Winter is Here!!

As we end the year and begin anew, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of our clients, friends, campers and professional associates for a memorable 2013.

Without you, there would be no Speech & Hearing Center. We appreciate all of the opportunities that allowed us to share our enthusiasm for improving communication.

We know you have choices for your hearing healthcare, hearing aid and speech, language and voice needs and appreciate your continued trust.

The highest compliment our clients can give us is to recommend us to a friend. We thank all of you for the referrals to our Center.

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Keeping Your Hearing Aids Happy – Learn more on pages 6-8.

Research Opportunities – The GWU Speech & Hearing Science Faculty are conducting a number of research projects – see pages 9-10 to learn more!

Save the Date!

Hearing Health Fair
January 7 & 8, 2014
Free Hearing Screenings and Free Hearing Aid Checks – call 202-994-7360 to reserve your appointment.

Upcoming Workshops
See pages 2 for details!

New Group Therapy Opportunities
See pages 3-4 for details!
Upcoming Workshops

Every year, the Speech & Hearing Center holds a variety of workshops designed to provide intensive therapy for a variety of communication needs.

**Transitional Voice Training Intensives (Boot Camp)**

Entering its second offering, this workshop was created and directed by Linda Siegfriedt, MEd, CCC-SLP. This program is designed to intensively enhance vocal feminization through prolonged therapy sessions using physiological and behavior techniques. All training is based on the individual needs and desires of the attendee. Candidates for training are any transgendered person with a desire for personal vocal alignment supported by vocal balance, power, endurance, flexibility and clarity. To enroll, contact Linda Siegfriedt at (202) 994-3027. Space is limited. Examination by an ENT for medical clearance prior to this workshop is strongly recommended.

**New - AAC Intensives**

Designed for individuals who use Augmentative & Alternative Communication devices to increase their communication. Directed by Kari Comer, MS, CCC-SLP, the 2-day workshop will provide a skills assessment and therapy that is tailored to individual communication needs. For more information, contact Kari Comer at comerk@gwu.edu.
Upcoming Workshops

CHAMP Camp & Mini-CHAMP

Entering its 3rd year, CHAMP camp, designed for children with apraxia of speech, will again be held in the summer. Directed by Jodi Kumar, MS, CCC-SLP, the camp includes intensive individual and group therapy for the children, in addition to parent education training. To provide continuing care to children that have attended CHAMP camp and to provide support to children with CAS, a 2-day speech therapy intensive (Mini-CHAMP) will commence in Spring of 2014 and will be ongoing each semester. Detailed information and applications will be available starting in January 2014.

New Group Therapy Opportunities

Group Therapy for Clients with Transitional Voices

This activity is a weekly 90-120 minute therapy session with multiple participants who may have been placed on the waiting list for individual training. We are inviting clients to participate and begin a program until a slot for individual training becomes available. This is a way for all clients to start their training almost immediately. If interested, contact Linda Siegfriedt at (202) 994-3027.
New Group Therapy Opportunities

Communicating with Aphasia

Starting in Spring 2014, this group is designed for individuals with aphasia. The focus of this group will target improving overall communication through speaking, listening comprehension, writing and reading. For more information, contact Rachel Neuman at rneuman@gwu.edu or Mike Bamdad at mbamdad@gwu.edu.

Loud Crowd

Starting in Spring, 2014, this group is designed for individuals with speaking difficulties related to Parkinson’s disease, stroke, multiple sclerosis and other conditions. The focus of the group will be on clear speaking in a group setting. Members determine the topics for each session. For more information, contact Rachel Neuman at rneuman@gwu.edu or Mike Bamdad at mbamdad@gwu.edu.

For more information about any of the upcoming workshops & new group therapy opportunities, visit the GWU Speech & Hearing Science websites at departments.columbian.gwu.edu/speechhearing/center/workshops and departments.columbian.gwu.edu/speechhearing/center/grouptherapy
The Sensory Gym is an additional treatment space to complement the pediatric therapy rooms offered in the Center. While the Gym can be utilized to meet the needs of our client’s “sensory lifestyles,” it also serves as a fun and motivating motor-oriented environment in which to elicit language. Currently, the Sensory Gym has an array of sensory-related activities and equipment to assist in regulating our client’s sensory needs and meeting speech and language goals.
Keeping Your Hearing Aids Happy

If you are a hearing aid user, you have invested in improving your communication ability. Keep those hearing aids working well by treating them gently.

