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A joint venture of Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and the Department of Communication Science and Disorders at the University of Pittsburgh

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<http://www.stutteringcenter.org>

Stuttering Center at ASHA

The annual conference of the American Speech, Language, and Hearing Association (ASHA) will be held in Chicago, IL from November 12th through November 15th.

The Stuttering Center will be well represented with several presentations, including:

Everything you need to know about fluency: Clinical tips from the expert (Yaruss) (Invited workshop sponsored by NSSLHA)

Stuttering newsletter: A model for increasing community involvement (Coleman, Carlson, Yaruss, Pelczarski)

What do we do with pre-school children who stutter? Strategies for SLPs (Yaruss)

Anatomy, Fiber Type & Clinical Implications of Human Interarytenoid Muscle (Tellis, Yaruss)

Is It Necessary to Train School SLPs to Assess/Treat Stuttering? (Tellis)

Understanding the Speaker's Experience of Stuttering (Kluetz)

Handouts from these presentations will be available on the Stuttering Center's website after the conference.

(www.stutteringcenter.org)

We will provide summaries of these presentations, as well other key ASHA presentations, in future issues of the Stuttering Center News!!

Student Clinician's View: Exposure to Stuttering

Kristen Kostelich, Graduate Student, University of Pittsburgh

As a beginning student clinician and first year graduate student in speech-language pathology at the University of Pittsburgh, I have been given an opportunity that, I feel, many clinicians may not experience, but should.

When talking to other students and clinicians, I find that many are misinformed about stuttering therapy. They think that, like other types of speech therapy, you are trying to merely eliminate speech disfluencies. Many did not know of treatment approaches besides "not finishing sentences for

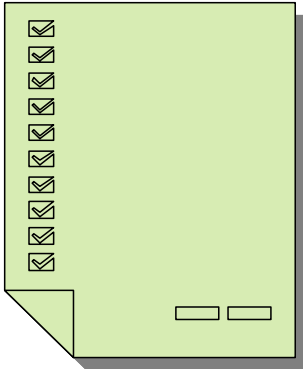
people who stutter" and "there's a new device that goes in your ear." When I began this semester I would probably have agreed with my peers.

As an undergraduate student, I was never exposed to fluency disorders beyond the basic facts and theories. After working with children who stutter and understanding the depths of therapy, I think that all student clinicians should be exposed to clients who stutter. The experience in itself is important so that a clinician feels comfortable with these clients.

It is very important to know as students that treatment involves a lot more than just decreasing the number of disfluencies. There are many steps we can take, such as educating the child and family members about the disorder and helping the family learn how to deal with the negative reactions that may co-occur with the child's disfluencies. You also have to build comfort levels in yourself and the client in order to be successful in stuttering treatment.



Stuttering Center Update: Newsletter Survey Now On-Line



The *Stuttering Center News* survey is now available on-line at www.stutteringcenter.org. You can take the survey by clicking on the link [here](#) or on the home page.

The surveys we have received so far have been very helpful for us. If you have not yet completed the survey, we ask that you please take a few minutes to do so.

When you open the link from our website, you will be asked to answer just ten

questions by clicking on the appropriate response.

When you have completed the survey, click on the “submit” button at the bottom of the page. Your web browser may prompt you to verify that you want to send the survey to Craig Coleman via email. You can click “yes” to confirm.

A blue “progress bar” will come up to indicate how much of the survey has been sent. Once the bar reaches

the end, you will need to click on the “yes” button again to complete sending.

You will need to be logged on to an email account for the survey to be submitted.

If you have any questions, or have difficulty completing the survey, please let us know by sending an email to craig.coleman@chp.edu

Results from the survey will be presented at the upcoming ASHA convention.

Stuttering treatment involves much more than reducing the number of disfluencies.

Hot Topic: Changes in Stuttering Treatment

Shane Harder, Graduate Student, University of Pittsburgh

Having been a child who stuttered, I was eager to learn how to help children reduce the negative effect stuttering could have on their lives.

In the past, treatment consisted of reading word lists. I went to therapy in school once a week for half hour sessions in 2nd and 3rd grade. We worked on word lists and “talking easy.”

Although my stuttering still exists, I know how to manage it, and that makes it have less of an impact. Today, many people don’t even know I stutter! As a student clinician, I was interested in making a comparison be-

tween treatment available 10+ years ago and the treatment available today.

For preschool children, we now initiate parent/child training sessions. This allows us to work more directly with the parent, and more indirectly with the child. We help parents modify their rate of speech, reduce “demand” speech, and help them rephrase their child’s speech. This approach involves both direct and indirect methods of treatment.

