

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Communicating effectively is critical to our ability to lead fulfilling lives.

Difficulties with communication can occur at any life stage - infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and in our senior years. They can include challenges with speech, language, hearing comprehensions, memory and attention.

Whatever the cause, prompt and proper treatment of these difficulties is essential.

Since 1969, Speech & Hearing Associates (SHA) has been helping people of all ages speak and understand whether deficits are due to heredity, birth defects, drug reactions, head injury, infections, exposure to loud noise, aging, neuromuscular disorders, stroke, viral diseases, mental retardation, physical impairments (cleft lip or palate), developmental delays and vocal strain.

Common Hearing Disorders

Conductive - Sound is not conducted efficiently through the outer and/or middle ear, causing unclear or muffled sounds. Often can be treated medically or surgically.

Sensorineural - Sounds may be distorted and misunderstood due to damage to the inner ear or nerve pathways to the brain. Usually a hearing aid or other amplification device can help.

Central Auditory Processing (CAP) - How individuals process or interpret what they hear. Many hear normally, but have problems listening and comprehending which causes communication and learning difficulties.

Common Language Disorders

Delayed Language - Late development of vocabulary and grammar, which hinders a child's ability to express and understand thoughts and ideas.

Aphasia - The loss of speech and language abilities resulting from stroke or head injury.

Common Speech Disorders

Stuttering - An interruption in speech characterized by hesitations, repetitions, or prolongation of sounds, syllables, words or phrases. For example "tuh, tuh, tuh, table".

Articulation Disorders - Difficulties forming and linking sounds. For example, substituting sounds (wabbit for rabbit), omitting a sound (han for hand) or distorting a sound (shlip for sip).

Voice Disorders - Inappropriate pitch (too high or low, no inflections), volume (too loud or soft) or quality (harsh, hoarse, breathy, or nasal).

Swallowing Difficulties - Can be present at birth or develop later in life for a number of reasons (injury, poor muscle tone, stroke, Alzheimer's Disease, etc.). Can challenge effective communication and the ability to eat.

Warning Signs

Hearing Loss - may be suspected when people do not hear sounds such as the telephone or doorbell ringing, frequently need conversation to be repeated, turn up the volume on the TV or radio too high, or have difficulty understanding speech in noisy or group environments.

Speech and language disorders - may be present when a person's speech or language is different from that of others of the same age, sex, or ethnic group; when a person's speech and/or language is hard to understand; when a person is overly concerned about his or her own speech; or when a person frequently avoids communicating with others.

Auditory processing disorders - may be suspected when a child has normal hearing but demonstrates auditory difficulties such as following directions, asking for frequent repetitions, and misunderstanding speech.

Whenever a communication problem is suspected - at any age - it is important to get an evaluation by an audiologist and speech-language pathologist to determine the cause and necessary treatment.

At Speech & Hearing Associates all of our Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists are licensed by the State of New Jersey, have a Master's or Doctoral Degree, and are certified by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA).

Speech, language & audiology services
For children & adults since 1969
(800) SHA-7551

Locations:

590 Anderson Avenue
Cliffside Park, NJ 07010
(201) 313-5335

3155 Route 10 East
Suite 212
Denville, NJ 07834
(973) 664-6990

275 Paterson Avenue
Suite 104
Little Falls, NJ 07424
(973) 785-0696

Bridge Pointe Office Complex
225 Bridge Street Bldg. E
Metuchen, NJ 08840
(732) 750-4660

784 Chimney Rock Road
Suite E
Martinsville, NJ 08836
(908) 575-0399

74 Pascack Road
Suite 7
Park Ridge, NJ 07656
(201) 775-5699

556 Eagle Rock Avenue
Suite 105
Roseland, NJ 07068
(973) 763-2841

150 Flanagan Way
Secaucus, NJ 07094
(201) 578-1999

121 South Euclid Avenue
Westfield, NJ 07090
(908) 232-2900