

Program Overview

The emphasis for speech-language services is on early intervention. S-LPs may provide direct or indirect service to a student depending on the student's communication needs.

The selection of students for direct therapy is dependent on a number of variables including the type and severity of the student's communication needs and the availability of support both at home and at school for the student.

Consultation/indirect service may take the form of attending Individual Program Planning (IPP) Team meetings, home programs, Program Support Assistant training, collaboration with outside agencies, transition planning and team teaching.

Referral Process

Students may be referred for speech-language services by schools, parents, and/or outside agencies or may be identified through pre-primary screening.

Referrals are received through the program planning process at the student's school. Junior and senior high referrals must be approved at the school level and then be brought forward to the Community of Schools. Parental consent is required for assessments and treatment.

Speech-Language Services for Students with Special Needs

All S-LPs work directly with the program planning teams of those students from P – 12 with severe speech and language disorders (e.g. non-verbal, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome). They may be involved in working directly with students with special needs, consulting regarding program planning for students with special needs, and assessing, monitoring and evaluating program goals for students with special needs.



Speech- Language Pathology Services

Who are Speech-Language Pathologists?

Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs) are employed by school boards to provide service to school-age students within their boards. S-LPs have a Master's degree in Communication Disorders.

S-LPs specialize in the assessment and treatment of articulation and/or language disorders and other communication difficulties.

S-LPs work with assigned schools on an itinerant basis offering direct therapy to students on a regular basis.

The Role of the S-LP

S-LPs provide direct/indirect speech-language services to students and collaborate with teacher(s), parents/guardians in developing and/or implementing speech and language programming.

Types of Speech-Language Disorders

- **Articulation/Phonology:** difficulty producing certain speech sounds (e.g. 'tar' for 'car').
- **Language:** difficulty understanding and/or using language (e.g. difficulty following directions, understanding meaning, uses improper grammar, difficulty expressing him/herself).
- **Pragmatics/Social Skills:** difficulty with turn taking, getting along with others, and with social language skills (e.g. topic maintenance).
- **Voice:** unusual high/low pitch for the student's age, monotone, consistently hoarse, or nasal/denasal voice quality.
- **Fluency (Stuttering):** difficulty controlling the fluency and rate of speech (e.g. consistently repeating sounds and/or parts of words).
- **Phonological Awareness/Literacy:** difficulty decoding (sounding out) words, rhyming, sound-letter correspondence, segmenting, blending, and spelling.
- **Hearing:** difficulty producing sounds, using and/or understanding language due to hearing related difficulties (i.e. hearing loss, cochlear implant). S-LPs are able to perform hearing screenings.

Augmentative/Alternative Communication: **using another mode than speech to communicate (e.g. Picture Exchange Communication System, voice output device, sign language).**

Responsibilities of the S-LP

- S-LPs work collaboratively with Student Services staff, Student Development Coordinators, principals and teachers in developing appropriate programming for students with speech-language difficulties.
- S-LPs conduct an assessment of the individual student's speech, language and communication needs.
- S-LPs consult/collaborate with Program Planning Teams (including parents/guardians) in developing Individual Program Plans (IPPs), Instructional Adaptations (IAs), Behavioural Modified Plans (BMPs), and Transition Planning.
- S-LPs provide direct/indirect service to students through speech and/or language therapy and alternate communication methods.
- S-LPs consult with Program Support Teachers and classroom teachers. Programming suggestions/materials may be provided to parents, teachers, and school staff.
- S-LPs collaborate with Supporting Early Literacy Learners (SELL) teams by conducting phonological awareness screenings during pre-primary screenings and by sharing results and resources with teachers.
- S-LPs conduct pre-primary screenings in conjunction with Health Services to ensure early identification of students.