



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

# Stuttering Center News

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## Inside this Issue

- 1 ASHA Convention Update
- 2 SLP Corner: The Great Debate
- 2 Stuttering Center Fluency Groups
- 2 Message from the Stuttering Center of Western PA
- 3 International Stuttering Online Conference
- 3 ASHA Election Results
- 3 New Book on Stuttering in School-Age Children
- 3 New Film about Stuttering to Debut at ASHA Convention!
- 4 Research Update: Caregiver-Child Interactions

## Stuttering Center at ASHA Convention

The 2004 Convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association will take place in Philadelphia, PA from November 18 through November 20.

Once again, Stuttering Center staff will give numerous presentations at ASHA. Here are some brief overviews of the presentations we will be giving:

### ***Stuttering Center News: Progress in Increasing Community Involvement*** (Craig Coleman, J. Scott Yaruss, Kristin Pelczarski, Kristine Campbell)

In 2003, the Stuttering Center News was presented as a model for facilitating interaction between the clinic and the community. The newsletter has become a national and international source of information. This presentation will provide a new model for the newsletter and demographic information from those who receive it.

### ***Assessment of the Child's Experience of Stuttering (ACES)*** (Craig Coleman, J. Scott Yaruss)

This presentation will describe a new instrument for assessing stuttering in children. Assessment of the Child's Experience of Stuttering (ACES) gauges children's reactions to stuttering across the affective, behavioral, and cognitive domains, in addition to evaluating functional communication abilities and the impact of stuttering on the child's quality of life. The development of the instrument will be reviewed, and preliminary data will be presented. (You can get a copy of the ACES in the "research" section of our website – [www.StutteringCenter.org](http://www.StutteringCenter.org).)

### ***Selected Attitudes Toward Stuttering: U.S. Urban, Ethnic, and Racial Variations*** (J. Scott Yaruss et al.)

This study is part of a larger effort to examine attitudes toward stuttering around the world. In this study, three groups of adults completed experimental versions of the Public Opinion Survey of Human Attributes (POSHA-E). Attitudes were similar between two predominantly Caucasian samples. Both showed differences in attitudes from African-American respondents.

### ***Mitochondrial Abnormalities in PCA of Smokers Versus Nonsmokers: Functional Implications*** (Cari Tellis)

Increased cytochrome c oxidase deficiency can indicate mitochondrial abnormalities in muscle fibers, decreased oxidative capacity, and increased muscle fatigue. Exposure to oxygen-free radicals from cigarette smoke may cause mitochondrial damage in intrinsic laryngeal muscles fibers. Smokers, therefore, may have an increased risk for laryngeal muscle fatigue and voice disorders. This presentation presents a study documenting cytochrome c oxidase deficiency in a group of adult smokers.

Handouts from our presentations will be available on our website soon!

## **Get your free subscription to the Stuttering Center News!!**

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## SLP Corner: The Great Debate

Craig Coleman, MA, CCC-SLP

With the Presidential Election getting a significant amount of coverage in the news these days, many school-age and adolescent children are being exposed to debates for the first time. This is particularly true when they see coverage of the candidates' debates on television.

As a clinician, one way to take advantage of children's growing awareness of debates is to have your students participate in debates of their own with their peers--or with you. For example, you can pretend that you are debating with the child to see who would make a better Class President of their school. If you have other children present, you can serve as the moderator while the children debate your questions. If you are involved in individual treatment with the child, you can take turns asking each other questions that you will both need to answer.

The "winner" of the debate is decided by a points system, which rewards one point for each of the following: appropriate eye contact, use of any speech modification *or* stuttering modification strategies (e.g., easy starts, pausing and phrasing, or even voluntary stuttering), *and* the content of the response.

Each participant in the debate is given their own turn to answer questions. This gives them a chance to talk without being interrupted. In addition to allowing the child to work on several objectives in a natural context, this activity also promotes an awareness of time pressure and turn-taking.

Debates are also a fun way to have children focus on *content* of their speech during treatment sessions as well as their speech modification and stuttering modification techniques.

If you would like to share a treatment idea, please feel free to send it to us at [craig.coleman@chp.edu](mailto:craig.coleman@chp.edu) and we will publish it in an upcoming newsletter!

## Preschool and School-Age Fluency Groups

Craig Coleman, M.A., CCC-SLP

Beginning in October, the Stuttering Center will begin holding monthly group therapy sessions for preschool and school-age children who stutter. Sessions will be held at each of our Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh neighborhood locations! We hope you will join us!

