WHAT ARE SPEECH IMPAIRMENTS?

There are many kinds of speech and language disorders that can affect children and grown-ups. There are four major areas in which these impairments occur.

FACTS

What are the different types of Speech Impairments?

- Articulation: speech impairments where the child produces sounds incorrectly (i.e. lisp, difficulty articulation certain sounds, such as “L” or “R”)
- Fluency: speech impairments where a child’s flow of speech is disrupted by sounds, syllables, and words that are repeated (i.e. stutter, etc), prolonged or avoided and where there may be silent blocks or inappropriate inhalation.
- Voice: speech impairments where the child’s voice has an abnormal quality to its pitch, resonance, or loudness
- Language: language impairments where the child has problems expressing needs, ideas, or information, and/or in understanding what others say.

These areas are reflected in how “speech and language impairment” is defined by the nation’s special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

What causes Speech Impairments?

Many speech sound disorders occur without a known cause. A child may not learn how to produce sounds correctly or may not learn the rules of speech sounds on his or her own. Problems with speech development is not always outgrown by itself. Many children do develop speech sounds over time but those who do not often need the services of an SLP (Speech and Language Pathologist) to learn correct speech sounds. Some speech sound errors can result from physical problems, such as: developmental disorders, genetic syndromes, hearing loss, illness, neurological disorders beside unknown cause.

What treatment is available for Speech Impairments?

Traditional Speech Therapy, Melodic Intonation Therapy, Music Therapy, Hyppo Therapy/Therapeutic Horseback Riding, and many more.
RESOURCES

- Sign language, assistive technology (Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)) devices help people with communication disorders to express themselves. These devices can range from a simple picture board to a computer program that synthesizes speech from text and Brain–computer interface research (new on the horizon).

REFLECTIONS

Activity: hold your tongue in the center, half-way back with thumb and index finger and tell your group about something you like (hobby, pets, book, tv show, etc.)

1.) How did you feel during this activity?

2.) What was the most frustrating part of this activity for you?

3.) How do you think you would feel if you had to face this challenge every day (school, home, with friends, etc)?

4.) Based on your experience in this activity, how would you interact differently when communication with someone who has a Speech Impairment?
- King George VI of England (made into a movie “The King’s Speech” 2010) struggled with stuttering from childhood through adulthood but with the help was able to get stuttering under control most of the time.

- James Earl Jones
  Who would have thought the baritone of Darth Vader would have trouble speaking? But for eight years while growing up, James Earl Jones barely spoke to anyone but close family and the animals on his farm. "Stuttering is painful," he told the "Daily Mail" in 2010. "In Sunday school, I’d try to read my lessons and the children behind me were falling on the floor with laughter."

- Nicole Kidman
  World re-known Australian Actress. Lisp and stutter as a child.

- Bruce Willis
  Actor and musician, he is well known for playing wisecracking or hard-edged characters, often in spectacular action films. Stutter as child.

- Michael Phelps
  American swimmer finished his career with 23 gold medals and 28 overall. Has struggled in childhood with vocabulary delay, lisp to stuttering, at age 9 also diagnosed with ADHD. It has not stopped him from amazing the world.

- Tiger Woods
  He has achieved three times a Grand Slam. Woods has won 18 World Golf Championship. He started stuttering as a young child and still has occasional set-backs.

- Winston Churchill
  was Britain’s prime minister for most of World War II. He was famous for his speeches, and for his refusal to give in, even when things were going badly. Stutter and lisp and some sources suggest also ADHD.

- Sir Isaac Newton
  A very important scientist who is responsible for founding the three laws of motion along with studies concerning Universal Gravitation. Was thought by many a product of psychosis but he may just have been in his right mind. Isaac Newton once asked that the windows of Parliament be closed so the public wouldn’t hear his stuttering.

- Theodore Roosevelt
  26th President of the U.S. (1858 - 1919) Speech impairment, also subject to epileptic seizures, his eyesight was bad and he had asthma, but was a man of great courage and strength appreciated by many.
- **Charles Darwin**  
  (1809-1882) Naturalist, author; supporter of Evolution theory, OCD and stutter.

- **Aristotle**  
  (384 BC - 322 BC) Aristotle was a Greek philosopher writing on many different subjects including zoology, biology, ethics, government, politics, physics, metaphysics, music, poetry and theater. He was also a great teacher for Alexander the Great. Aristotle was one of the first to point out that epilepsy and genius were often closely connected. Aristotle had an inaccurate conception of the cause of stuttering. He thought it was caused by a malfunctioning tongue.

- **Thomas Jefferson**  
  (1743 – 1826) Third president (1801-09) Also a polymath, Jefferson achieved distinction as (among other things) a horticulturist, statesman, architect, archaeologist, paleontologist, author, inventor and founder of the University of Virginia. – Lisp

- **Joe Biden**  
  Hard to believe, but Vice President Joe Biden’s long political career was almost derailed by a speech disorder. "When I was with people I didn't know, I used to t-t-t-talk l-l-l-like that," Biden told NPR in 2007. In his book "Promises to Keep," he wrote that even if he could, he wouldn't have changed anything. "That impediment ended up being a godsend for me," he said. "Carrying it strengthened me and, I hoped, made me a better person."

**Sources:**  
This poster board was borrowed from another AISD PTA committee who hosted “Kids First” at their school (similar event as “Celebrate me”)

- [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2780359/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2780359/)