

PEDIATRIC SPEECH THERAPY NEWSLETTER



SETTINGS FOR PEDIATRIC SLPs

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) have an exciting opportunity to work in a range of settings, including the client's home, hospitals, schools, private practices, outpatient clinics, or even large corporations. Due to the wide range of treatment areas that fall within the scope of practice for SLPs, the services and specialties might vary depending on the setting in which they work.



Pediatric SLPs frequently provide sessions in the client's home, as this is the child's natural environment where most of their learning takes place. SLPs who provide in-home sessions may work in a private practice or the early intervention system through the state for the "birth to 3 years" population. During in-home sessions, the SLP will work with the child one-on-one, and the parents or caregivers may observe the session to learn how to implement the strategies during daily routines. The SLP will typically leave time at the end of the session for a parent report to share more about what they targeted during the session, as well as the clinical rationale.

Pediatric SLPs may also work with children in the school setting. These may be one-on-one or group settings, depending on the structure of the school's speech therapy program. School-based SLPs may work with children to target a range of skills related to speech and language that may impact the child's success in the classroom. For example, they may focus on articulation to improve a child's intelligibility and ability to communicate with teachers and peers effectively.

Some children learn best in a clinic-based setting that is free of the distractions that may be present in the home or school setting (e.g., siblings, pets, classmates). Pediatric SLPs can also work in inpatient or outpatient medical settings.



WHAT DO SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS DO?: SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR PEDIATRIC SLPs

Individuals who are unfamiliar with the field of speech-language pathology may believe that speech-language pathologists (SLPs) only treat difficulty with articulation, or the pronunciation of certain speech sounds, such as /l/ or /s/. However, SLPs receive years of training to assess and treat individuals across the lifespan, from newborn to geriatric populations, for a range of speech, language, and swallowing or feeding concerns.

Some clinicians may specialize in a particular population, such as pediatric services. A pediatric SLP may have additional training or certification to work with children on early language milestones, expressive language (i.e., verbal and written communication), receptive language (i.e., comprehension and processing language), articulation (i.e., pronunciation of speech sounds), fluency, voice, or other areas of concern. As children reach school-age and begin reading and writing, SLPs may also work with children on literacy skills to ensure academic success.

...Continued On Page 2



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

p.2 Cover Story
p.2 Ask A Therapist
p.3 Spotlight

p.3 About Us
p.3 Additional Resources
p.4 Contact Us

ASK A THERAPIST



HOW CAN THE LANGUAGE EXPANSION STRATEGY HELP MY CHILD'S SPEECH?

Language expansion is a helpful strategy that pediatric speech-language pathologists (SLPs) often recommend for parents. Imagine your child says the word 'train' while playing with a train set together. Using the language expansion strategy, you would repeat back 'train' and add one or two words to the phrase, such as 'big blue train.'

By repeating back your child's original word and modeling a longer utterance, you can show your child how to create longer phrases. In the example of 'big, blue train,' your child also has a visual cue, as they can see the big, blue train.

Parents can use this strategy with children throughout the day by adding different types of words, including adjectives, pronouns, verbs, and locations.

For example, if you are getting ready to leave the house and your child says, 'shoes,' you could respond by saying, 'Put shoes on.' During snack time, if a child says, 'banana,' you could respond by saying, 'Want banana.'

As your child builds independence using two-word utterances, you can begin expanding utterances further. By using this strategy consistently, you can help your child expand their utterances and use longer phrases in their daily activities and routines. Over time, children will require less prompting and cueing from their parents as they gain independence.

APP OF THE MONTH:

Speech Blubs: Language Therapy

Ages 4+

Target Skills
Speech

About The App

This app offers a fun and engaging way to build important language skills!



What do SLPs Do?: Scope of Practice for Pediatric SLPs Continued...

SLPs also receive training to assess and treat concerns with feeding and swallowing. Children may experience challenges with feeding for a variety of reasons, ranging from issues with oral-motor skills (i.e., coordinating the muscles and movements for feeding) to sensory sensitivity (i.e., hyper-sensitivity or hypo-sensitivity to textures of food).



