

# Speech, Language, and Learning Services 2022 Program Evaluation Report

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This was a year of growth for our department, including the addition of new team members, new service lines, and new community partners. Our clinical team grew by two full-time equivalents (FTEs), and we hired a full-time manager for Project ELLA. We added ultrasound to our service lines, which is an evidence-based visual-biofeedback intervention for children with residual speech sound errors. Our growth in community partners was driven by Project ELLA. Team members' families grew as well – we had two team members go on maternity leave at the same time! One of the highlights of our year was the implementation of GatherUp, a software that sources feedback from our clients. “Great,” “love,” and “knowledgeable” were some of the most common words from the reviews; this is not surprising based on the department’s fantastic team.

## STAFFING

### January 2022

At the beginning of 2022, the department employed 16 staff speech-language pathologists (SLPs; 9 fulltime [9.0 FTE], 7 part-time [4.26 FTE]) and 1 per diem SLP (.1 FTE). This was a total of **13.26** FTE dedicated to clinical service. The department also employed 1 director (1.0 FTE).

### January 2022 Clinical FTE by Location

Location	FTE
University Circle	4.83
Lyndhurst	1.55
Broadview Heights	1.05
Westlake	0.95
Contracts	4.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.26</b>

At the end of 2022, the department employed 19 staff SLPs (9 fulltime [9.0 FTE], 10 part-time [6.26 FTE]), for a total of 15.26 FTE dedicated to clinical service. Additionally, the department employed 1 director (1.0 FTE) and a Project ELLA Manager (1.0 FTE).

#### **December 2022 Clinical FTE by Location**

<b>Location</b>	<b>FTE</b>
University Circle	6.52
Lyndhurst	1.28
Broadview Heights	.95
Westlake	1.28
Contracts	5.23
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.26</b>

The increase in FTE at UC includes the addition of another private school (Hathaway Brown) and an increase in hours at the other private schools we serve (University Schools and Gilmour). Time and revenue for those locations is assigned to UC. The increase in UC FTE also includes the addition of evening hours, which are in the most demand. The decrease in FTE at Lyndhurst is due to assigned SLPs reducing their hours after returning from maternity leave. Broadview Heights FTE is slightly reduced due to one of the SLPs reducing her hours. The FTE increase in Westlake comes from adding an SLP with the intention of picking up more adult clients, and another to see evening clients. Contracts FTE increased slightly due to increasing caseloads at our charter schools.

## BY THE NUMBERS

<b>In-Office Services</b>	<b>Number</b>
Treatment Sessions	7,833
Evaluations	415
No-Show Rate	8%
Number of Unique Clients	<b>651</b>
Peds	93%
Adults	7%
Demographics	
Race	
Black	44%
White	37%
Asian	1%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%
Biracial or multiracial	4%
No response	13%
Ethnicity	
Hispanic/Latino	6%
Not Hispanic/Latino	62%
No response	32%
<b>Outside Services</b>	<b>Number</b>
Charter Schools Served	8
Students served through charter school contracts	<b>278 (sp22)</b> <b>333 (fa22)</b>
Hours of service provided at charter schools	6,507
Private Schools Served	3
Students served at private schools	<b>42</b>
Head Start locations served for evaluation and treatment	9
Students seen for evaluation or treatment	<b>92</b>
Number of Screening Sites	17
Children screened	<b>2,156</b>
Number of Preschool Language and Literacy Classroom (PLLC) locations	15
Number of students that participated in PLLC	<b>271</b>
<b>Total Number Served</b>	<b>3,823</b>

# IN-OFFICE OUTCOMES

## PROGRESS ON GOALS

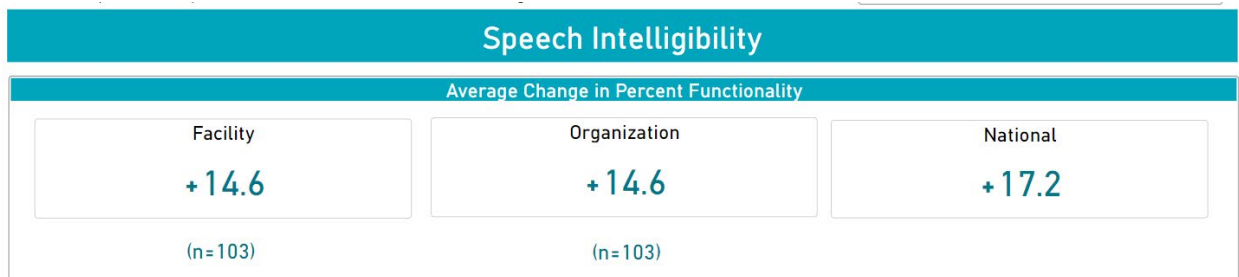
Treatment plans are set as 10-visit periods, which usually take place over 10 weeks depending on how the client is scheduled (e.g., every other week, twice a week) and if the client attends all scheduled sessions (i.e., no no-shows, cancellations, or holidays). At the end of each treatment plan the treating SLP records if the goals set for that treatment plan were met, showed progress, or did not show progress. In 2022, the percentage of children who met or showed progress on their 10-visit treatment plan goals were as follows:

