SUMMIT SPEECH SCHOOL PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

The goal of Summit Speech School's Preschool is to enable children who are deaf or hard of hearing to take their place in the mainstream by providing educational, therapeutic, and support services during the critical preschool years, through an auditory/oral program. Enabling children to engage with others who have hearing loss and use similar amplification equipment fosters self-esteem and confidence prior to entry into the mainstream, where they are unlikely to encounter other children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Acoustical Treatments in all Classrooms and Therapy Rooms:
- Special HVAC system that vents noise out of therapy areas
- Wall-to-wall carpeting
- Acoustical ceiling tile
- Noise-free fluorescent lighting
- Wall mounted acoustical panels
- Solid core wood doors
- Double glazed sound isolating window assemblies
- Remotely located toilet exhaust fans

Design Features:
- Observations rooms with built-in speakers for all therapy areas
- Enclosed outdoor playground equipped to minimize static build-up
- Dedicated speech therapy rooms
- Dedicated OT/PT rooms

AUDIOLOGICAL SERVICES
- FM's provided at no additional charge
- Hearing aids and cochlear implants checked daily
- Spare parts available and minor repairs to equipment done on site
- Behavioral conditioning for play audiometry
- Complete audiological evaluations to include air conduction, bone conduction, speech audiometry, otoscopy, acoustic immittance testing and middle ear muscle reflex testing
- Behavioral and electroacoustical assessment of hearing aids and FM benefit (including real ear measurement)
- On site MAPping by two NYC cochlear implant centers
- Staff available to attend audiologicals when there are concerns
- Extensive staff and parent workshops related to hearing loss

Over ➔
**CURRICULA**

- Specialized curricula goals, designed for children with hearing loss, are integrated into classroom and related service activities.
- Components of curricula follow children from Early Intervention through Preschool and Itinerant Services, enabling continuity of goal development.
- Evaluation/assessment tools are normed on children with hearing loss and on children with typical hearing.
- Teachers of the Deaf and Speech-Language Pathologists conduct ongoing assessments collaboratively through regular meetings and goal sharing.

**RELATED SERVICES**

**Speech**

- Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP’s) provide speech, language, and auditory training by following curricula designed for children with hearing loss.
- SLP’s receive ongoing specialized training re: working with children with cochlear implants, hearing aids, and FM’s.
- SLP services are provided individually or in pairs, three to five times per week, in acoustically treated rooms.
- SLP’s have small caseloads to ensure individual attention and continuing communication with other team members and parents.

**Occupational and Physical Therapy**

- Well-equipped treatment rooms, including vestibular swings
- Providers understand how a hearing loss affects gross and fine motor development.
- Providers are educated on language development, hearing loss, and the use of the children’s amplification equipment. They continually discuss educational and speech/language goals with classroom teachers and SLP’s.
- Movement groups are provided to all classes, including yoga and appropriate fine and gross motor activities.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION**

All staff members receive ongoing specialized training related to hearing loss and eliciting language consistently and naturally while working on each child’s individual language and speech goals.

*Results of the study, “The Role of Early Language Experience” by Susan Nittrouer, Volta Review, Spring 2003, showed unequivocally that children with intensive preschool experience in settings explicitly for children with hearing loss performed exactly as children with normal hearing on a wide range of speech perception and language processing tasks, while the children in general education preschools performed much more poorly.*
**School Strengths**

Summit Speech School is an auditory/oral school for deaf and hard of hearing children. The preschool is a language intensive program that integrates core curriculum expectations with curricula specifically designed for children with special needs. Classroom teachers, who are certified both in education of the deaf as well as in elementary education, use a unique block structure for teaching: large group lessons for curriculum alternating with small group lessons for language and auditory habilitation. A typical full day might include: calendar/circle; table/floor play; math/science/social studies; vocabulary/syntax; auditory training; experience stories/language arts; conversational language; and phonics.

Several of the unique programs that help Summit Speech School organize for instruction are Handwriting Without Tears, SMILE, CASLLS, and SPICE.

The Cottage Acquisition Scales for Listening and Learning (CASLLS) was designed for deaf and hearing children with language impairments. It is a type of criteria referenced scale for tracking the development of language (discourse and social interaction, semantics, syntax), listening (sound awareness, phonetic/phonemic discrimination), cognition and speech (articulation). The CASLLS enables teachers to track language skills and select specific objectives while giving a clear picture of progress and needs.

The Speech Perception Instructional Curriculum and Evaluation (SPICE) is a developmental guide for developing listening skills in deaf and severely hearing impaired children. The SPICE (1) assists in specifying a child’s ability to perceive speech; (2) facilitates the development of instructional goals for auditory skills; and (3) assists in measuring and recording progress.

Structured Methods in Language Education (SMILE) is a phonics based multisensory reading program for children with language, processing, reading or visual disorders. It is a progressive, developmental program that provides structure, repetition and much practice.

Summit Speech School uses a team approach to teaching in that classroom teachers, teaching assistants, speech/language pathologists, occupational therapists and physical therapists are exposed to and receive some instruction in each other’s programs in order to provide a consistent program to the children.