**FRAGILE X SYNDROME**

### What is Fragile X Syndrome?

- A genetic condition present from birth
- It is the most common known cause of an inherited mental impairment
- Characterized by intellectual and behavioral difficulties
- Can affect how individuals learn and interact with others
- Boys are more severely affected than girls

### Physical Characteristics

- Elongated face
- Large head
- Wide forehead
- Prominent ears
- The above characteristics typically become evident around age 8.
- Cognitive deficits become more evident later in childhood

### Communication Skills and Needs

- Males typically show moderate to severe delays in communication and are more frequently nonverbal
- Research suggests that females typically do not show significant delays in communication, but show deficits primarily in social skills
- Communication breakdowns typically occur during conversation
  - Scripts can make communication more accessible
- Children with Fragile X Syndrome tend to understand what is said to them better than they are able to express themselves
Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)

• Help the child speak clearly so he/she is easier to understand
• Assist in finding alternative methods of communication (if necessary)
• Encourage:
  o Slower rate of speech
  o Appropriate grammar
  o Increased vocabulary
  o Appropriate social skills
• Incorporate familiar routines and structure during transitions from one activity to the next
• Consider each child’s developmental delay when designing activities

Considerations for Working with Children with Fragile X

• They may have…
  o Difficulty with answering questions
  o Poor topic maintenance
  o Difficulty with abstract language (reasoning and making inferences)
  o Poor eye contact
• Some children also:
  o Go on tangents during conversations
  o Self-repeat words, sentences, and/or topics
• Moving may often encourage them to talk

For more information, visit:
http://www.fragilex.org/