The structure of the individual speech therapy sessions can vary depending on many factors, including the child's age, areas of concern, interests, skill level, and more. For example, if a child experiences delays in expressive language, sessions with the SLP will focus on building verbal communication and non-verbal communication (e.g., signing, AAC devices).

Because children make the most progress when they are engaged and attentive, pediatric speech therapy sessions are often play-based to promote interest in the activities.

Due to the wide range of areas that SLPs treat and assess, they can work in many different settings, including private practices, hospitals, outpatient clinics, schools, and more. Many pediatric clinicians work with children in the home setting, as in-home sessions offer an excellent way for children to learn and generalize skills. It is not uncommon for SLPs to work in multiple settings with multiple client populations. This flexibility is one of the unique aspects of the field.

Some of the most critical aspects of pediatric speech therapy sessions are parent collaboration and home practice. SLPs are just one part of the child's care team, so parent involvement helps to promote the child's progress and carryover of skills that the SLP teaches during the individual sessions. Some SLPs may also provide specific homework or strategies that parents can use throughout the week.

Some children may receive other therapeutic services, such as occupational therapy or ABA therapy, so the SLP will collaborate with the multidisciplinary team of professionals to ensure consistency across all sessions. To meet the unique needs of the child, the team will develop an individualized care plan based on their individual strengths, areas of concern, and learning style. The treatment plan may also change over time as the child makes progress.

If you believe your child could benefit from a speech-and-language evaluation, you can contact your child's pediatrician or a local practice.

SPEECH THERAPY SPOTLIGHT

Debbie S. Lombardi, AuD, CCC-A/SLP

Debbie Lombardi is the owner and provider at Premiere Speech and Hearing with offices in Collegeville and Lancaster. Debbie has a license and certification to practice audiology and speech language pathology. She has worked in a variety of settings but loves private practice and the attention and care she can provide to the patients. Debbie provides services to both children and adults. She has expertise in the area of childhood speech and language development including articulation, language, auditory processing and aural rehabilitation. Audiologic areas of expertise include diagnostic evaluations, hearing aid fitting and service and assistive listening technology. Debbie is a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. In 2019 she will serve as the VP of Publications for the Pennsylvania Academy of Audiology.



Kristin Park, MS, CCC-SLP

Kristin Park is a certified and licensed clinical Speech-Language Pathologist. Kristin has had clinical experience in a variety of settings, but has extensive experience with childhood expressive and receptive language, fluency, and articulation disorders. In addition, she has expertise in the areas of cognitive rehabilitation, verbal apraxia, oral motor planning, and voice assessment and treatment. Kristin works with infants, school-age children and adults. Recently, Kristin completed a certification in the LSVT Loud program that is designed to treat patients with Parkinson's disease and other neurologic conditions. She is a member of the following organizations: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association.



Testimonials

"My experience for years has been nothing but excellent. Very knowledgeable and efficient." – Joe

"I have had a great experience with the people at this office. They are a great bunch of people. Love it here." – Cathy

"My son has been a client here for 2 year and we have seen an incredible improvement in his speech. Sue Levy makes therapy fun and exciting, and my son loves coming here!" – Jen

Would You Like Additional Copies of this Newsletter to give as a **FREE** Resource?



If so, email Debbie at:

dlombardi@PremiereSpeechHearing.com
Please include the address of your office & how many additional copies you would like.



Concerned About Your Speech or Hearing?

**Call us today
for a free consultation
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About Premiere Speech & Hearing: *Hear. Communicate. Live.*

Premiere Speech and Hearing provides superior services in a personalized, convenient, and caring environment. Our educated and experienced Doctors of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathologists are dedicated to the evaluation and treatment of hearing loss, tinnitus, speech, language, voice, fluency and cognitive disorders. Our efforts are designed to provide patients and their loved ones with advocacy, education, prevention, and rehabilitation services.

As we say, the goal is to *"Hear. Communicate. Live."*

Contact Premiere Speech & Hearing at www.PremiereSpeechHearing.com or call (610) 454-1177

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