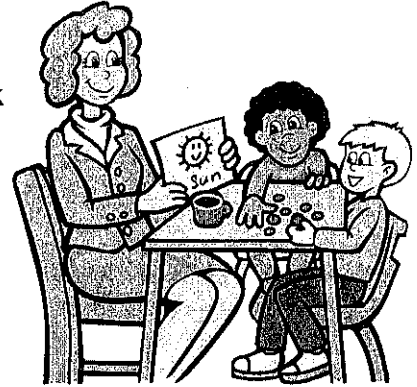


What Is a Speech-Language Pathologist?

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A *speech-language pathologist* (SLP) is a highly-trained professional who evaluates and treats children and adults who have difficulty with speech or language. Although people often think of speech and language as the same thing, the terms actually have very different meanings. If your child has trouble with *speech*, he/she struggles with the “how-to” of talking—the coordination of the muscles and movements necessary to produce speech. If your child has trouble with *language*, he/she struggles with understanding what he/she hears or sees. Your child may struggle to find the right words and/or organize those words in a meaningful way to communicate a message or hold a conversation.



An SLP also evaluates and treats children and adults who have difficulty swallowing food or liquid. An SLP will help identify what part of the *swallowing process* is making it difficult for your child to eat (e.g., chewing, manipulating food with the tongue, coordinating mouth and throat structures and muscles, breathing appropriately while eating).

What Do SLPs Treat?

Below is a list of common speech and language disorders with a brief explanation of each.

Speech Disorders

- *Articulation* - the way we say our speech sounds
- *Phonology* - the speech patterns we use
- *Apraxia* - difficulty planning and coordinating the movements needed to make speech sounds
- *Fluency* - stuttering
- *Voice* - problems with the way the voice sounds, such as hoarseness

Language Disorders

- *Receptive Language* - difficulty understanding language
- *Expressive Language* - difficulty using language
- *Pragmatic Language* - social communication; the way we speak to each other

Other Disorders

- *Deafness/Hearing Loss* - loss of hearing; therapy includes developing lip-reading, speech, and/or alternative communication systems
- *Oral-Motor Disorders* - weak tongue and/or lip muscles
- *Swallowing/Feeding Disorders* - difficulty chewing and/or swallowing