

7

MYTHS ABOUT

Online Speech Therapy

BUSTED!

A GUIDE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATORS, SLPS, AND PARENTS



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Note: This ebook is best viewed in Adobe Reader to take full advantage of the media and content inside.

What is Online Speech Therapy?

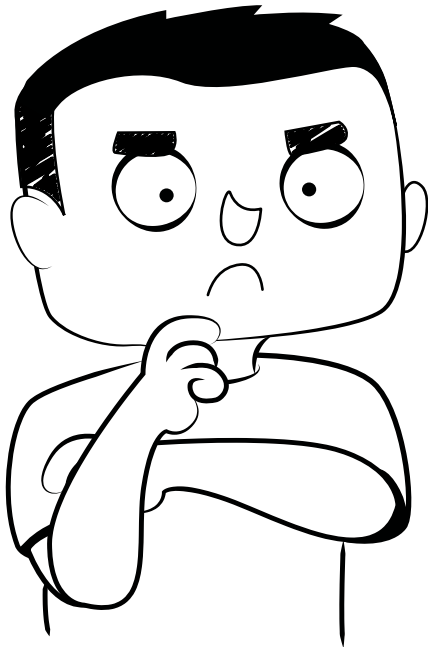


Online speech therapy (known to practitioners as “telepractice”) is the delivery of speech-language therapy services using live, secure videoconferencing on a computer equipped with a webcam and an audio headset.

Since 2009, fully credentialed Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) from the **PresenceLearning network of clinicians** have been providing online speech therapy to students throughout the U.S. Our skilled clinicians have delivered more than 1 million sessions of teletherapy to K-12 students, helping more than **17,000 students in over 300 districts** to develop the speech and language skills they need to be successful in a school setting. All PresenceLearning SLPs have Master’s degrees, their ASHA CCCs, and a minimum of two (2) years of experience in a school setting.

Online SLPs do the same job as onsite therapists: they provide speech therapy services, administer assessments and write evaluations, prepare IEPs and goals, serve as case managers, attend IEP meetings, track and report on student progress, schedule students, and communicate with parents and staff. The length, content, and frequency of online therapy sessions are individualized in accordance with each student’s IEP or 504 plan, and are delivered one-on-one, in small groups, and in full classroom settings.

A Viable & Effective Option for Schools



Online therapy has become a popular delivery model for schools (as well as homes, hospitals, and clinics) throughout the country. Why? Because, in the school setting, online therapy provides:

- Access to experienced, fully credentialed, and rigorously screened clinical professionals (including bilingual therapists)
- Expanded capacity for therapy services, assessments, and case management
- Relief from excessive caseloads for onsite clinicians
- Student progress monitoring on IEP or 504 goals
- Ability to serve homebound and virtual students, as well as students from different sites
- Ability to accommodate growing autism referrals, expand early intervention and RTI efforts, and treat low incidence disorders

It can also cut down windshield time—and cost—for your onsite providers.

The 7 MYTHS About Online Speech Therapy:

MYTH 1 Online speech therapy is beneficial only for a few conditions

MYTH 2 Online speech therapy is less personal and individualized

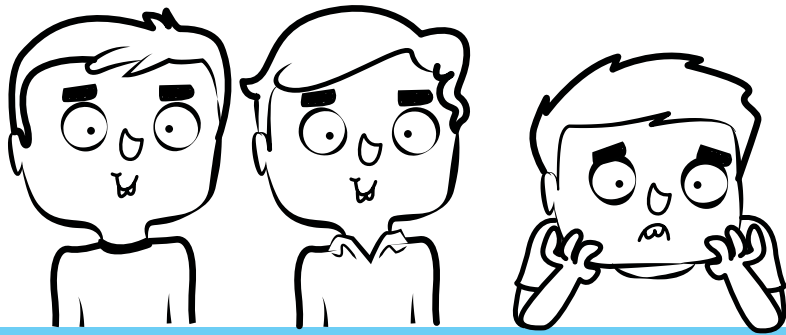
MYTH 3 Online speech therapy requires complex technology

MYTH 4 Online speech therapy makes it harder for parents and caregivers to know how kids are doing in therapy

