

## Welcome!

Welcome to the Augmentative Alternative Communication Program at the Spaulding Lexington Outpatient Center! We are excited to offer your child a comprehensive evaluation focused on helping your child communicate. At the center of the process are you and your child. The journey may feel exciting and overwhelming. We are here to help.

### **What does AAC stand for?**

AAC stands for augmentative alternative communication. For people who struggle to communicate, it may include paper-based tools (such as pictures and letter boards) or more sophisticated technologies. Your child's clinician will try a variety of systems to see what makes the most sense. Research suggests AAC enhances communication; it does not keep people from speaking.<sup>1</sup>

### **What do I do now?**

Our evaluation process is the only of its kind in the region. We take the time to get to know you and your family's needs so that we can make an informed decision. You can help us by:

- Filling out and returning the intake form
- Calling our office and scheduling 3 appointments:
  - Initial AAC evaluation: 90 minutes
  - 2 follow up sessions: 45-60 minutes each
- For each appointment please bring:
  - Your child's favorite food or toys
  - Any current communication system your child may be using at home or school

### **What happens after my third visit?**

After your third visit, the evaluating therapist will make a recommendation. You will receive detailed instructions on next steps.

If at any time you have questions or need to reschedule an appointment, please contact the front desk at 781.860.1742. We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

The Spaulding Lexington AAC Team

<sup>1</sup>Schlosser, R. & Wendt, O. (2008). Effects of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Intervention on Speech production in children with autism: A systematic Review. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, (17) 212-230.

## Welcome to the Spaulding Lexington Outpatient Center for Children!

We're happy you've chosen to undergo your therapy program here with us. Our staff will provide your family member or child with therapy intervention and care using a team approach in a friendly environment. Please read the following information very carefully prior to the day of your child's first visit. If at any time you have additional questions, please contact our front desk at 781-860-1742.

### Before Your Visit

- A physician order is required for all patients to receive therapy. Please contact your child's doctor to have an order sent to our office. The order should include the requested type of therapy, your child's name, date of birth, and medical diagnosis.
- If it is your child's first appointment to our center, please plan to arrive approximately 5-10 minutes early for the completion of registration paperwork and bring your child's insurance card(s) and a photo ID (if applicable).
- **A parent or legal guardian is required to attend the initial visit.** Proof of guardianship must be presented if you are not the parent.
- If your child has had any previous assessments, please bring them with you or send copies prior to the evaluation. This may include any PT/OT/Speech evaluations performed within the last year, current IEP's, etc.
- If your child has any braces, adaptive equipment, or communication books/boards/devices, please plan to bring these with you.
- If you anticipate your child may have difficulty participating, please bring 1-2 reinforcers, such as a favorite toy, game, or snack.
- If your child requires additional support staff due to behavior, please arrange for familiar staff to accompany the patient to the appointment.

### On the Day of Your Visit

- As a patient and/or family member, you are an important member of the treatment team. Please share your goals and expectations with your clinicians so that we may better coordinate your care.
- Your child's therapist will determine the most appropriate plan of care for your child following the initial evaluation. Please see our front desk after the evaluation for scheduling.
- Treatment sessions are scheduled for 45-60 minutes. Each session includes direct treatment, documentation of progress, and feedback from your therapist. Please be available in our lobby for feedback from your child's therapist 10 minutes prior to the scheduled end of the treatment session.
- Please be prompt for your appointments. Our therapists make every effort to be on time for you. We realize your therapy time is valuable and we don't want you to be shortchanged!
- Our therapists make every effort to provide you with your child's reports in a timely manner. If you need a report by a specific date, please inform the therapist on the day of the evaluation.
- Our waiting room is designed to be a fun place to wait. We expect children to be supervised by their parent or caregiver at all times. Please be respectful of others in the waiting area.
- **A caregiver must remain on the premises at all times while your child is receiving therapy.**

### **Cancellations**

- **If you cannot keep a scheduled appointment, please try to notify us at least 24 hours in advance.** Be aware multiple cancellations or no-shows will affect your child's progress, can jeopardize your insurance coverage, and may result in possible cancellation of future appointments.
- If your child is ill, please use your best judgment in coming for therapy. It will be difficult for your child to be productive in therapy and puts other children and staff at risk. If your child has a fever or active infection (including rashes), wait 24 hours after symptoms have cleared before coming for therapy. If your child has a rash, you will require a doctor's note before returning for treatment.