Expressive Language	100%
Receptive Language	96%
Articulation	96%
Fluency	100%
Pragmatic Language	98%
Phonological Awareness	100%
Parents reported carryover of goals after the program	89%

These outcomes demonstrate that the SLPs set realistic, attainable goals for their clients, and provide effective clinical service.

## ASHA NOMS

ASHA NOMS is the American Speech-Language-Hearing Associations national outcome measurement system. “Functional Communication Measures” (FCMs) are one of the outcomes used to assess progress. The below outcomes show the percent increase in communication functionality across all offices. It should be noted that samples sizes under 25 are not considered statistically meaningful. Taken at face value, our organization lags behind the national average for some FCM percent increase. However, we work with many clients who are at high-risk because of socioeconomic background or complex communication needs. Also, because of life circumstances many children have to be discharged from treatment before we would have made the clinical decision to discharge them (e.g., poor attendance). This means that when they are discharged from NOMS, they are not performing as high as they would have if they would have completed a full course of therapy. Overall, under these circumstances, our performance is strong.



## Spoken Language Expression (3-5)

### Average Change in Percent Functionality

Facility  
**+16.0**  
(n=33)

Organization  
**+16.0**  
(n=33)

National  
**+16.4**

## Spoken Language Expression (6+)

### Average Change in Percent Functionality

Facility  
**+10.5**  
(n=19)

Organization  
**+10.5**  
(n=19)

National  
**+15.9**

## Spoken Language Comprehension (3-5)

### Average Change in Percent Functionality

Facility  
**+6.9**  
(n=20)

Organization  
**+6.9**  
(n=20)

National  
**+11.5**

## Spoken Language Comprehension (6+)

### Average Change in Percent Functionality

Facility  
**+10.1**  
(n=15)

Organization  
**+10.1**  
(n=15)