MYTH 5 Online speech therapy steals jobs from on-the-ground SLPs

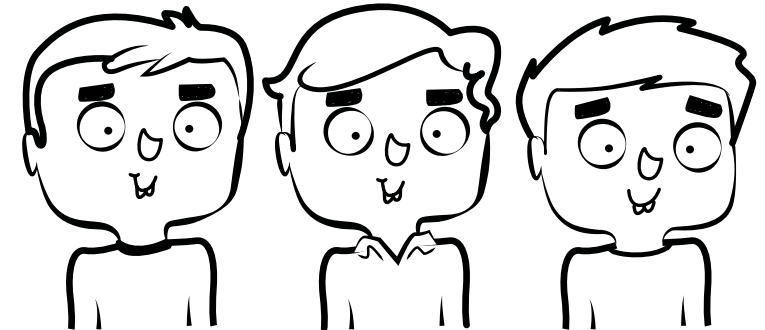
MYTH 6 Online speech therapy might expose kids to the dangers of the Internet

MYTH 7 Remote administration of speech and language assessments compromises the validity of the tests



MYTH

ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY
IS BENEFICIAL ONLY FOR
A FEW CONDITIONS



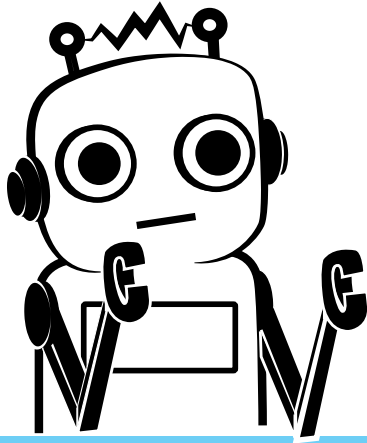
FACT

ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY CAN
BE USED TO EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS
A WIDE RANGE OF CONDITIONS

Online speech therapy works well for kids on a **wide spectrum of mild, moderate, and severe speech and language issues** including lisps, stuttering, articulation, language processing, pragmatic communications, autism, and other disorders.

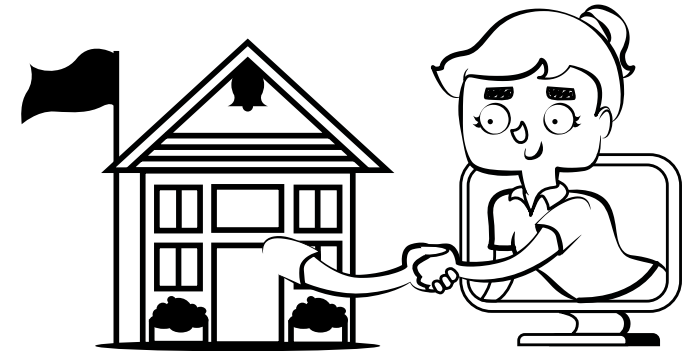
Kids with conditions that prevent them from easily using a computer or paying attention for more than a very short period of time may need an in-person therapist—however, this is the exception, not the rule.

**Want to read the research?
Visit: plearn.co/speech-research**



MYTH

ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY
IS LESS PERSONAL AND
INDIVIDUALIZED

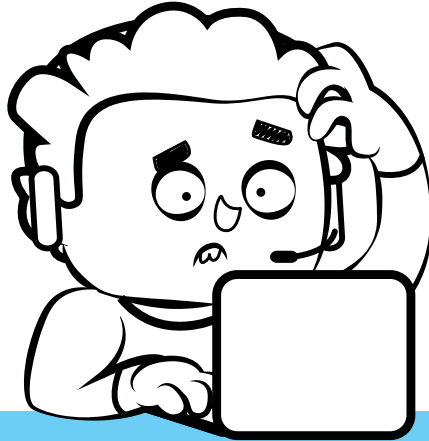


FACT

ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY IS
SPECIFICALLY TAILORED TO MEET THE
NEEDS OF EACH AND EVERY STUDENT

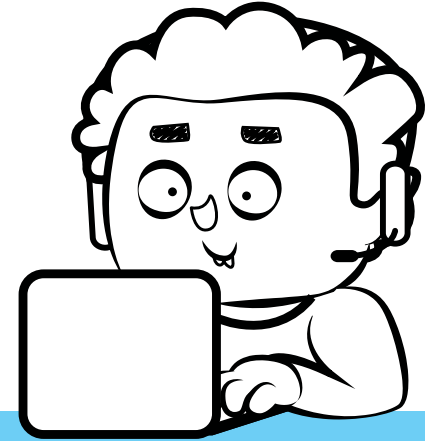
Just like onsite therapists, online SLPs plan activities that target the goals in each student's IEP. With PresenceLearning, therapists have access to an **online library** of more than 100,000 engaging, interactive activities targeting all ages and issues.

