CEREBRAL PALSY

What is Cerebral Palsy?

• A congenital disorder that refers to a group of neurological disorders that affect movement of body parts & coordination of muscles
• It is classified based on:
  o Severity level
  o Body parts affected
  o Ability to control movement
  o Muscle tone

Speech & Language

• Over 1/3 of people with CP have speech & language disorders
  o This can make it difficult for them to communicate effectively with others
• A child’s ability to communicate can vary based on type & severity of the disorder

Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)

• Help children speak more clearly
• Provide services for swallowing difficulties
• Show children new ways to communicate
• Assist in selecting an augmentative or alternative communication device to improve overall communication skills

Tips for Addressing Communication Needs

• Talk directly to the child, rather than expecting an adult to communicate for them
• If a child does not respond, try to ask a “yes/no” question
• Pay attention to other ways that a child may be trying to communicate, such as gestures or facial expressions
• Be supportive of different methods the child may use to communicate – do not force communication!