**Welcome**

Language Links is the Newsletter of the Child Language Research Projects in the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences at Purdue University. Through this publication, we keep in touch with families who have participated in our research, as well as people who have referred families to our programs.

We are grateful for the contributions that you have made to our research, and we hope that you find this newsletter interesting and informative!

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**Child Language Program**

The Child Language Program is a long-term clinical intervention study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, for children who demonstrate language learning difficulties. The program, directed by Dr. Laurence Leonard, examines children’s learning, understanding and use of certain grammatical forms, as well as their overall language development.

Children who meet the selection criteria are eligible to participate. The study includes 24 sessions of speech-language therapy free of charge.

The intervention sessions are provided twice a week at Purdue. Children who are already enrolled in speech-language therapy are still eligible for participation in this research project.

To be considered for the Child Language Program, children should be between 3 and 4 ½ years of age, demonstrate delay in their speech and language skills, be English-speaking, have hearing within the normal range, and have no obvious physical problems that would affect their speech-language development.

The Child Language Program will continue to enroll children who qualify throughout this year. We would like to thank those families who have participated so far as well as the professionals who have referred them! You are making an important contribution to our knowledge of child language development, and our understanding of the best ways to help children who are experiencing language delays.

To learn more about participating in the Child Language Program, contact Pat Deevy at deevy@purdue.edu or (765) 496-1821; (800) 691-4700.
CHILDREN LEARNING MORE THAN ONE LANGUAGE

It is said that the number of children in the world who speak more than one language is far greater than the number who speak only a single language. For typically developing children, learning two languages simultaneously, or a second language shortly after learning a first, is quite natural and not especially difficult. In fact, we have learned that there are some unexpected advantages to being bilingual. These children must learn very early that, for example, the same object can be called different names, or that the same idea can be expressed through two very different sentence patterns. With this flexibility comes a challenge. When speaking, words and sentences from two different languages pop into the child’s head. Yet, to make sense to the listener, the child must focus on only one set of words and sentences, while suppressing the other. It turns out that this constant practice of focusing on one thing while suppressing another helps these children develop a broader ability to focus on one activity while successfully ignoring distracting material – even when the children are engaged in activities that do not involve speaking or listening.

A very important question to ask is whether children who have difficulty acquiring their first language can or even should be expected to learn a second language. The scientific evidence relating to this question is important, and perhaps a bit surprising. In studies of bilingual French-English speaking children with language problems, the bilingual children were able to use each language at a level that was similar to the level seen in monolingual French- or monolingual English-speaking children with the same types of language problems. Put differently, the bilingual children did not experience a drop-off in language ability by having to learn two languages. This is not to say that these bilingual children were as capable as their typically developing bilingual peers. But these children were clearly not “penalized” for learning two as opposed to a single language.

Many families are faced with the question of whether their children with language problems should learn a second language. The following are questions they might be asking:

• “Should we continue to use our home language given that our child (with a language problem) is now in an English-speaking environment when outside the home?”

• “Should both of us (mother, father) speak the same language with our child (with a language problem) when before we would each use our own first language (for example, the mother speaking English and the father speaking French) with our child?”

Based on the evidence available, it seems that parents should feel comfortable in continuing to have their child hear two languages. Although the child will not acquire either language in an effortless manner, the child will likely benefit from the social and cultural advantages associated with speaking two languages. Perhaps also the child will develop an extra strength seen in other bilingual children – that of being able to resist distraction while focusing on the activity at hand.

COME VISIT US IN OUR NEW BUILDING!

The Department of Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences, including the M.D. Steer Audiology and Speech-Language Clinics and Preschool Language Program, will be moving into our new building just in time for the Fall 2014 semester. Lyles-Porter Hall and its attached parking facility are located at the northwest corner of Harrison and University streets.

The new building is named in honor of a $10 million 2009 gift from Marybeth Lyles-Porter Seay of Visalia, Calif. Seay is a former speech pathologist who earned her bachelor’s degree in speech-language pathology at Purdue in 1959.

In addition to the new larger facilities, the location (easily accessible from the US 231 bypass) and the attached parking garage will make visits more convenient. We look forward to seeing our research participants and their families in our new facilities!
JOIN US FOR SUMMER FUN!

Each year, the Child Language Research Lab at Purdue offers a unique program for children with language delays. The Summer Fun program combines language research with speech-language therapy for eligible 4- and 5-year-olds, at no cost to parents. This year, Summer Fun will begin on June 10 and end on July 3. The sessions are held during these four weeks on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 9:00 to 11:30am.

During Summer Fun, children participate in general preschool activities and a variety of fun and language-enriching experiences. They paint t-shirts, have a pretend camping trip, march in a 4th of July “parade”, and sell lemonade at a stand. Each Summer Fun participant has individualized communication goals, which are addressed during daily half-hour therapy sessions, as well as in the classroom. Children may work on articulation, descriptive language, social communication, and school readiness skills. Parents are provided with progress summaries and reports of their children’s test scores, and they have the opportunity to meet with clinical staff at the end of the program to discuss their child’s progress.

The Details: To participate in the Summer Fun program, children must be either 4 or 5 years of age by June 1st and have a significant delay in language development without accompanying medical problems, hearing impairment or other developmental delays. Families are reimbursed $9 per session for eligibility testing and $9 per day for participation in research; speech therapy during the program is provided at no cost to families. Children can be scheduled for eligibility testing starting now and continuing through April.

Find out more! Contact Pat Deevy at Deevy@purdue.edu or (765) 496-1821; (800) 691-4700.

PROJECT SEeks CHILDREN WHO STUTTER

We are seeking children who stutter to participate in a study examining persistence and recovery from stuttering in young children, conducted by Professors Anne Smith and Christine Weber-Fox.

- Children must be 4 or 5 years of age
- Free assessment of child’s speech, language, and hearing
- Families of eligible children will receive $100.00 to help with transportation costs

Contact: Barbara Brown at brownb@purdue.edu or 765-496-6403 or toll-free at 866-360-0051

Dr. Lisa Goffman, Director Developmental Speech Production Lab SLHS Department

We are looking for 5-8 year old children diagnosed with high functioning autism spectrum disorder to participate in a study on language development.

- Children must be native speakers of English.
- Entire study takes 4 sessions, and each session lasts approximately 1 hour.
- Parents will be compensated $10.00 and children will receive a toy for each session.
- For more information please contact Allison Gladfelter at (765) 494-1669 or agladfel@purdue.edu.

We are looking for 5-8 year old children with speech sound disorders, including apraxia of speech, to participate in a study on language and motor learning.

- Children must be native speakers of English.
- Children will be asked to attend 5-6 sessions; each lasting approximately 1 hour.
- Parents will be compensated $10.00 and children will receive a toy for each session. Children will also receive a free speech, language, and hearing evaluation.
- For more information, please contact Janet Vuolo at (765) 494-1669 or jvuolo@purdue.edu.