Students are matched to a therapist who gets to know each student and his or her goals, and they develop a bond during the course of therapy. The online SLP provides student treatment, regularly documents student progress, communicates with teachers, attends meetings via video or telephone conferencing, and can serve as a case manager.



MYTH

**ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY
REQUIRES COMPLEX
TECHNOLOGY**



FACT

**ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY RELIES
ON EVERYDAY TECHNOLOGIES
ALREADY IN YOUR SCHOOL**

The technology needed for online therapy is readily available: a computer with an up-to-date browser and an Internet connection, plus a high quality webcam and a headset—which we provide. In fact, **the PresenceLearning therapy environment was designed to put significantly less demand on school network bandwidth** so that schools in areas with limited high-speed internet options can gain access to PresenceLearning's large network of highly qualified clinicians to help students with special needs succeed.

Setup is quick and easy, and our team walks you through the steps needed to get the equipment up and running. Should any issues crop up during a session, our Support Services team is available by phone every school day from 8:00 am through 8:00 pm ET.

Starting a session of online speech therapy is as easy as going to our website and logging in to the therapist's private room.



MYTH

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FACT

**ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY MAKES
IT HARD FOR PARENTS AND
CAREGIVERS TO KNOW HOW KIDS
ARE DOING IN THERAPY**

**ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY
PROVIDES UNPRECEDENTED
VISIBILITY INTO STUDENT
PROGRESS**

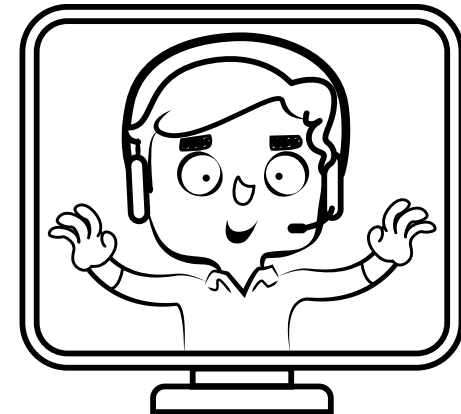
Parents and caregivers don't typically get to see what a student is doing in speech therapy at school. In fact, **a school is only required to report quarterly on student progress, and up-to-date information is often not available or needs to be tracked down.** If a parent or caregiver wants an interim report, they have to undertake many steps—including getting an independent evaluation and submitting a written request. These are huge barriers for caregivers who simply want to know how to help their kids achieve their goals.

With online speech therapy from PresenceLearning, parents and caregivers can be in the know on their child's progress by logging into a secure account that shows the SLP's session notes and progress on goals. Parents and caregivers can also log in and observe live sessions online; watching how the therapist works with their child often helps improve carryover at home.



MYTH

**ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY
TAKES JOBS AWAY FROM
ON-THE-GROUND SLPS**

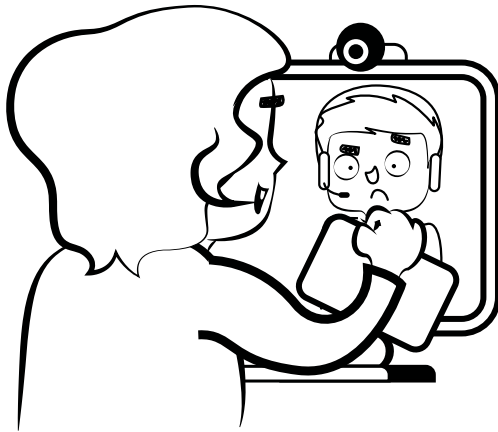


FACT

**ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY
EXPANDS CAREER FLEXIBILITY FOR
SLPS WHILE COMPLEMENTING
YOUR EXISTING STAFF**

School districts treasure their onsite SLPs and want to retain them. But **many districts simply can't locate and hire enough of these valuable team members:** SLPs leave due to retirements, family obligations, low job satisfaction, or to pursue other opportunities.