Earwax, or cerumen, is often the biggest culprit preventing hearing aids from working properly. Many manufacturers provide wax guards to help prevent cerumen from entering the hearing aids – changing them when a decrease in sound quality is identified often solves the problem. Additionally, regularly scheduled hearing aid checks with your audiologist are a great way to monitor the amount of cerumen your ears produce and ensure that the sound ports of your devices are clear and properly functioning.

Moisture tends to be the next offender to proper hearing aid function. Even in winter, when the air is dryer, moisture can be an issue. Our ear canals maintain an approximate 40-70% humidity. Add a hearing aid to the ear canal and the humidity percentage increases, regardless of season. The best defense against moisture from humidity, perspiration and heat is to use a desiccant every night, all year long. There are several types of desiccants available: passive, electronic and disinfecting. Although the hearing aid battery can remain in the hearing aid when using a desiccant, it may reduce its life by 1-2 days.

**Passive** – uses silica moisture-absorbing beads that are housed in a container/pod, which is stored within a larger container. Over time, the silica beads change color, indicating they are saturated. The beads are then reactivated in a microwave or oven. The color of the desiccant beads should be checked every 2 weeks. With reactivation, the desiccant can be used repeatedly.

**Electronic** – creates a dry heat without the use of an internal fan. The result is the evaporation of moisture, melting oils and drying of earwax without damaging the hearing aid. The dryer is manually activated every night.

**Disinfecting** – combines removal of moisture with disinfection of the hearing aid. A germicidal light sanitizes the hearing aids (killing up to 99% of common bacteria), and then the unit heats up to remove the moisture. The dryer is automatically shut off after the cycle completes.
Desiccants Styles

Passive

The desiccant pod changes color from orange/amber to a dark green. Check every 2 weeks to monitor the color of the silica beads. Reactivate in the microwave.

*Shown: Westone Hearing Aid Saver*

Electronic

Place hearing aids on surface every evening – close lid and turn on. In the morning, turn off and allow aids to cool for 1-2 minutes before inserting into the ear canals.

*Shown: Moisture Guard Dryer*

Electronic & Disinfecting

Place hearing aids on surface every evening – close lid and turn on. The devices will cycle through a disinfecting then moisture removing functions. The machines automatically shut off after the cycle completes. Some devices require desiccant Dry-Briks that have to be replaced every 2 months while others require no maintenance.

*Shown: Widex Dry-Go UV and Global Dry & Store II*

In order to provide comprehensive hearing aid service, many products listed can be obtained from the GWU Speech & Hearing Center. Contact your Audiologist to learn more (202) 994-7360.
Keeping Your Hearing Aids Happy

Daily Maintenance

The Audiologists at the Speech & Hearing Center advise daily cleaning of hearing aids to maintain the device and increase the longevity of the technology.

Suggested Night Routine
Every night, it is recommended that the hearing aids be wiped off with a soft cloth or tissue to remove any visible pieces of earwax, dust and moisture. Do not use alcohol to clean the case or shell of the hearing aid, as it can crack the plastic. After wiping the aids, open the battery doors to turn them off. Some advise removing the batteries completely from the hearing aids before placing them into one of the desiccant containers detailed on pages 4-5. Not removing the batteries may result in slightly faster battery drain. Store your hearing aids in the bedroom, not the bathroom, as the changes in humidity from the bath can negatively affect their functioning.

Suggested Morning Routine
Before retrieving the hearing aids from the desiccant, ensure your ears and hair around your ears are dry (presuming one bathes in the morning). If hair product is used, apply that and wash your hands before inserting your hearing aids. Before the aid(s) is placed into the ear, take the provided cleaning brush and brush around the microphones to remove debris and around the sound outlet to remove any dried wax. It is also recommended that the battery compartment be brushed to remove any corrosion or debris. Always use a downward brushing motion so any dirt or debris falls to the floor and not back into the hearing aid microphones or sound outlet.

