

Something BIG is happening at The Swain Center!

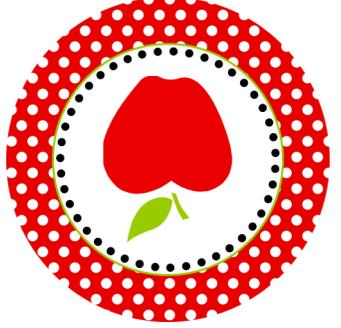
FastForWord®: FastForWord® is a computer-based intervention program that dramatically improves language and reading achievement. It is unique from other reading interventions in that it employs the principles of neuroscience to address the underlying causes of reading difficulties by strengthening the key pathways in the brain that enable children to learn. This approach enhances reading and language skills while simultaneously helping a child build core cognitive skills including memory, attention, processing rate and sequencing. FastForWord® accelerates the learning process and can result in 1-2 years of improvement in overall literacy in 4 to 12 weeks. The program is tailored to fit the specific needs of every client. Each learner is placed at the appropriate starting level and follows a differentiated learning path that adapts to every single response ensuring individualized quality instruction. Over 30 years of extensive research into how the brain learns and 250 studies have repeatedly proven that FastForWord® helps build the skills essential for success in reading and language.

Providing Speech-Language Pathology Services to Adults and Children Since 1985

May 4th - 8th is Teacher Appreciation Week!

Don't forget to show your teachers how much you appreciate all they have done for your child this year! These "Thanks for being a berry great teacher" berry packs are adorable and delicious! You can even print out these cards if you visit:

<http://sistersuitcaseblog.com/2013/05/teacher-gift-using-project-life-cards.html>

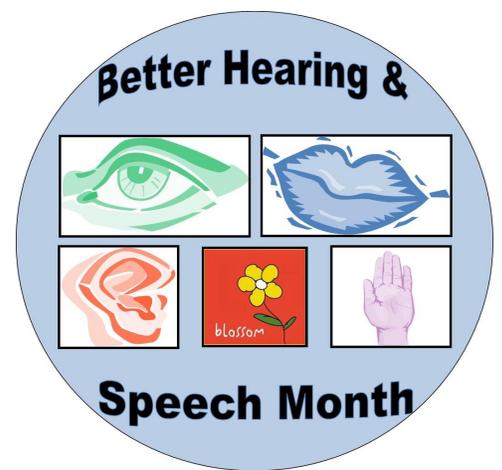
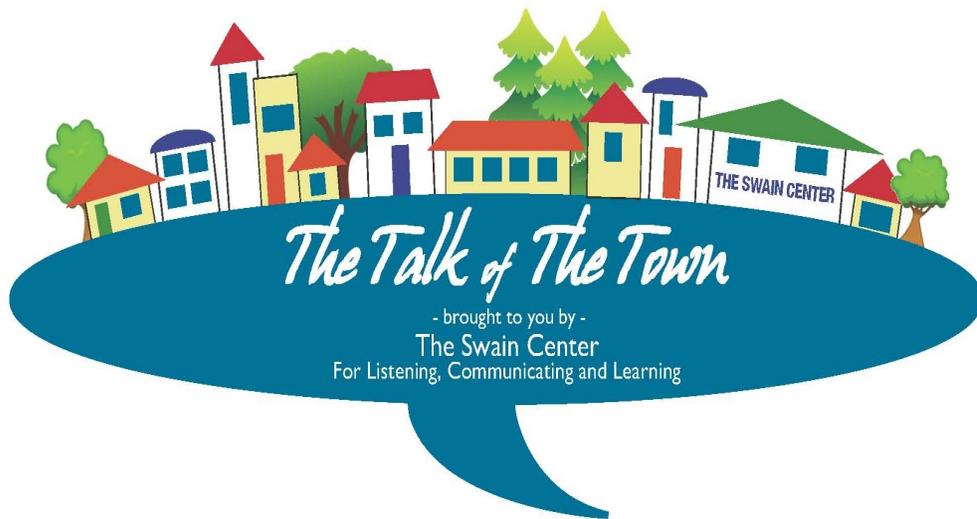


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Listening, Communicating and Learning



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MAY The month of May is also known as **Better Hearing & Speech Month!** Hearing and speech are directly linked to how we communicate and learn. It's important as parents, teachers and individuals that we educate ourselves on these links and seek to help those around us improve!

10 Ways a Speech-Language Pathologist Can Help Your Child

By Katie Yeh

Speech-Language Pathologist. Speech Pathologist. Speech Teacher. Known by many names, people refer to these specialists most often as speech therapists. They work with children with a variety of delays and disorders spanning from mild articulation delays to more complex disorders such as autism, Down syndrome, hearing impairment, motor speech disorders, and other developmental delays.