National  
**+18.1**

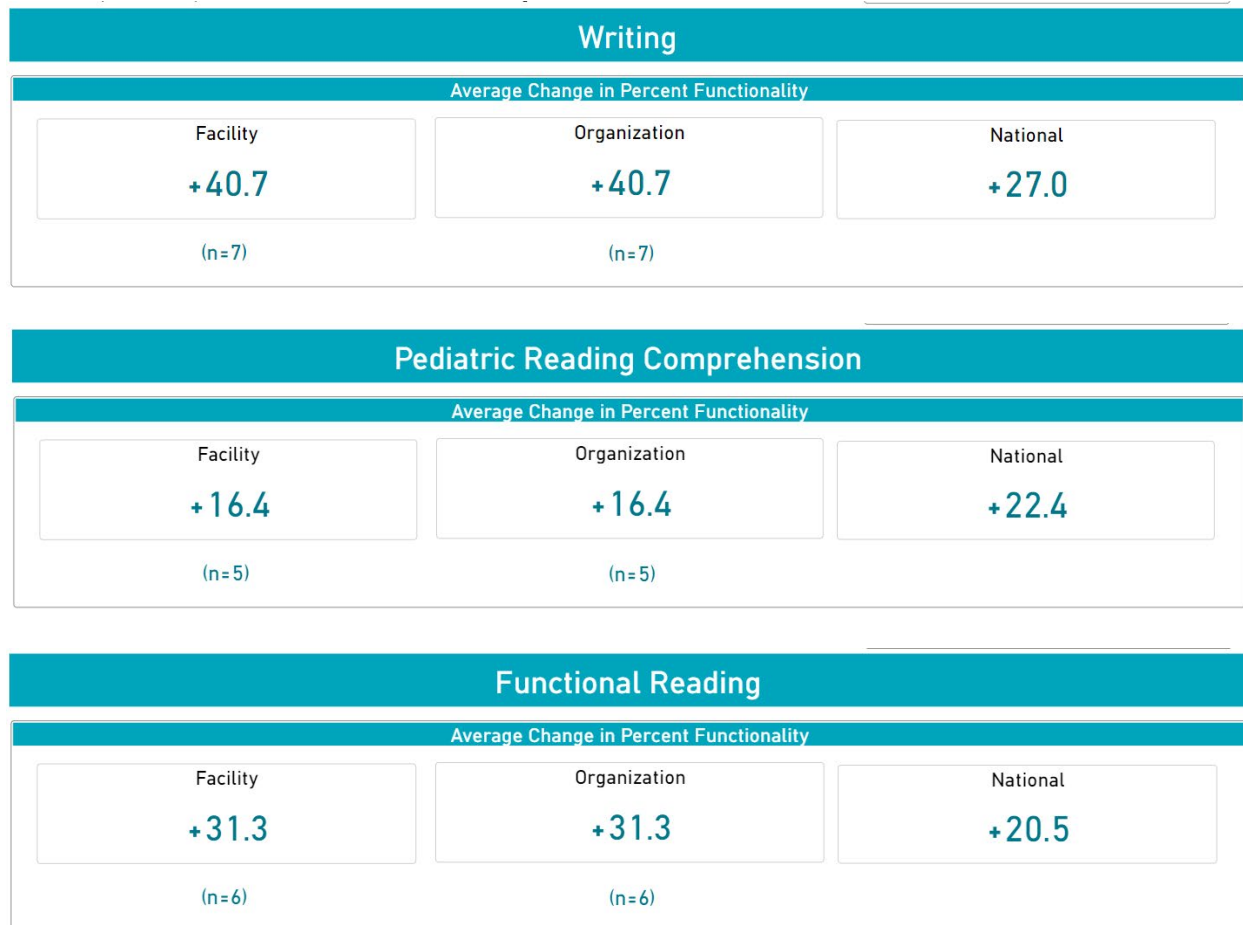
## Fluency

### Average Change in Percent Functionality

Facility  
**+16.1**  
(n=22)

Organization  
**+16.1**  
(n=22)

National  
**+19.9**



## CLIENT FEEDBACK

In June 2022 the department began sourcing feedback from clients and their families using a feedback program called Gather Up. Clients are sent an email to rate their services out of 5 stars and also asked how likely they are to recommend CHSC to a family member or friend out of 1 – 10. These requests are sent after an evaluation, then after the first treatment visit, and then every 3 month. The 1 – 10 rating is called a net promotor score, and indicates the loyalty of our client base. Clients who give a 9 or 10 are considered promotors who are loyal enthusiasts of our services and will keep coming back along with referring others to CHSC. Clients who give us 7 – 8 are considered passives who are satisfied with our services but may be vulnerable to moving to competitors. Clients who give us a 0 – 6 are detractors, who are unhappy with services with the potential to damage the brand. We are happy to report that the vast majority of our feedback has been from highly satisfied customers who would be considered promotors. Any client who submits feedback that indicates they are not satisfied is contacted by the department director to attempt to rectify the situation. We received 260 instances of feedback this year.

Office	Rating (1 – 5 Stars)	Net Promotor Score (1 – 10)
University Circle	4.92	9.75
Lyndhurst	4.94	9.83
Broadview Heights	4.77	9.43
Westlake	4.85	9.56
Overall	4.90	9.70

Gather Up also has the option of leaving written feedback. Some of the written feedback we received included:

“I feel great about [my daughter’s] speech evaluation at CHSC. I feel like [the SLP] took the time and consideration to really understand [my daughter’s] speech needs”

“Very positive experience. Our speech-language pathologist is always pleasant and goes above and beyond to assist my son with his speech difficulties.”

“Very good experience at CHSC. [My son’s] speech therapist has a natural way with him, and is able to work through his fidgety ways.”

“Our SLP has made a big difference in a very short time in [my son’s] speech and language skills. The Lyndhurst staff is friendly and supportive, and he looks forward to his therapy. I couldn’t have asked for a better organization or SLP.”

“We could not be happier with our speech sessions with [our SLP]. He’s very professional yet my son finds their time together fun and engaging. We’ve seen progress and look forward to what’s ahead!”

“As an autistic 14-year-old, I have been coming to CHSC for a long time and it has helped me develop my skills.”

## GRANT FUNDED PROGRAMS

Preschool Language and Literacy Classroom (PLLC) was funded by grants from Thomas White Foundation, Stocker Foundation, and Bruening Foundation. Every summer, SLPs travel out to area Head Starts and other preschools to provide PLLC. Over 6 weekly visits they model language-building read-aloud skills and each child receives 3 books. The children are always thrilled to participate, and the teachers enjoy PLLC as well.

Cleveland Automobile Club Orphan’s Outing, GPD, and US Protective Services supported the FACETIME fluency program. FACETIME is a year-round program for children who stutter. During the school year, clients participate in weekly individual services and monthly groups with other children who stutter. In the summer children who stutter participate in FACETIME Summer Camp, a 4-day day-camp that combines fun and fluency. In the fall, a generous donor provided Browns tickets for our FACETIME clients!