Weekly Routine
Examine where the sound exits the hearing aid to determine if the wax guard or wax trap needs to be replaced. If it appears to the naked eye that the wax guard is occluded, replace it wax guards designated for your aids. Cleaning these pieces is very challenging due to their small size, therefore replacement is recommended.

For hearing aids that couple to the ear using an earmold with a tube, examine the tube and remove any wax. For large tubes, start by removing the wax with the small wire loop provided at the dispense. If wax or moisture (looks like beads of water in the tubing) were too deep to be removed with the wire loop, a piece of periodontal floss (Thornton is the thickest) fed through the tube from where it connects to the hearing aid can often effectively remove the impediment. An earmold blower is also helpful for removing moisture from large earmold tubing. For hearing aids with slim tubes, use the provided cleaning filament, starting at the end where the tube connects to the aid, and push it through until it exits where the sound exits the tube.

For hearing aids with domes, one can remove the domes from the hearing aids, and wash them with warm soapy water. Allow them to dry overnight and place them on the aids in the morning.

Every 3 Months
If your hearing aid uses a dome, it is advised that it be replaced every 3 months.
Research Opportunities

The Department of Speech and Hearing Science is always looking for individuals who would like to participate in ongoing research projects. The Department currently has five different projects open to the community for participation.

Information about each of these research projects can also be found on our website at departments.columbian.gwu.edu/speachhearing/research-opportunities.

**Voice Function and Perception**

- This study is designed to help us understand voice function and perception, especially in aging voice.
- Participants will complete a questionnaire and audio-recording reading sentences and saying vowels.
- One 30 minute session is required and participants receive $15.00.
- Eligible participants are Male between the ages of 60-80 years with no history of voice disorder.
- To enroll in the study, contact Adrienne Hancock, PhD at GWUvoice@gmail.com

**Adults**

**Cochlear Implant Research**

- The study is assessing two training programs to determine whether they can improve speech understanding and communication in daily life of individuals who have received cochlear implants.
- Eight weekly visits (90 minutes each) are required initially, with two follow-up visits, one at 2-months and one at 6-months following the last training session.
- Eligible participants are 18 years of age or older, have had their implant between 3 months and 3 years, be post-lingually deaf and are fluent in English.
- To enroll in the study, contact Claire Bernstein, PhD at (202) 448-7204 or via email at CITrainingStudy@hearingresearch.org

**Language After Stroke**

- The study will help us understand which brain regions are important for language & other higher level cognitive functions.
- Participants will use a touch screen computer to match sentences to pictures
- One-time session of up to one our. Participants receive $10.00.
- Eligible participants are between the ages of 18 and 80, are right handed, native English speakers and have brain damage due to stroke.
- To enroll in the study, contact the GWU Neuroscience of Language Lab at (202) 994-5210 or gwu.neurolang@gmail.com
Research Opportunities

**Children**

**Infant Social Development**

- The study is examining how infants make social decisions by tracking where they look.
- Infants will track objects on a screen.
- Eligible participants are 3-12 months of age, have no medical complications and take no prescription medication.
- Parents will be compensated with $20.00 for their time and cost of travel.
- To enroll in the study, contact the Subiaul Social Cognition Lab at [www.recruitment.subiaul.com](http://www.recruitment.subiaul.com)

**Child Language Learning**

- This study is looking at how children of different ages remember & reproduce sequences.
- Children will use a touch screen computer to respond to visual and auditory stimuli.
- This study is a one-time session of approximately 15-30 minutes.
- Compensation is available in the form of a small gift for the child or $5.00 for travel.
- Eligible children are between 3 - 7 years old and are native English speakers with no diagnosis of cognitive or linguistic disorders.
- To enroll your child in the study, contact the GWU Neuroscience of Language Lab at (202) 994-5210 or gwu.languagelab@gmail.com
Don’t Forget to Update Us!

Have new information?

Life moves very quickly these days. If you move or change your phone number, please let us know so we can update our files and remain in communication with you. Contact Andrew Cheng, Executive Aide at (202) 994-7360.

Happy New Year!

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