

Understanding the Role of the SLP

Presented by Suzanne Ducharme MacFarlane MS CCC-SLP

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Tonight's Presentation

- Speech language pathologists (SLP) and SLP assistants- training and credentials
- What do SLPs do? Where do we do it?
- Top 10 Red Flags that indicate your child may need an evaluation
- Models of service delivery- why does it look so different?
- How to have great communication with your SLP
- Overview of Childhood Speech and Language Disorders book

SLPs and SLP assistants

- SLPs are highly educated and trained professionals who have demonstrated the credentials to provide services to those with communication and feeding disorders
- SLPs must have a Master's Degree (MA or MS) which includes over 400 hours of practicum
- Complete a residency
- Pass the National Praxis Exam
- Agree to follow the code of ethics

Training and credentials

- In MA, SLPs must also have a state license given by the Board of Registration in SLP/A...
 - Good moral character
 - Meet ASHA certification standards
 - Complete at least 20 hours of CEU/2 years
- In MA, SLPs in the schools must also have a separate license given by the dept of Education

SLP Assistants

- Must have an Associates or Bachelor's degree in SLP/A (certificate) and
- Complete at least 18 semester hours of requisite courses in CommDis
- Complete observation hours
- Be licensed by the Board of Registration in SLP/A
 - You can check anyone's license on the website:
<https://www.mass.gov/division-of-professional-licensure-check-a-license>

SLP assistants

There are requirements for use of assistants:

- Informed consent
- Licensure
- Supervision-direct and indirect
- Documentation

SLP Assistants

Assistants have a very specific scope of practice:

- Assist with screenings (not scoring)
- Informal documentation
- Follow a plan developed by the SLP
- Take data
- Assist the SLP
- Clerical duties/equipment maintenance

SLP Assistants

Assistants may not:

- interpret results of standardized or nonstandardized diagnostic tests or formal or informal evaluations;
(b) May not screen or diagnose patients/clients for feeding/swallowing disorders;
(c) May not write, develop, or modify a patient's/client's individualized treatment plan in any way;
- (d) May not assist with patients/clients without following the individualized treatment plan prepared by the Speech-language Pathologist/ Audiologist, or without access to supervision; (e) May not sign any formal documents (e.g., treatment plans, reimbursement forms, or reports; the assistant should sign or initial informal treatment notes for review and co signature by the supervising professional);
- (f) May not select patients/clients for service;
(g) May not determine case selection;

SLP Assistants

- May not interpret observations or data into diagnostic statements of clinical management strategies or procedures;
 - (i) May not compose clinical reports except for progress notes to be reviewed by the supervisor and held in the patient/client records;
- (j) May not discharge a patient/client from services;
- (k) May not disclose clinical or confidential information either orally or in writing to anyone without a supervisor's approval;
- (l) May not make referrals for additional service;
 - (m) May not consult with the patient/client, family or others, or participate in parent conferences, case conferences, or any interdisciplinary team meetings, regarding the patient/client status or service received without the Supervisor's approval;
 - (n) May not develop, alter, or initially demonstrate swallowing strategies or precautions to patients, family, or staff;

SLP Assistants

May not represent himself or herself as a Speech-language Pathologist or Audiologist orally or in writing;

(p) May not perform tasks when a Supervising Speech-language Pathologist or Supervising Audiologist cannot be reached by personal contact, phone, pager, or other immediate means or until a licensed Speech-language Pathologist or licensed Audiologist with at least two years of experience has been designated as the supervisor.

What do SLPs do?

SLPs address a wide variety of issues related to speech, language, cognition, swallowing and literacy from cradle to grave...

- Articulation
- Language (receptive and expressive)
- Literacy and phonological awareness
- Fluency

What do SLPs do?

- Social communication- pragmatics
- Voice
- AAC
- Cognition (includes executive function)
- Feeding/swallowing

Where do we do it?

SLPs work in many different settings:

- Schools
- Hospitals
- Rehab (short and long term)
- Early Intervention
- Private practice

SLPs in school

- Work on issues related to academic achievement, learning and social skills
 - Individual and group sessions
 - Pull out and inclusion
 - Consultation services
 - Direct and indirect services and RTI

SLPs in Private Practice

Address the full range of issues, but with somewhat more flexibility about frequency, length and I/G sessions

Typically private pay or through primary medical insurance

Models of Service Delivery

Why does it look and feel so different?