Elizabeth Ring and William Gwen Mather Fund, along with Abington Foundation, supported our parent-toddler program. The department’s services for toddlers includes parent-toddler group, which includes four toddlers and their caregivers. Having the caregivers play an active role in

their child's language development is key for the child's language skill progression. As the children play with their caregivers and each other, an SLP models and encourages language-building strategies.

Funds from the NEO-ACT donation continued to support adult services. Near the end of the year, we received a very generous gift from a donor to fund a NEO-ACT clinical fellowship in 2023. We began the planning process in 2022, and are thrilled that we will be able to bring a fellow on in 2023!

## **GRANT-FUNDED HIGHLIGHT: PROJECT ELLA**

One of the most exciting initiatives of the year was Project ELLA (early language and literacy for all), a new grant-funded program in our department. Project ELLA takes a public health approach to addressing language skills in children aged birth to 5. These first few years of life are a critical period for language development, and many children in our community are at an elevated risk of developing language disorders.

In 2022, Project ELLA secured five-year funding from the Prentiss Foundation two-year funding from the Cleveland Foundation, and one year funding from PNC and Treu-Mart. These funds have contributed to a solid first year focused on building a comprehensive infrastructure that will be the basis for our public health approach and curricula, ongoing program evaluation, and the foundation for future growth.

One of the focuses of Project ELLA is removing financial barriers for families who need to pursue clinical language treatment for their children birth to age 5. This ensures that no family ever hesitates to seek services for their child due to fear of cost. Currently, Project ELLA children who receive services at our University Circle location never receive a bill for services.

A Project ELLA Coordinator joined our team in September 2022. She has worked closely with the department director to build community partnerships and has now facilitated meetings with multiple community partners. At the end of 2022, she was finalizing training curricula and planning outreach events. Our goal for 2023 is to bring a community health worker onto the team, who the Project ELLA manager will supervise.

With the initiation of this new program, we have established more rigorous data tracking so that we can measure and monitor the impact of our services and focus on continuous improvement. We redesigned the client intake and referral tracking processes, and now collect more detailed demographic information. We are also tracking parent reported outcomes, along with in-session goal progress, so we can get a true picture of the progress a child is making outside the therapy room and how parents feel services are affecting their child. We also hired a data scientist to assist with outcome analysis. The data scientist has been an invaluable team member and has provided much guidance on the design of measures and the statistical analysis of results.

We have worked extensively with our marketing department in the design of a Project ELLA landing page on our website along with collateral for various stakeholders, including prospective and existing Project ELLA families, outreach event attendees, potential and existing community partners, and potential and existing funders.

Building on this established infrastructure, Project ELLA will continue to expand over the next four years, using a public health approach to reach as many eligible families as possible in the Cleveland area.

## NO SHOWS & CANCELLATIONS

CHSC DEPARTMENT DASHBOARDS 2022													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Speech No-Show	60	61	55	40	43	62	51	79	47	56	47	18	619
No-Show %	9%	8%	7%	7%	8%	9%	8%	11%	7%	7%	6%	3%	8%

The department’s average no-show rate was 8%, with a high of 11% in August and a low of 3% in December. August is a transition month for families as their children return to school, so more appointments tend to be missed without calling because so much is going on in the family’s life. In December, families usually anticipate their absences due to the holidays and cancel in advance if they are not going to be able to attend a session. The no-show rate was not a statistic we could easily gather from our old EMR system, so this is the first time we have a full year of reliable data on this number. Cancellations are not as easy to track in CounselEar because of the way appointments are scheduled. If a client is discharged, all their future appointments show up as cancellations. We are working with our data scientist to assess how we can better track true client cancels.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND EFFICIENCY OF SERVICES

Physical accessibility is addressed in our formal accessibility plan and related policies, but financial accessibility is also an important factor for our clients. This year we updated our sliding scale fee calculation and the client care coordinators were reminded to make sure to inform clients that the sliding scale was an option. This resulted in a number of clients being able to attend services that would not have been able to otherwise. We were also able to offer no-cost services to clients birth – age 5 at our University Circle location through grant funding. We are continuing to work on effective and accurate efficiency tracking. This has been a challenge for our department, but with our new data scientist we believe that we will be able to design an approach that balances productivity with quality of client care.

## ACTIONS FOR THE COMING YEAR

The department is looking forward to continuing to work with our new data scientist to both better understand who we serve and how to best serve them. We are continuously working to refine how we collect outcomes to best demonstrate the value and effectiveness of our services. Team members will be strategically placed at offices, including increasing FTE at Lyndhurst and possibly University Circle, although Lyndhurst is the current priority. This will help us address our ever-growing waitlist, which we are working on overhauling with the client care coordinator team. The changes to the waitlist will streamline the process of getting clients in for services – in 2022 it was cumbersome to work with. This was a great year for our department, and we will continue working towards doing an even better job serving our clients in 2023.