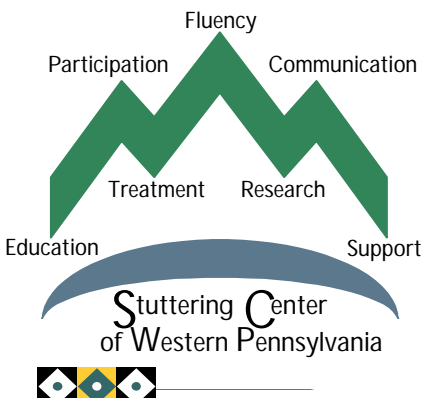
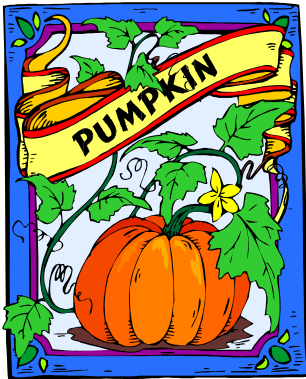
With school-aged children, we try to educate children on all aspects of stuttering. We

also work on getting “stuck” on purpose and talk about how it feels and what our speech system is doing. This helps “desensitize” them to stuttering. We also help them see the differences between stuttering with and without physical tension. All children agree that stuttering is much easier without physical tension. We have found that not only reducing the number of disfluencies, but also reducing negative feelings and reducing tension are essential components for coping with stuttering.

As one might imagine, treatment methods for stuttering have changed dramatically in the last 10+ years. I strongly believe that the approaches today are much more beneficial for people who stutter. When children learn *why* and *how* they stutter, they become the experts and begin to communicate freely, regardless of whether they stutter. In essence, isn’t that our ultimate goal?

The Stuttering Center of Western PA’s four-part mission.....

- Treatment for people who stutter
- Research on the nature and treatment of stuttering
- Education for students and clinicians interested in learning more about stuttering
- Support for people who stutter, their families, and their clinicians



Q & A: At What Age Can Stuttering Treatment Begin?

Like all speech and language disorders, **early intervention is critical for helping young children who stutter.** While it is true that many children go through a normal period of disfluency between the ages of 2 and 5, it is difficult to accurately predict which children are at greatest risk for continuing to stutter.

Sometimes, parents are told to wait to see if their child will “outgrow” stuttering before seeking help. We do *not* favor this approach, for it may result in the need for more extensive treatment at a later time. The best time to act is when a parent (or child) becomes concerned about speaking.

We have found that parents are *very* accurate in their concerns about their child’s speech. If you are concerned about your child, it is best to *act as early as possible* and seek an evaluation with a therapist who is knowledgeable about stuttering.

Today, many treatment programs, including our program at the Stuttering Center, directly involve parents to help them learn how to “treat” the child’s stuttering at home. There is so much you can do to help your child— if you have concerns about your child’s speech, call us today!!

National Stuttering Association Corner Dan Kremer, Leader of Pittsburgh Chapter of the NSA

The National Stuttering Association (NSA) is the largest support organization in the US for people who stutter. With more than 80 chapters nationwide, the NSA is dedicated to helping people who stutter, their families, and clinicians who serve them.

The Pittsburgh Chapter of the NSA meets at 7:00pm on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month. Meetings are held at the Children’s Institute in Squirrel Hill at the corner of Shady Ave. and Northumberland Street.

As the leader of our local NSA chapter, I organize activities to help members speak openly and freely in front of a group of people.

We begin by introducing ourselves and talking about what we have been doing the past two weeks. Of course we always talk about stuttering. Each meeting, we have a specific discussion topic. We usually have about 10 to 12 people, and we’re always looking for more. Speech therapists are *always* welcome! If you’re interested in joining us, send an email to thustlebird@yahoo.com

Our holiday party will be held on 12/10 at 7 pm. We are also developing a website and newsletter, coming soon!

For more information about the NSA, check out the NSA’s new website at: www.WeStutter.org!

SLP Corner: Helping Children Learn About Speech Structures

When working with school-age children, one of the first things we do is to help the child learn *how* they talk. We accomplish this by working with the child to create a “Speech Man.”

We help children identify all the parts of the Speech Man that help him talk (e.g., brain, lungs, teeth, lips, tongue, voice box, etc.).

Next, we show the children each step of the speaking process.

First, the brain comes up with a message to send. Then, the brain has to “talk” with muscles to help parts of the Speech Man move to help him talk. Before the Speech Man can talk, his lungs have to give him the air that he needs to talk.

The Speech Man’s voice box may or may not “buzz” when air is coming from the lungs. The Speech Man also has different parts of his mouth that make sounds. Children learn where sounds are made in their “speech system.”

This activity sets the stage for many more advanced therapy strategies. Try it and let us know what you think!

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The Stuttering Center offers evaluation and treatment through Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh in Oakland and at our satellite offices in Bethel Park, Monroeville, and Wexford. Visit the Children’s Hospital website at www.chp.edu for directions.

Find us on the Web!

www.stutteringcenter.org

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Send us your questions & comments and *don’t forget our survey!!!*