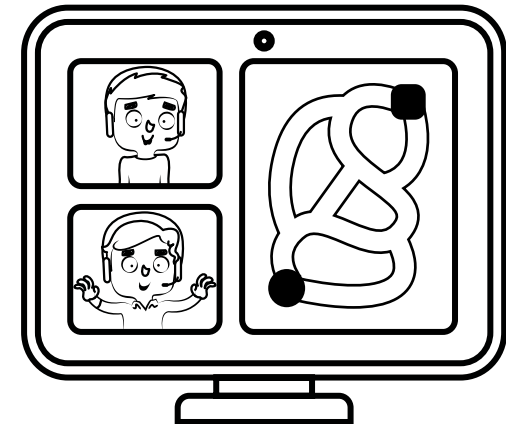
PresenceLearning SLPs complement your onsite clinical team, and ensure that you remain fully staffed with happy clinicians, helping your overworked, on-the-ground team better meet the needs of students and maintain reasonable workloads. Our online SLPs are highly qualified and experienced in integrating into IEP meetings and processes, and can also serve as case managers.



MYTH

**ONLINE SPEECH THERAPY
ISN'T PRIVATE OR SECURE**

6



FACT

**PRESENCELEARNING ONLINE
SPEECH THERAPY PROVIDES A
SAFE, PRIVATE, AND SECURE
ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

The number one concern parents have about live, online services is regarding their child's privacy. The PresenceLearning therapy platform delivers secure, fully encrypted therapy sessions. **Unlike online video tools such as Skype and Adobe Connect—which aren't designed for clinical applications—PresenceLearning was designed specifically for therapy,** including stringent measures to ensure student security and confidentiality.

Only the online therapist and the student(s) assigned to that particular appointment time are permitted to enter the therapy room. PresenceLearning student data cannot be shared, sold, or otherwise distributed to any entity outside of the school, district, or family.

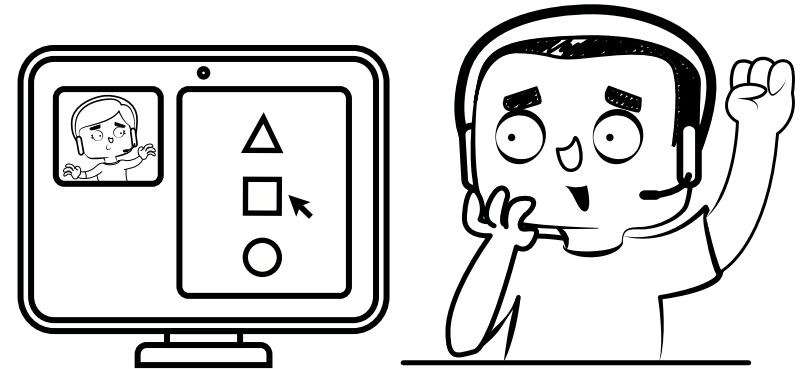
PresenceLearning has taken numerous steps designed to safeguard Protected Health Information (PHI) and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from unlawful and unauthorized access, use, modification, processing, disclosure, or destruction, including security and privacy training for PresenceLearning employees on compliance with FERPA, the HIPAA Security Rule, the HIPAA Privacy rule, and the HITECH Act.

And regardless of the student's age, online speech therapy enables them to safely work on their goals in a discreet, socially-enviable context. **Kids of all ages love using technology, and teens are often more comfortable and motivated online than in-person.**



MYTH

7



FACT

REMOTE ADMINISTRATION
OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE
ASSESSMENTS COMPROMISES THE
VALIDITY OF THE EVALUATION

ONLINE ADMINISTRATION IS
A VALID AND RELIABLE MODEL
FOR DELIVERING SPEECH AND
LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS

PresenceLearning has performed more than 10,000 online assessments. We license standard assessments from Pearson, HMH, WPS, and others to incorporate into the platform so that the stimulus items retain the same quality as the paper test easel. Using the same techniques and materials as onsite evaluators, PresenceLearning's online SLPs use a combination of standardized assessment tools, student work samples, clinical observation via webcam, behavioral observations, records review, parent/teacher/student interviews, and developmental/medical histories.