- Each setting has its own eligibility criteria, testing methodology and level of intensity
- We move from medical-EI-school-medical
- A finding of “not eligible” in any setting does NOT mean there are no issues, which is why you may need more than one setting concurrently

Models of Service Delivery

In Early Intervention, eligibility is determined by:

- Failure to meet milestones
- Diagnosed condition
- At risk factors
 - Services are developmental and driven by family goals for functional skills in daily routines

Models of Service Delivery

Educational Model: Must have a diagnosed condition and a need for Sped services- issues that are *academically relevant*- services assist with access and mastery of goals

Tends to be group model

Less frequent and more consultative

RTI for kids on the bubble

Each school district can determine what their eligibility criteria are... MSHA now trying to work on consistency

Conditions for Disability

- Autism
- Deafness
- Hearing Loss
- Deaf-blindness
- Mental Retardation
- Orthopedic condition
- Emotional disturbance
- Multiple disabilities
- Other health conditions
- Specific learning disability
- Speech and language impairment
- TBI
- Vision impairment

Models of Service Delivery

Medical Model: Focused on the defect or dysfunction

- Tends to be more intensive, based on rehab model
- Uses a problem solving approach
- Tends to be a lot of cooks in the kitchen

****Private practice is a combination of all models**

Models of Service Delivery

Questions and Discussion

- Important to calibrate expectations and consider the BIG picture
 - Class time vs. pull out
 - Social impact
 - Intensity and home programming

Red Flags for Referral

There are many red flags that can indicate a problem:

1. Lack of progress in school or a change in progress
2. Frequent melt downs or “white knuckling” school
3. Significant history of medical issues/ear infections
4. Difficulty expressing thoughts or ideas or processing information
5. Poor attention and difficulty managing time/space/materials or emotions

Red Flags for Referral

6. Difficulty with learning to read or comprehension
7. Difficulty with clarity of speech
8. Frustration with or resistance to school
9. Difficulties with writing skills (content)
10. Difficulty with peer relationships and social skills

Communicating with your SLP

If your child is already working with an SLP,
communication is critical to success:

- Home programming for carryover
- Coordinate strategies and prompts
- Gate keep communication between SLPs/team
- Monitor progress and provide feedback

Communicating with your SLP

Here are some questions to ask your SLP:

- What are the specific areas you are working on with my child? Why are those important right now?
- What are your goals for the current period?
- What strategies and prompts are you using to help them get the skill?

Questions for the SLP

- How do I know if it is a correct response? What if they make an error?
- How often should I be practicing these skills?
- How can I practice them in our daily routines or do we need to set aside time for speech work?
- How long have you been working on these goals?

Communicating with your SLP

- How do the different deficits they have relate to and impact each other?
- What is the best thing I can do to support my child?
- What information would be most helpful to you in shaping my child's program?

Writing the book

- Series: Whole Family Approaches to Childhood Illnesses and Disorders
 - Edited by Brian Fligor, friend and colleague
- Published in October 2016
- Childhood Speech and Language Disorders: Supporting Children and their Families on the Path to Communication

An Overview of the Book

The book is divided into 2 parts:

The first half of the book is technical education: providing information about speech and language development and things you need to know to be a savvy consumer of these services:

Part One

- Chapter 1- Welcome to the Journey
- Chapter 2- Alphabet Soup/Seeing your child in context
- Chapter 3- Communication Development
- Chapter 4- Assessment of speech and language disorders

Part One, continued

- Chapter 5- An overview of speech sound disorders
- Chapter 6- An overview of language disorders
 - Special populations include Autism Spectrum Disorders and premature infants

Part One

These chapters are meant to equip you with knowledge and provide you with practical strategies you can use with your own child

An Overview of the Book

Part II

The second half of the book is a love letter to parents and families who are facing the unexpected challenge of having a child with a communication challenge.. It represents all that families have taught me about the journey- the successes and the challenges and how it changes you.

Part II, continued

- Chapter 7- The Parent Experience
- Chapter 8- Finding the New Normal: moving forward and taking charge
- Chapter 9- Bringing it all together: Looking ahead
- Chapter 10- Lessons I have Learned**

What are your questions?

I would love to hear your questions... your comments... Your stories.....

How to Contact me:

- Call my office: 339-214-2906- I offer free consultations and screenings
- E-mail me: Suzanne.Ducharme44@gmail.com
- Connect with me on Facebook: The Offices of Suzanne Ducharme
- Join my e-mail list on the website:
- www.childhoodspeechandlanguage disorders.com