to read and write
- Speaking clearly and/or fluently

Supporting Your Child's Oral Vocabulary and Language Development

Parents have considerable influence over their child's language and brain development simply by engaging them in conversation!

- Add words to your child's sentences to make them more complete. For example: "Girl eat pancake." can become "The girl is eating pancakes for breakfast."
- Provide many opportunities for your child to hear and say new words across the day including outside activities such as playing at the park, shopping in a store, driving in a car, bathing, eating a meal, etc.
- Get on the floor and play with your child. Comment on what you are doing and what your child is doing.
- Choose toys that inspire creativity and conversation. Age-appropriate craft supplies, dress up props, building blocks, and play dough keep children busy and provide opportunities for parents to model great language.
- Create "tech-free" time as technology, screen time, and television limit conversations and interactions.
- Model correct speech sounds for your child. Encourage your child to imitate the correct sound while looking at your mouth.

Supporting Your Child's Reading & Writing

Reading and sharing stories is not just for bedtime, consider reading or telling stories to your child throughout the day!

- Read stories together with your child. Have your child describe the pictures. Ask your child what was his/her favourite part.
- Read alphabet books and talk about the letter names and what sounds they make.
- Play with magnetic letters or make letters out of play dough or cereal. Talk about the letters and the sounds they make with your child.
- Provide a variety of writing tools such as crayons, markers, coloured pencils and chalk and encourage your child to be creative, draw pictures and try to write words. You can write down what your child is saying.
- Let your child help you write out shopping lists, notes, letters, menus, etc. It is OK if your child scribbles and draws pictures!
- Point out and read print in the environment such as store names, signs, and labels.