

# THE CITY SPEAKS

A PARENT NEWSLETTER BY DISTRICT 75 SPEECH-LANGUAGE PROVIDERS

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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## Welcome Back

Welcome back to the 2010-2011 school year! The Parent and Language Committee (PAL) welcomes all District 75 parents, teachers and students to a new school year. Through "The City Speaks" newsletter, our committee will continue to provide you with current information, tips and ideas that help stimulate language growth and independent communication skills. This year we will focus on working with parents as partners in the development of speech, language and communication skills. Look for our Winter 2010, Spring 2010 and Summer 2010 editions of the newsletter throughout the school year. Citywide Speech Services (CSS) is committed to maintaining a strong home-school connection. Past issues of The City Speaks are available on the Citywide Speech Services website - <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/Departments/RelatedServices/Speech/default.htm>. If you have any questions regarding speech, language and/or communication issues, contact your speech-language provide.

## Parents as Partners in the Community Setting

As residents of New York City, we have access to many local places that offer education and language learning experiences. The following are some suggested places to visit. While walking to these destinations discuss and point out places of interest. If walking is not an option, you can practice traveling on the subway, buses or in the car. Whenever possible take photographs during your outings and collect literature from your visits and assemble a scrapbook of your trips. Your child can then share his/her experience with family and friends.

- **BACK TO SCHOOL SHOPPING:** You and your child can look through circulars (i.e. Staples, Macys) to discuss the different items necessary for school. At the same time, create a list either written or by cutting out pictures of desired items. At the store, allow your child to find items and make guided choices for him/herself. Provide your child with a choice of 2 or 3 items to choose from. Encourage your child to wait on line and pay the cashier.  
Speech-language goals addressed: Labeling, requesting, commenting, choice making, responding and asking questions.
- **RESTAURANT:** Take the opportunity to go out for a meal with your child at a local restaurant. Prepare pictures of the available food choices or discuss the choices ahead of time. Allow your child to order his/her own food either from the waitress or the clerk at the counter. This is also an excellent opportunity to practice independent feeding skills if needed. Have your child pay the bill and wait for the change.  
Speech-language goals addressed: Requesting, choice making, commenting and sequencing.
- **LIBRARY:** At your local library, your child can learn how to find a book of his/her choice, borrow the book with a library card, and return the book at the appointed time. The librarian will be able to assist in finding books that are appropriate for interest level as well as reading level.  
Speech-language goals addressed: Choice making, reading, requesting, commenting, responding and asking questions.
- **GROCERY STORE:** First, you and your child can create a shopping list at home with pictures or written words. Then, at the store have your child find the items on the list. Last, encourage your child to pay the cashier, wait for the change and say "thank you".  
Speech-language goals addressed: Choice making, vocabulary development, commenting, greeting and sequencing.
- **MOVIES:** You and your child can select a movie time from the newspaper/internet. Once there, the child can make a choice of refreshments and practice adjusting their behavior in different settings (outside voice/inside voice, standing/sitting). Later, you can discuss the movie recalling key facts and details from it.  
Speech-language goals addressed: Choice making, labeling, requesting, commenting, responding and asking questions.

Dear CITY SPEAKS,

I am a new parent of District 75. My daughter is 5 years old and is able to communicate her basic needs and wants. However, because she uses so few spoken words I am often unaware of what is going on in school. How can I become a more informed and involved parent?

Concerned Parent

Dear Concerned Parent,

This is a common issue for parents of children in District 75. Many of the students demonstrate discussing the activities of the school day. Fortunately, District 75 encourages parent involvement and provides many different ways of communicating with your child's school.

- Know your child's speech-language provider's name.
- Use a notebook for communication between you, the classroom teacher, and related service providers.
- Upon request, you can make an appointment to observe a therapy session in order to learn new strategies and techniques you can use at home.
- Contact the Parent Coordinator to find out about upcoming parent workshops.

### Joke Time



Jokes are a fun way to practice language skills. Jokes provide a script for children with limited language as well as opportunities to interact with their peers, practice figurative language, develop vocabulary & support language processing, retention and recall skills.

For non-speaking individuals, voice output communication devices can be programmed with jokes.

Teacher: James, where is your homework?

James: I ate it.

Teacher: Why?

James: You said it was a piece of cake!



Q. What school supply is always tired?

A. knapsack!



Knock Knock!

Who's there

Canoe

Canoe who?

Canoe help me with my homework



### Internet Resources for Parents

The following are useful resources that will help facilitate your child's communication development.

[www.cindysautisticsupport.com](http://www.cindysautisticsupport.com) This website was developed by a teacher and it contains printable activities, schedules and general information about Autism.

[www.kidsturncentral.com](http://www.kidsturncentral.com) This website has games and activities that you and your child can do together at home.

### What is an IEP?

An IEP is an Individualized Education Plan that contains documentation that describes your child's current level of functioning. It also identifies the instructional goals that are relevant to your child's next step in their development. As a parent you are the most important team member during this process because you know the most about your child. Parent - teacher conferences provide valuable opportunities to discuss your child's needs and to develop appropriate goals for the year. The following is a list of important terminology relating to areas that may be discussed during these meetings. It is strongly recommended that you, the parent be involved in the development of your child's IEP. Be prepared with a list of questions, and/or concerns that you might want to address during the meeting. Ask for clarification of unfamiliar terms, and request the name and number of a person who you may contact after the meeting if needed.

### Common IEP Terminology

**AAC-** Augmentative Alternative Communication. Children who are minimally verbal or nonverbal may use an alternate way to communicate their wants and needs. An AAC system may include the use of real objects, picture symbols, sign language and/or electronic voice output devices.

**Annual Review-** Yearly meetings where the IEP is updated to include new goals and any other necessary changes.

**Behavior Plan-** The school based IEP team's plan that addresses your child's emotional and behavioral needs.

**CSE-** Committee on Special Education. This division processes all cases and makes initial referrals to Special Education programs as well as reviews, recommendations made by school based IEP teams.

**Goals- Annual Goals-** A behavior or skill that will be the focus throughout the school year. **Short term objectives-** Smaller components of the annual goal that are stated in the behavioral, observable and measurable terms.

**Mandate-** This refers to the frequency, amount of time, and group size that your child is seen for a related service. Example- 2x30:3, means two times a week for 30 minutes in a group of three.

**Related Services-** Any support service your child needs that will support the instructional program. These services may include speech language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, hearing and vision services, and orientation and mobility.

**Triennial-** Reevaluation of your child's current abilities to determine what changes need to be made to the IEP. This takes place every three years.

If you have any questions or topics that you would like us to address, please send an e-mail to: or

[BMandel6@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BMandel6@schools.nyc.gov)

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