

Communication Chronicles

A publication bringing speech/language tips to your inbox and more

Dialect vs Disorder

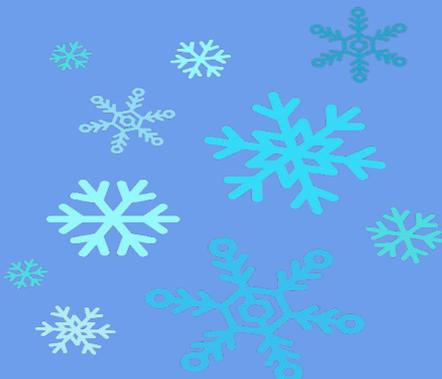
What is a speech sound disorder?

A speech sound disorder is the presence of a sound substitution, omission, distortion, or addition that should not be occurring at a given age.

What is a dialect?

A dialect is a specific form or a language known to a specific region or social group.

Did you know there are roughly 30 major dialects in the United States? Not all speech sound errors, such as sound substitutions or sound omissions, are the result of a speech disorder. These could be caused by a difference in dialect. A speech-language pathologist may use formal articulation testing to record sound productions and discern what sounds are typical or atypical to the child's dialect. This is how an SLP navigates through speech sound disorders and dialectal differences.



What's the Harm in a Little Cough?

It's that time of year when the classrooms are filled with a symphony of sniffles and coughs.

When we speak or sing, our vocal cords come together to produce sound. When we cough or throat clear, our vocal cords come together with a similar clapping force of a standing ovation. The cords are coming together at a rapid rate with much greater force. Prolonged periods of coughing and throat clearing can lead to swelling, irritation, and even lesions on the vocal cords. It also adds to greater sensitivity in the airway and can lead to even more coughing.

A cough is an action designed to keep the lungs clear of any substances that may be harmful, so it's healthy and necessary; however, if you can, try to avoid prolonged periods of coughing. Here are a couple of strategies to reduce the urge to cough:

1. Try initiating a hard swallow with or without a sip of water.
2. Try gargling a small amount of water while using your voice (Gargling is just as effective as a cough, but brings the vocal cords together with less force).

Teachers are more than twice as likely as non-teachers to have voice problems, so keeping the vocal cords healthy is important.

Did you know...

The smallest bone in the body is the stapes (also known as the stirrup), which is located in the ear and carries sound vibrations from the middle ear to the inner ear.



Teaching students with Autism

Is it Autistic Behavior or Misbehavior?

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition significantly affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction. It is characterized by a triad of symptoms, including social interaction, communication and the use of language, and in restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior and activities. Autism is a spectrum disorder, which means that symptoms and characteristics can manifest in a variety of combinations, and range from mild to severe.

When you have a student with autism in your classroom who exhibits challenging behavior, it's important to distinguish if the behaviors you're seeing are behaviors related to autism or true misbehavior.

Sometimes autistic behaviors can unintentionally cause significant issues. It's important to first identify what the challenging behaviors are, look for possible triggers resulting in the behaviors, and determine in what ways they can be addressed in the classroom.

Five Language Domains:

1. Phonology - Knowledge and use of individual phonemes.
2. Morphology - Knowledge and use of morphemes, which are the smallest meaningful units in language to shape words
3. Syntax - Knowledge and use of combining words to create various sentence structures
4. Semantics - Knowledge and use of word meanings and word relationships
5. Pragmatics - Knowledge and use of the rules associated with language used in social situations/conversation

We all use language for functional, social, and academic purposes. If a student is struggling in any of these language domains, it's going to negatively impact how he or she navigates through the academic school day. School-based speech services provide support in all of these domains, depending on the student's needs. The goal is to support access to instruction, by improving comprehension and use of language used in the classroom and during daily social interaction.

Strategies for Helping Your Speech impaired Students

While it is easy to think of Speech Impaired students as different from other EC students, they have to meet the same criteria in order to be determined eligible for IEP services. More than likely you will see some impact on classroom performance. Some simple accommodations implemented in class can go a long way to ensuring success.

Recommendations that may assist your students in classrooms:

1. Provide SLP with spelling/vocabulary list.
2. Shorten and/or modify oral directions.
3. Allow longer oral response time.
4. Utilize classroom routines and highlight changes to any routine.
5. Paraphrasing new information.

Celebrity Spotlight



Dan Aykroyd, comedian and actor famously known for his role in movies including Ghostbusters and Trading Places, was diagnosed with asperger's syndrome, which is a diagnosis no longer used today, but now falling into the larger scope of autism spectrum disorder. He later talks about his obsession with ghosts and law enforcement. It was his passion for ghost that led to the idea of the film, Ghostbusters!

School systems have an important responsibility—they are charged with *identifying, locating, and evaluating* any children who need special education. This is called "Child Find." This is critical to getting them the help they need to thrive in school.

Child Find applies to children from birth to age 21. It can cover children with learning and thinking differences, developmental delays, and other conditions. If you know of any children you suspect of disabilities particularly at the preschool level (at least 3 years old) but also beyond, please reach out to Dr. Kanika Griffin at the Board of Education at 252-426-5471.

Communication Chronicles is a publication of the Speech Language Pathologists at Perquimans Central School covering a broad range of topics. For questions or further material ideas, contact Ellen Silva ellensilva@pqschools.org or Brittany Owens brittanyowens@pqschools.org