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### Cerebral Palsy: Classification, Neurological Bases, and the Role of an SLP

This presentation intends to use evidence based research to inform the reader about the neurological bases and classification system of cerebral palsy from the perspective of a speech language pathologist (SLP).

Cerebral palsy is an umbrella term for a varied group of disorders attributed to posture, movements, and limitation due to disruption in brain development in prenatal, perinatal, or postnatal stages (Van Naarden Braun et al., 2016). Cerebral palsy is a permanent, or chronic, non-progressive group of disorders. The disorder cannot be cured, although can be treated with a variety of therapies, depending on type, severity, and individualized symptoms an individual with cerebral palsy possesses (Pakula, Van Naarden Braun, & Yeargin-Allsopp, 2009). Children who have cerebral palsy can have a wide range of disabilities including speech and hearing difficulties, physical difficulties, and cognitive delays. There is a normal life expectancy and low mortality rate in individuals with cerebral palsy, despite the need for continuous treatment and high intensity care in many cases (Trabacca, Vespino, Di Liddo, & Russo, 2016). There are multiple types of cerebral palsy, which can impact different areas of brain development. Individuals with cerebral palsy can require medications, physical, occupational, and speech therapies, and other treatments. There is still a wealth of information and understanding of cerebral palsy yet to be researched.

A speech language pathologist plays an important role in treating respiration, phonatory control, speech rate, and phrase length with children with cerebral palsy (Pennington et al., 2016). Children with cerebral palsy are likely to have dysarthria accompanying their disorder as well as feeding difficulties (Pennington, Miller, Robson, & Steen, 2009). Some treatments that an SLP can do for individuals with cerebral palsy are: LSVT Loud, PROMPT Therapy, and Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC). A speech pathologist can provide resources and support for families and individuals with cerebral palsy.