Our SLPs can conduct assessments of articulation and phonology, receptive/expressive language, pragmatic language, literacy, written language, fluency, voice, and dysphagia online, including:

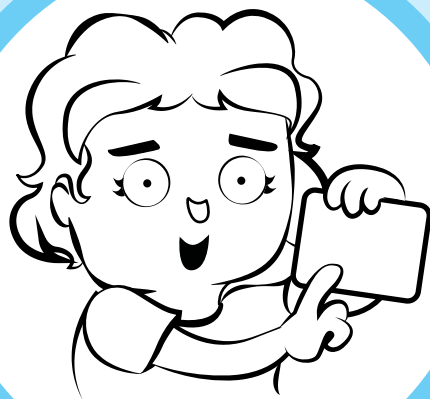
- GFTA-3, KLPA-3, Arizona-3, CELF-5, CELF-5 Screener, CELF-Metalinguistics, CELF-5 Reading and Writing Supplement, CASL-2, CELF 4-Spanish, BESA, PPVT-4, EVT-2, CCC-2, SSI-4, EOWPVT:SBE, ROWPVT:SBE, TAPS-3, TAPS-SBE
- Thorough clinical observation of school-related skills
- Parent, teacher, and student questionnaires

Online assessments can be used for initial, triennial, and dismissal evaluations, providing a school with options for adding students to—and dismissing students from—special education and/or related services, or for updating their IEP goals. Online assessments can also be used for 504 eligibility, intervention planning, and pre-referral assessments for at-risk students.

7

FACTS ABOUT

Online Speech Therapy



The 7 FACTS About Online Speech Therapy:

FACT 1 Online speech therapy can be used effectively for a wide range of conditions

FACT 2 Online speech therapy is specifically tailored to meet the needs of each and every student

FACT 3 Online speech therapy relies on everyday technologies already in your school

FACT 4 Online speech therapy provides unprecedented visibility into student progress

FACT 5 Online speech therapy expands career opportunities for SLPs

FACT 6 Online speech therapy is a safe, private, and secure online learning experience

FACT 7 Online administration is a valid and reliable model for delivering speech and language assessments

What Do the Researchers Say?

Speech-language pathology service delivery via the web is effective, affordable, and highly engaging for today's students. Over 40 published, peer-reviewed studies confirm that online speech therapy produces outcomes that are as good as, or better than, standard face-to-face therapy. The technology is simple, affordable, and practical. Kids love it, and really get engaged—and more engagement means more time on task and faster progress.

Online speech therapy is recognized as effective by major organizations including the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), the Mayo Clinic, and the American Telemedicine Association (ATA).

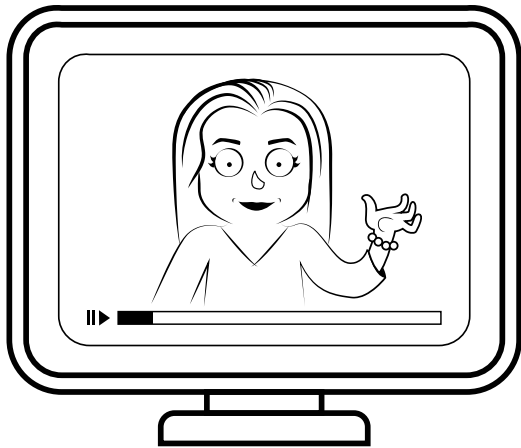
The Mayo Clinic says, “telemedicine evaluations can be reliable, beneficial, and acceptable to patients with a variety of acquired speech and language disorders, both in rural settings and within large multidisciplinary medical settings.”

**For more information visit:
plearn.co/speech-research**

What ASHA Says

The **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)** is the professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 135,000 members and affiliates who are speech-language pathologists and audiologists. Based on the strong body of peer-reviewed research supporting telepractice as an effective method of delivering speech-language therapy services, ASHA recognizes telepractice as a valid means of service delivery.

About PresenceLearning



Allison Oxford, Director of Instructional Support Services, explains how online speech has enabled her students to succeed
watch video: plearn.co/murray-video

PresenceLearning is the leading telehealth network of providers of clinical services and assessments to educational organizations. Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, and Mental Health Professionals from the PresenceLearning network have provided over one million sessions of live, online speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral interventions and mental health services, and early childhood services for children with special needs.

Online speech-language therapy is reimbursable by Medicaid in many states; for more information, view our **coverage map**.



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