

Standards for Certification as a Child Language Specialist

An individual may apply to the American Board of Child Language and Language Disorders to become a Board Certified Specialist in Child Language by complying with the following Standards for Certification as a Child Language Specialist:

1. Hold a current Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) in Speech-Language Pathology; verify an equivalent of five years of clinical experience after obtaining the CCC with an emphasis on Child Language;
2. Document advanced educational experiences related to typical and atypical language learners, beyond the requirements for the CCC, including typical language learning, children at-risk for language disorders, language differences, and disordered oral and written language, including discourse; and
3. Demonstrate advanced knowledge, skills, and experiences in Child Language.

Qualifications

ASHA Certification - Applicants must currently hold and maintain the ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) in Speech-Language Pathology. Maintenance of the ASHA CCC shall be in compliance with the most current ASHA *Membership and Certification Handbook: Speech-Language Pathology*.

Post-certification experience - Within the ten years prior to submitting an application for Specialty Certification in Child Language, the individual must have been employed as an ASHA certified Speech-Language Pathologist for either of the following:

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- a full-time basis for five years, or
- part-time basis for the equivalent of five years.

The formula to be used to determine the five-year equivalency for an applicant who was employed on a part-time basis will be the same as the formula used by the ASHA for individuals who are part-time employees while pursuing the ASHA CCC (as per the most current edition of the *Membership and Certification Handbook: Speech-Language Pathology*). Clinical experience is defined as the preparation of individuals to provide and/or direct provision of clinical services with clients and their families and in consultation with other professionals also serving the needs of the individual(s).

To qualify for Specialty Certification in Child Language, the individual must demonstrate an emphasis in Child Language by providing the following:

- a description of the employment setting,
- identification of percentage of time employed,
- definition of employment responsibilities and
- identification and description of his/her clinical / professional responsibilities and percentage of time dedicated to each.

The areas of emphasis for which applicants may demonstrate expertise in Child Language include those services for children ages birth - 21 years and their families, across the wide range of consumer needs. Those services are broadly defined within the Scope of Practice in Speech-Language Pathology (ASHA, 2007). More specific to that range of services offered by speech-language pathologists are the most recent Preferred Practice Patterns statements that define universally applicable characteristics of activities directed toward individual patients/clients, and that address structural requisites of the practice, processes to be carried out, and expected outcomes (See ASHA www.asha.org)

Based on this definition, the applicant would necessarily be cognizant of and demonstrate application of these practices, consistent with the most recent ASHA Code of Ethics, the Scope of Practice and the Guiding Principles

defined in the Preferred Practice Patterns for the Profession of Speech-Language Pathology document.(www.asha.org). To be eligible for Specialty Certification in Child Language, however, the applicant must demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills related to those practices unique to the area of Child Language. This does not exclude the need for knowledge and skills in the other areas of practice, as appropriate to the needs of particular consumers served by the speech-language pathologist.

(Refer to ASHA essential documents for the most current information on preferred practice patterns and scope of practice at www.asha.org).

Specialists in Child Language will demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills by documenting the following:

- professional responsibilities beyond the requirements for the CCC that provide services unique to consumers in the area of Child Language;
- specific examples of the application of those Preferred Practice Patterns specific to Child Language; and
- professional responsibilities of the applicant exceed the entry-level requirements for speech-language pathologists due to the specific nature of the clients served, the complexity of the clients' communication needs, and the innovative clinical practices applied.

Education The applicant must meet the ASHA continuing education program requirements and include documentation of advanced educational activities in topics related to Child Language. Advanced educational activities must reflect satisfactory completion of (1) coursework that exceeds requirements for a master's degree and CCC in Speech-Language Pathology or (2) 100 continuing education units at the intermediate or advanced levels of professional development. Topics might include but are not limited to such diverse areas of study as neurolinguistics, the relationship between oral language and literacy, linguistic differences, discourse and narrative analysis, or multicultural variations in language use.

Assessment of knowledge The applicant must submit supporting materials /portfolio that document the application of advanced knowledge and skills in Child Language that are consistent with those Preferred Practice Patterns unique to this area of practice for prevention, assessment of and intervention/treatment with infants, toddlers, children and/or adolescents. The supporting materials/portfolio must include the following:

1. A statement of the applicant's current philosophy of typical and atypical language and literacy development in children with appropriate evidence- based references; and
2. One case study that documents specific application of advanced knowledge and skills in prevention, assessment and intervention/treatment, demonstrates advanced problem-solving skills and applied theoretical constructs, and is consistent with his or her professional role as direct or indirect provider of services;
3. Integration of advanced knowledge as reflected by:
 - a) specifically linking professional literature and presentations (e.g., symposia, workshops, conferences, coursework) to the applicant's philosophy statement and clinical case study;
 - b) references to (a) evidence-based specific practices, (b) position statements , and (c) practice guidelines.