SLP's, as they are called for short, are the specialists that help your child with speech, talking and communication. However you may be surprised at how broad this field of speech-language pathology really is and just how many skill areas SLPs are trained to build and expand in young children.

An SLP can help your child with...

1. Articulation Skills/Speech Intelligibility

Articulation is the physical ability to move the tongue, lips, jaw and palate (known as the articulators) to produce individual speech sounds which we call phonemes. For example, to articulate the /b/ sound, we need to inhale, then while exhaling we need to turn our voice on, bring our slightly tensed lips together to stop and build up the airflow, and then release the airflow by parting our lips.

2. Expressive Language Skills

Expressive language then, refers to what your child says. Speech-language pathologists can help your child learn new words and how to put them together to form phrases and sentences (semantics and syntax) so that your child can communicate to you and others.

3. Receptive Language/Listening Skills

Receptive language refers to your child's ability to listen and understand language. Most often, young children have stronger receptive language skills (what they understand) than expressive language skills (what they can say). An SLP can help teach your child new vocabulary and how to use that knowledge to follow directions, answer questions, and participate in simple conversations with others.

4. Speech Fluency/Stuttering

Stuttering is a communication disorder that affects speech fluency. It is characterized by breaks in the flow of speech referred to as disfluencies and typically begins in childhood. Everyone experiences disfluencies in their speech. Some disfluencies are totally normal but having too many can actually significantly affect one's ability to communicate. SLP's can teach your child strategies on how to control this behavior thus increasing his speech fluency and intelligibility.

5. Voice and Resonance

Voice disorders refer to disorders that affect the vocal folds that allow us to have a voice. These can include vocal cord paralysis, nodules or polyps on the vocal folds, and other disorders that can cause hoarseness or aphonia (loss of voice).

Resonance refers to "the quality of the voice that is determined by the balance of sound vibration in the oral, nasal, and pharyngeal cavities during speech. Abnormal resonance can occur if there is obstruction in one of the cavities, causing hyponasality or cul-de-sac resonance, or if there is velopharyngeal dysfunction (VPD), causing hypernasality and/or nasal emission." Speech-language pathologists with experience in voice and resonance disorders can work with children to decrease these behaviors and repair the strain/damage of the folds.

6. Social/Pragmatic Language

Social/pragmatic language refers to the way an individual uses language to communicate and involves three major communication skills: **using language to communicate in different ways** (like greeting others, requesting, protesting, asking questions to gain information, etc.), **changing language according to the people or place it is being used** (i.e. we speak differently to a child than we do to an adult; we speak differently inside vs. outside), and **following**

the rules for conversation (taking turns in conversation, staying on topic, using and understanding verbal and nonverbal cues, etc.).

SLP's can work with your child to teach them these social language skills so that they can more appropriately participate in conversations with others.

7. Cognitive-Communication Skills

Cognitive-communication disorders refer to the impairment of cognitive processes including attention, memory, abstract reasoning, awareness, and executive functions (self-monitoring, planning and problem solving). These can be developmental in nature (meaning the child is born with these deficits) or can be acquired due to a head injury, stroke, or degenerative diseases. SLP's can work with your child to help build these skills and/or teach your child compensatory methods to assist them with their deficits.

8. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication, also known simply as AAC, refers to "...all forms of communication (other than oral speech) that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas.

We all use AAC when we make facial expressions or gestures, use symbols or pictures, or write" (ASHA Website). When SLP's are working with children, our number one goal is always *communication*. Sometimes, a child may have such a severe delay/disorder that traditional oral speech is not possible or is not practical. In these circumstances, an SLP may work with a child and his family to come up with an AAC system to use instead of, or along side of, speech.

9. Swallowing/Feeding Issues

Speech-language pathologists, believe it or not, can be trained in pediatric swallowing and feeding issues in addition to speech and language issues. This is because, as SLP's, they have intimate knowledge of the structures and functions of the oral cavities and beyond. In fact, some SLP's have training in myofunctional disorders including tongue thrust.

10. Educating and Empowering YOU on how to best help your child.

*Hands down, the best thing an SLP can do for your child, is to **educate you and empower you on how to best help your child**.* A speech-language pathologist may spend an hour or so a week with your child, but you spend hours and hours a week interacting with your child. You wake your child, get him ready for his day, read to him, talk to him, bathe him, and put him down to sleep at night. It is during these everyday routines that your child is learning the most and is given the most opportunities to communicate.

For the extended version of this article, please visit:
<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/>