### **Insurance and Billing**

- It is always wise to verify your insurance coverage and benefits with your insurance company. Please note that although most plans do have benefits for therapy services, some plans exclude coverage for certain diagnoses such as Autism or developmental delay. If the requested service is not a covered benefit under your plan and you still desire to receive these services, you may opt to self-pay.
- Insurance referrals must be provided to our office as required by your insurance carrier. If your insurance company requires referrals, you must contact your child's primary care physician to obtain the necessary referral(s). If you choose to receive care without a referral or authorization from your insurance, you will assume responsibility for payment. Our National Provider Number or NPI is 1780600825.
- **You must notify us if your insurance changes during the course of treatment.** Failure to notify of insurance changes in a timely manner may result in additional out-of-pocket costs to you and a delay in treatment services to your child. Please call Registration at (844) 805-0205 to update your information.
- If a copay or self-payment is required, payment is due at the time of each visit. We accept all major credit cards. If you have any questions about a bill you have received, please call our Billing Customer Service Department at (617) 726-3884.

### **Additional Information**

- Free parking is available in our parking lot located directly outside the main building entrance.
- Upon your arrival to our center, follow the path along the side of the building to the Spaulding entrance.
- We support the law known as the Massachusetts Patient's Bill of Rights. A copy of your rights is posted in our center. You may also request a copy.
- After your visit, you may receive a phone call or email asking about your experience. Your feedback is very important to us.

**Your satisfaction is our primary goal.** If you have questions or concerns, please share these and we will work to resolve any issues. If your patient service representative or therapist cannot help you, you may contact our site manager, Michelle Alexander. As always, we are here to help you!

Sincerely,

***The Staff at Spaulding Lexington***

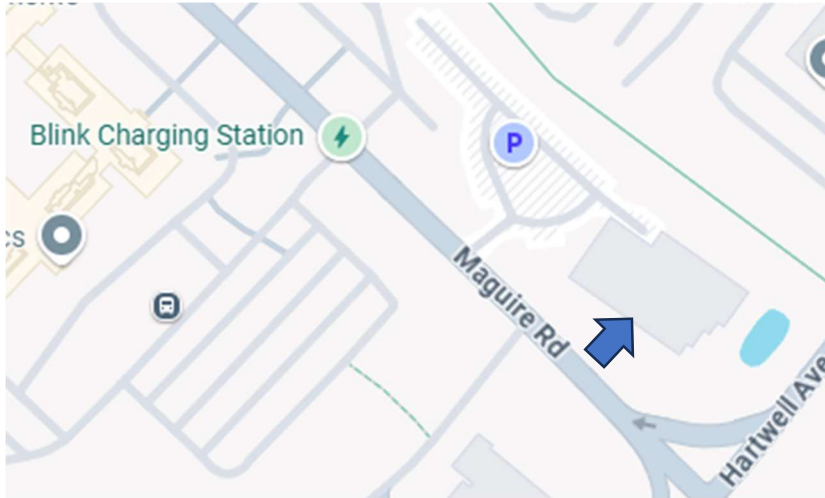
SRHLexington@partners.org

## Spaulding Lexington Outpatient Center for Children

1 Maguire Road, Lexington, MA 02421-3114

Phone: 781-860-1742 Fax: 781-860-1769

Email: [srhlexington@partners.org](mailto:srhlexington@partners.org)



### Traveling I-95/Rt. 128 North:

- Take 4N RT 225W Exit 49 B
- Merge onto MA – 225/MA-4 (Bedford Street)
- Follow Bedford Street in the right-hand lane for approximately .5 miles and take a right turn (“Jug Handle Turn”) onto Hartwell Ave. Follow signs for Hartwell Avenue and Hanscom. (This right-hand turn allows you to turn left onto Hartwell Ave.)
- Follow Hartwell Avenue staying on the right side of the road for .5 miles. Take the first right hand turn at Maguire Road. Our parking lot is the first driveway on the right on Maguire Road.

### Traveling I-95/RT 128 South:

- Take 4N RT 225W Exit 49 B
- Turn slightly onto MA – 225 MA – 4 (Bedford Street)
- Follow Bedford Street in the right-hand *lane* for approximately .5 miles and take a right turn (“Jug Handle Turn”) onto Hartwell Ave. Follow signs for Hartwell Avenue and Hanscom. (This right-hand turn allows you to turn left onto Hartwell Ave.)
- Follow Hartwell Avenue staying on the right side of the road for .5 miles. Take the first right hand turn at Maguire Road. Our parking lot is the first driveway on the right on Maguire Road.

