



PHOENICIA UNIVERSITY

# Speech Therapy and Neurodevelopmental Disorders

*How Speech-Language Pathologists Support Children and Their Families*

A guide for students, families, and allied health professionals

# 1 Brief Overview

## What Are Neurodevelopmental Disorders?

Neurodevelopmental disorders are conditions that affect how the brain develops, influencing communication, language, learning, behavior, social interaction, and daily functioning. Early identification and intervention are essential to help children reach their full potential.

## The Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) play a key role in assessing, diagnosing, and treating communication difficulties associated with neurodevelopmental disorders. They work collaboratively with families, educators, psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and physicians to provide individualized, evidence-based intervention.

## 2 Neurodevelopmental Disorders Commonly Seen

*Speech-language pathologists frequently support children with the following conditions:*

1

**Developmental Language  
Disorder (DLD)**

2

**Autism Spectrum  
Disorder (ASD)**

3

**Attention-Deficit/  
Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

4

**Intellectual Developmental  
Disorder**

5

**Cerebral Palsy**

6

**Down Syndrome**

7

**Learning Disorders Affecting  
Language and Literacy**

### 3 What Does a Speech-Language Pathologist Do?



Assess speech, language, communication, and swallowing skills.



Identify strengths and areas requiring support.



Develop individualized therapy plans based on the child's needs.



Improve speech clarity and language comprehension and expression.



Enhance social communication and conversational skills.



Support early literacy skills, including phonological awareness.



Introduce Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) when appropriate.



Train parents and caregivers in effective communication strategies at home.



Collaborate with schools and healthcare professionals for consistent support.

## 4 Why Early Intervention Matters

Research consistently shows that early intervention improves communication, academic achievement, social participation, and quality of life.

### Communication

Builds vocabulary, comprehension, and expressive language skills.

### Academic Achievement

Strengthens literacy and readiness for classroom learning.

### Social Participation

Improves peer relationships and everyday interactions.

### Quality of Life

Supports confidence, independence, and family connection.

*The earlier support begins, the greater the opportunity to build essential communication skills during critical periods of brain development.*

# Key Message

***Communication is a fundamental human right.***

Speech-language pathologists help children with neurodevelopmental disorders develop the skills they need to communicate, learn, build relationships, and participate fully in everyday life.