

Family Partnership:

Parents are the first and primary teachers. Their commitment to spoken language is imperative to the success of their child in the program.

The T.A.L.K. program's staff members will engage parents and family members in the following ways:

- Home visits
- Daily communication with parents
- Parent/teacher conferences
- Family involvement activities
- Volunteer opportunities in the classroom
- Training opportunities for families to integrate and use their child's technology at home and in the community
- Parent education nights

These methods of communication assist with generalization of skills outside of the school.



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T.A.L.K.
**Teaching Auditory Learning
in Kids Program**
A Listening and Spoken Language
Educational Program (LSLS)



What is T.A.L.K.?

T.A.L.K. is an auditory-oral preschool classroom where children with hearing loss learn to listen, talk and communicate effectively in their world. This is a unique educational program in Summit County and an option for families who have chosen spoken language as the primary means of communication for their child.

Using appropriate amplification, children with mild to profound hearing losses are given access to spoken language through strong speech, language and auditory training focusing on individual needs, family concerns and involvement.

Incorporating developmentally appropriate practices, the T.A.L.K. program's focus is on meeting the different learner needs in ALL areas of development, including listening, speech, language and pre-literacy skills while fostering their social, emotional, cognitive, physical and creative skills.

Who provides the services?

- Classroom Teacher
- Assistant Classroom Teacher
- Audiologist
- Speech Language Therapist
- Coordinator

Our staff also participates in community and professional organizations to support and improve the lives of children with hearing loss.

Research:

Research shows if children are diagnosed with early hearing loss and receive appropriate early intervention, services and amplification, they have a higher probability for increased academic success, social skills and post-secondary opportunities.

This also leads to a greater likelihood for the child to participate in their home school and general education classrooms during school-aged years.

The ability of a child with hearing loss to successfully acquire spoken language requires a framework of rich, bidirectional communication with language mentors and immersion in an auditory and language-rich environment.

Classroom Setting:

T.A.L.K. offers two half-day sessions with the opportunity for full-day programming for eligible students. The preschool classroom follows a 6:6 model, which means there is a maximum of 12 students - six children with hearing impairments and six children with peer hearing models. This classroom model mirrors a typical early childhood setting.

The classroom is acoustically pleasing and integrates up-to-date technology to meet the needs of children with both hearing aids and cochlear implants. In addition, the classroom focuses on the specific needs of children with hearing loss and adheres to the Ohio Department of Education preschool requirements, including the Early Learning Content standards, Licensing Rules and Step Up To Quality.

The T.A.L.K. program also partners with university graduate programs and audiology and cochlear implant centers in the region.

Transition to Kindergarten:

One of T.A.L.K.'s goals is to help prepare children with hearing loss for a successful transition into kindergarten in their home district. Itinerant kindergarten services are available from the classroom teacher to help with that transition. The itinerant teacher will work with the child and kindergarten teacher to successfully incorporate proven strategies, methods, materials and technology into the kindergarten classroom.



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