## Rehabilitation Philosophy

Spaulding Outpatient Center for Children prides itself on providing the highest quality of care for our patients. Our rehabilitation philosophy has been developed over the course of many years to maintain this quality. Our facility provides short-term rehabilitation, and we are committed to improving the lives of our patients and families. Upon arrival to our facility, each child's functional skills are evaluated through standardized testing and caregiver interview. Based on this initial evaluation, clinicians work with the patients and their family to develop functional goals and an individualized treatment plan.

**Family Centered Model:** Spaulding Outpatient Center for Children promotes a family centered therapy model to ensure carryover and mastery of skills in all environments. The ability to provide consistent family education is the primary variant between the school-based treatment model and Spaulding Outpatient Center for Children's model. We believe that consistency in everyday activities is essential for success as we are only able to work with your family for a limited time. As a result, it is the responsibility of each family to participate in treatment and follow through with home education programs as they are instructed.

**Attendance:** In order to achieve goals established by clinicians and caregivers, it is imperative that children regularly attend treatment sessions as outlined in their plan of care. Although we realize there are legitimate reasons you may need to cancel an appointment, our main priority is providing consistent treatment. As a result, missed sessions may result in changes to your child's treatment schedule.

**Therapeutic Breaks:** As Spaulding Outpatient Center for Children is a short-term rehabilitation facility, we promote the use of strategic therapeutic breaks for patients with long-term needs regardless of diagnosis and/or prognosis. Based on the extensive experience of our specialized clinicians, these short breaks in treatment are beneficial in the rehabilitation process. For patients and families, it helps prevent burnout from the difficult task of participating in intensive treatment. For therapists, it allows them to view the patient with a new perspective from one course of therapy to another to ensure that treatment goals are as functional as possible. The decision regarding therapeutic breaks is made at the discretion of the treating clinician with input from the caretakers.

To ensure maximal gains in your child's therapy, we believe our rehabilitation philosophy of family-centered care, consistent attendance, and strategic breaks are important components for success. Consequently, failure to commit to our rehabilitation philosophy may result in changes to your child's plan of care, schedule or untimely discharge from treatment. We look forward to working together with you to ensure the best care for your child and family.

## Frequency of Therapy

The focus of therapy is to equip children and their families with the knowledge and skills needed to manage daily challenges after therapy has ended. The goal of therapy is to help each child develop the skills necessary for the job of living. Therapy programs are short term with clearly identified functional goals. Progress toward these goals is assessed continuously and the determination is made at least every three months to determine if therapy is still needed. Studies have shown that children achieve targeted goals, acquire functional skills and show accelerated rates of developmental progress when parents and professionals work together. We believe you are the key to your child's success.

Therapists use **Guidelines for Determining the Frequency of Therapy** to help decide how often and for how long therapy services are needed. There are four frequencies of therapy used: Intensive, Weekly/Bimonthly, Periodic and Consultative.

**Intensive Therapy** - Three to 5 visits each week

This frequency is for children who need intensive therapy and have immediate and complex needs.

- Intensive Therapy is frequent, for a limited length of time, and for children who are quickly moving toward their goals.
- Intensive Therapy is also for children at risk for losing function due to a current medical condition.
- Changes to the therapy plan are made often and intense family education is provided.

**Weekly/Bimonthly Therapy** - One to two times each week or every other week

This frequency is for children who need frequent therapy and are making continuous progress toward their goals.

- The child needs to see a skilled therapist for regular visits for a limited time.
- Parents learn to safely perform exercises and activities with their child.
- A routine home program is being established.

**Periodic Therapy** - Monthly or at regularly scheduled intervals

This frequency is best for children who show slower progress toward their goals and for caregivers who can safely carry out a routine home program.

- Periodic sessions with a therapist are needed to check on function, provide treatment and update the home program.

**Consultative Therapy** - As necessary

Once your child has been discharged from therapy, consultative services are available as necessary. These services may be needed when:

- Your child improves or regresses.
- Medical interventions that occur in stages are planned.
- Your child is ready to perform a new task as a result of changes in age, developmental stage, life cycle, physical environment or social environment.
- New assistive technology is available.

When appropriate, re-enrollment in therapy for a defined period of time may be recommended.

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***“Spaulding Rehabilitation does not discriminate with regard to age, race, color, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socio-economic status, physical or mental disability. We strive to enhance the wellbeing of all members of our community.”***

At Spaulding Rehabilitation, we are committed to the principles of equity, dignity and respect for all members of our community. We value the diversity of our patients, visitors and staff members. As a patient, you have the right to be treated with respect. You also have the responsibility to treat other people you encounter here (other patients, visitors, and our staff) with respect. Our Patient Bill of Rights are posted in the lobbies of our buildings, on our website, and in our Patient Guide.