

Information for Parents

Welcome to Language Express! The following information will help you to know what to expect.



Language Express Services During the Pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, all Language Express services moved to telepractice. Telepractice includes videoconference sessions and phone and email communication. Most assessment and therapy sessions are very successful online. With younger children we are mostly teaching parents strategies and coaching parents as they interact with their children, older children usually enjoy doing some fun activities and games with us on line.

Families who cannot access telepractice due to technology issues can arrange to come in to one of our offices and use a room and computer to connect with their speech-language pathologist. For a few children telepractice is not appropriate due to their needs. We offer limited in-person visits to families who meet the criteria, with precautions in place to keep everyone safe. Clients and staff will be screened for symptoms, extra cleaning will be done between clients, and clients and staff will be required to sanitize their hands and wear masks. Young children who cannot tolerate masks will not be required to wear them.

Why is Speech and Language Therapy Important?

Communication skills are critical to your child's future success in school and in life. Children who enter school with delayed speech and language skills are much more likely to struggle with learning to read. The younger we start with speech and language intervention the more difference we can make.

Children Under 24 Months

If your child is under the age of 24 months and you have concerns about other areas of development as well as speech and language, you may wish to consider a referral to one of the Infant and Child Development Programs (ICDP) that serves our area. Infant and Child Development Programs support a child's global development, including language skills. Children can receive service from both Language Express and ICDP at the same time, if appropriate. If you have not been referred to ICDP, you may call them directly at the numbers listed below.

Leeds & Grenville Infant Development Program (613) 345-1662

Lanark County Infant Development Program (613) 257-7121 ext. 230

Parent Participation

There is no better person to help your child learn than you! The speech-language pathologist who works with your child will also be working with you, to help you to help your child become a better communicator. Parents and caregivers are expected to participate actively in therapy sessions so that they can learn the techniques needed to help their children. Regular practice at home between therapy sessions is also essential. Parent education programs may also be recommended.

How much service will my child receive?

First, your child's communication skills will be assessed. You will receive a written assessment report, and the findings and recommendations for further intervention will be discussed with you. After the assessment, the type and frequency of therapy visits will be determined according to your child's needs, ability to attend, and the type of service you and your family require. Parent Education programs, which parents attend without their children, may be recommended. Therapy visits with children are typically about 45 minutes in length and may be weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or even quarterly if only monitoring is required. Visits may be individual or as part of a group program. Your child's name may go on a therapy waiting list if the type of service your child needs is not immediately available.

What does speech and language therapy look like?

Speech and language therapy for preschoolers is play-based. We use lots of toys, books, and games to keep it fun. All activities are carefully planned to target your child's communication goals. Therapy sessions may take place via telepractice or in person. For some children our speech-language pathologists act more as consultants. They advise parents, caregivers and teachers on ways to help develop children's communication skills.

Attendance / Cancellations

We have many families waiting for service, and regular attendance at therapy sessions is important for progress. Your child's therapy appointments are carefully planned, requiring considerable preparation time. Please inform your speech-language pathologist as soon as possible if you are unable to attend your appointment. Three absences without notification will result in discharge from

the program. Frequent cancellations without reasonable cause may also result in discharge. If your speech-language pathologist needs to cancel an appointment due to illness or other circumstances, she will attempt to contact you as soon as possible to reschedule. For this reason, it is important that we have up-to-date contact numbers for you.

Illness

Please call to cancel your appointment if you, your child, or anyone else in the home is sick. A sick child cannot benefit from a therapy session (including a telepractice session), and he or she exposes our staff and subsequent clients to the illness.

Confidentiality

All information provided to the program is confidential, and is collected according to the privacy policy of the partner agency through which your child receives service. Your S-LP can provide you with the policy upon request. Information may be shared with Language Express staff for program planning or referral purposes. We will ask for your written consent before sharing information with anyone else. As your child's legal guardian you have the right to read or request copies of anything in your child's file.

All staff are required by law to report any suspected abuse of children to a child protection agency.

Discharge

Discharge from our program will occur:

- If your child's speech/language skills reach normal limits
- When your child reaches the age of eligibility for Senior Kindergarten
- If referral to another agency is more appropriate
- If you do not show up for your initial assessment appointment
- If you miss more than three appointments without prior notification
- If you do not follow through with homework as requested
- If you decide to withdraw your child.

Other Services in the Community

Other community agencies provide support for children with behaviour needs, physical disabilities, mental health issues, developmental delays, etc. If you would like information about any of these programs please call 211, or call us at the number below.

Coordinated Service Planning

Coordinated Service Planning is available for families involved with more than one agency who would like help coordinating their child's services.

KidsInclusive is the lead agency for Coordinated Service Planning in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville. For more information, go to the KidsInclusive website or call the Language Express office.

Questions? Please don't hesitate to call the Language Express office at 283-2742 or 1-888-503-8885 (toll free).

Note: There are no fees or charges for our service

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