There will be a "Preschool Fluency Group" for children ages 4-7 and a "School-Age Fluency Group" for children ages 8-13.

In general, these groups will run as follows:

**First Wednesday of each Month:** Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh East in Monroeville (Pre-school Group at 3:00; School-Age Group at 4:00) *Note: This group will begin in November.*

**Second Wednesday of each Month:** Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh South in Bethel Park (Pre-school Group at 3:00; School-Age Group at 4:00).

**Third Wednesday of each Month:** Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh North in Wexford (Pre-school Group at 3:00; School-Age Group at 4:00).

**Fourth Wednesday of each Month:** Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh-Main in Oakland (Pre-school Group at 3:00; School-Age Group at 4:00).

Since this schedule may change for holidays, vacations, etc., **you must confirm your child's attendance for a group session at least 48 hours prior to the group session.** You can confirm your child's attendance by contacting Craig Coleman, Clinical Coordinator of the Stuttering Center, at 412-666-3825, or vial email at [craig.coleman@chp.edu](mailto:craig.coleman@chp.edu)

**If a session needs to be cancelled by us, you will be contacted by a clinician at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled group session.**

### Message From the Stuttering Center

Craig Coleman

J. Scott Yaruss



Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions. Our December 2004 issue will focus entirely on practical treatment activities for children who stutter! We now have over 320 people receiving the newsletter. We look forward to more joining soon!

## International Stuttering Online Conference

By Judy Kuster, MS, CCC-SLP

The seventh annual International Stuttering Online Conference is open from October 1 to October 22, the day designated "International Stuttering Awareness Day." The theme of the conference is "international year of the child who stutters."

Conference presentations, by consumers and professionals from 15 countries, are posted for reading on the web site. Presentations are designed for a general audience, and feedback and discussion is invited through an Internet bulletin board (threaded discussion). Featured this year is a special section designed especially for participation by children and teens who stutter.

Please come to the conference, choose some papers that interest you, and post comments/questions to the presenters. Help children post their questions and messages about the special presentations (they are marked with balloons). There are also two places to post general questions about stuttering and about stuttering research. A group of professors and researchers have agreed to respond to appropriate questions during the three weeks of the conference.

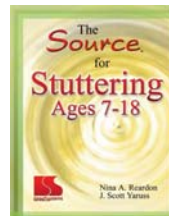
The 2004 Conference, as well as those from previous years, can be found linked to the Stuttering Home Page (<http://www.stutteringhomepage.com>), which also features a place to post ISAD 2004 events planned by organizations and individuals around the world (<http://cahn.mnsu.edu/7announcement>).



## ASHA Election Results

Thanks to the tremendous support from local ASHA members, the Stuttering Center's **Craig Coleman** was elected to serve on the ASHA Legislative Council as a Pennsylvania representative. Mr. Coleman's term will begin on January 1, 2005 and run through December 31, 2007. Mr. Coleman thanks all of the voters for their support. He is looking forward to representing Pennsylvania on the ASHA Legislative Council. Complete results of the ASHA Election can be viewed at [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org).

### New Book on Stuttering Treatment for School-Age Children



The Stuttering Center's J. Scott Yaruss and colleague Nina Reardon have written a new book on stuttering! *The Source for Stuttering: Ages 7-18* will be published by LinguiSystems in October. This resource provides a wealth of information about diagnosis and treatment, including numerous forms, handouts, and worksheets to help you help children who stutter. Contact Dr. Yaruss ([jsyaruss@csd.pitt.edu](mailto:jsyaruss@csd.pitt.edu)) or check LinguiSystems ([www.LinguiSystems.com](http://www.LinguiSystems.com)) for more information.

### New Movie Debuts at ASHA

Dr. Phil Schneider, SLP Professor at Queens College in New York, has created a new 60-minute film about stuttering. *Stutter Free: Transcending the Challenge* was designed "to teach the world about stuttering" and to show how people can overcome the challenges they face. The film tells the personal stories of people who stutter as they made their journeys from "feeling okay about themselves...to shame about things that set them apart...and back to self-expression...light to darkness to light." The film will debut in a reception hosted by the National Stuttering Association on Thursday, November 18.

## Upcoming Events

Stuttering Center staff will present several workshops in the coming months. For more information, check out our website at [www.StutteringCenter.org](http://www.StutteringCenter.org) or send an email to Craig Coleman at [craig.coleman@chp.edu](mailto:craig.coleman@chp.edu).

### Workshops Include:

- Pittsburgh, PA--Naomi Landy Lecture of the Southwestern PA Speech and Hearing Association (10/9)
- Grand Rapids, MI (10/14)
- Detroit, MI (10/15)
- Dallas, TX (10/20)
- Hot Springs, AR (10/21)
- Baltimore, MD (11/2)
- Louisville, KY (11/4)
- Omaha, NE (11/10)
- Bloomington, MN (11/11)
- Middleton, WI (11/12)

You can view handouts from previous presentations by **J. Scott Yaruss and Craig Coleman** at:

[www.stutteringcenter.org/handouts](http://www.stutteringcenter.org/handouts)

If you would like information on scheduling an in-service presentation with J. Scott Yaruss or Craig Coleman, please let us know!

**NEW! Check out our updated website at [www.stutteringcenter.org](http://www.stutteringcenter.org) for several new and updated handouts and resources, including information for teachers and physicians!!**

## Research Update: Caregiver-Child Interactions

In the January 2004 edition of *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in the Schools*, Dr. Nan Bernstein Ratner of the University of Maryland discussed the importance of providing appropriate recommendations to parents when working with young children who stutter. The article, titled “Caregiver-child interactions and their impact on children’s fluency: Implications for treatment,” provides a multitude of suggestions for clinicians working with parents of young children who stutter. These recommendations include:

1. Help parents understand that, while certain modifications in their communication may be recommended, their communicative interactions with their child did *not* cause their child’s stuttering. The modifications can have a positive impact, but the fact that they were not used prior to the start of treatment is not the reason that the child began stuttering.

2. Clinicians should understand that working on decreased speaking rate and appropriate turn-taking may have a positive effect on a child, but they also may not be enough to resolve stuttering unless other strategies are implemented.

3. Clinicians should also help parents understand that talking about stuttering openly with a child is not always negative. Many children will benefit from open discussion about stuttering. Such discussion demonstrates that the parents are aware of the stuttering, while at the same time showing that is okay for the child to have “bumpy” speech sometimes. Ratner suggests that, while this type of discussion may not immediately result in increased fluency, it typically results in decreased physical tension, decreased secondary behaviors, and decreased negative reactions on the part of the child. In turn, this can help the child’s overall speech fluency.

4. Clinicians should avoid making any type of recommendation that might negatively impact the child’s language development. This includes suggestions that parents reduce the amount of language stimulation they provide for the child (e.g., simplifying utterances).

Bernstein Ratner’s recommendations show the importance of the parent-child-clinician relationship. Clinicians should be sensitive to the specific needs of a child and his or her family. When providing suggestions for altering communication environments, it is important to remember that each child may receive a different level of benefit from these modifications. Some children will benefit greatly from an open discussion and positive acknowledgement of their stuttering. Other children, who are not aware of, or who are not bothered by their stuttering, may not need this aspect of treatment.

Some parents will need to make more changes in their communication patterns than others. Reducing communication pace, reducing time pressure by minimizing rapid-fire questioning, reducing speaking demands, and other strategies may need to be more of a priority for some parents, and less so for others. The strategies you will select depends on the family’s pre-treatment communication patterns, highlighting the importance of a thorough diagnostic evaluation.

At the Stuttering Center of Western PA, we use a Parent/Child Training Program (PCTP) that is individualized to meet the needs of each child’s his or her family. Treatment begins with a six-session program that provides the education and counseling parents need in treatment. It also allows clinicians to tailor treatment to the child’s needs. Our treatment is based on research such as that reviewed by Bernstein Ratner. This is particularly important in today’s “evidence-based practice” environment. Although we have more work to do to evaluate the outcomes of our treatment, this work is underway, and you can look for more information about our research in this column.

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**The Stuttering Center offers evaluation and treatment for children who stutter 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](http://www.chp.edu) for directions.**

**Find us on the Web!**

[www.stutteringcenter.org](http://www.stutteringcenter.org)

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For more information or to view handouts about the PCTP at the Stuttering Center of Western PA, visit our website at [www.stutteringcenter.org](http://www.stutteringcenter.org) and click on the “Resources” tab. You can also contact Craig Coleman at [craig.coleman@chp.edu](mailto:craig.coleman@chp.edu) to receive an overview of the PCTP program.

