

Notes From Kid Stuff

(Editor's Note: The eighteenth article in a series published monthly, about children, by the Human Development Division of the Pasquotank-Perquimans-Camden-Chowan District Health Department.)

The most frequently used means of communication is, unquestionably, the spoken word. We use speech so often that many of us have never stopped to think about exactly what a spoken word is. A basic understanding of the nature of the spoken word can help us decide if our children are developing this important means of communication in a normal fashion.

The branch of science that is concerned with speech is called phonetics. People who are experts in this field, called phoneticians, tell us that spoken words are sequences of noises that we make with our voices, tongues, teeth, lips and even our noses. Taken together, these body structures are called the vocal tract. These speech noises are chained together like a train, and it is very important that they occur in the proper order.

Speech noises are called, appropriately enough, phones. The particular sound of a phone depends upon where along the vocal tract it is made. The nature of the sound also depends upon the manner in which it is made. For example, a "p" sound can be made by pressing the two lips together and then releasing a puff of air. If this same operation is performed while a voice sound is made in the throat, the sound becomes a "b". Other speech sounds are made by bringing two vocal tract structures together, or by changing the shape of the vocal tract. All of this happens so fast in connected speech that it is difficult to perceive. All these rapid changes are called "speech articulation" by Speech Pathologists.

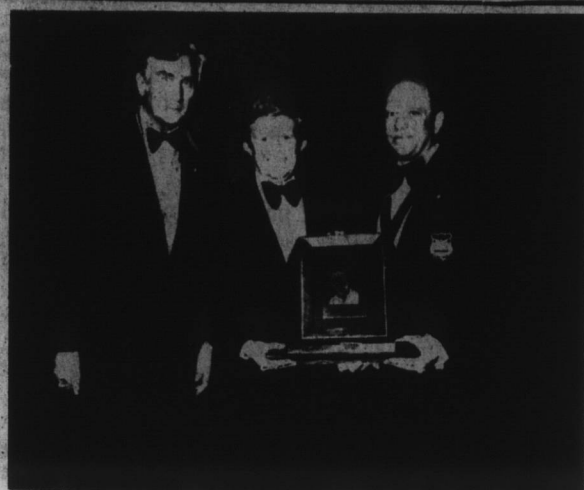
It is difficult for the child who is learning to speak to perceive these rapid

changes in the shape of the vocal tract. Not only must the child hear the sounds, but he must see how they are made, as well. He must also feel himself make them. All of this takes time to learn, the most people realize that a ten-year-old child speaks with more clarity than a three-year-old.

When an infant begins to babble, as he should at around six months, he will often begin making sounds at the rear of his mouth. These sound like "g" or "k". As the child begins to use sounds for speech, however, he most often will begin with those formed at the front of the mouth, such as "m" or "b", because these are more easily seen. The young child will often have trouble with the speech use of sounds that are more difficult to see being produced. A child of three-and-one-half should be able to produce all of the speech sounds made with the two lips (p, b, m and w), but not necessarily the more difficult-to-see sounds like "k" or "g". It is not necessarily abnormal, therefore, for a young child to use distorted speech, but this depends upon many factors other than just the child's age.

A speech pathologist uses articulation testing and data about normal children to determine whether a particular child is developing speech skills normally or whether he needs extra training. This training can help him use the most important means of communication: the spoken word. Is your child's ability to use speech, the Albemarle Regional Center for Communication Disorders, an agency of the Division for Human Development, can help. The main center is located in Elizabeth City with satellite centers in Plymouth and Manteo.

Questions and comments are welcomed and should be addressed to Kid Stuff, P.O. Box 149, Elizabeth City, N.C. 27909 on phone 338-2167, extension 47 or 49.



NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA -- U.S. Senator Robert Morgan (D-N.C.) is pictured receiving the Vanguard Award of the Non Commissioned Officers Association from NCOA President Normand M. Gonsauls (right) and Vice President Leon Van Autreve (left). The Vanguard Award is presented to the person who in the opinion of the NCOA Board of Directors deserves special recognition for his contribution to the national defense.

Good Prevention

Immunizations against the childhood diseases have been one of the most important medical discoveries of the 20th century. The common use of vaccinations against diseases such as polio, measles, whooping cough, etc., has freed almost everyone from the crippling if not fatal complications of these diseases.

With the memory of the effects of these diseases growing dimmer with the passing years many forget that unless children are adequately immunized the possibility of these diseases recurring becomes more probable. Sadly enough, every case will have been avoidable.

While infants receive "passive immunity" against infections from their mothers, this protection does not last. This is why it is so important that children receive immunization against the childhood diseases. There is no reason to expose them to diseases that are entirely preventable.

When a person is immunized a mild form of the particular disease is produced and the body reacts against it without becoming sick. Immunity

acquired in this way, or by having the disease itself, is known as active immunity. It is also long-lasting since the body cells have learned how to resist later invasions of the same disease-producing germs. With some vaccine, however, this protection gradually diminishes and there is a need for periodic reinforcement through "booster shots."

Immunization is produced by three basic types of vaccine: live virus vaccine, killed virus vaccine, and toxoid vaccine, any of which may produce an adverse reaction. Commonly these reactions include pain at the site of the injection, a low-grade fever, or a rash. On rare occasions a serious reaction may occur but the risk of these reactions is very much lower than the risk of similar complications from the disease itself.

Other reactions to the vaccine an allergic reaction to the material with which the vaccine is made. For example, influenza vaccine is prepared from viruses grown in eggs. Persons normally allergic, or hypersensitive to egg or egg products should avoid the influenza vaccine.

Governor Tours N.C. Agencies

Continued From Page 3-B employees about the Work Planning Performance Review program. "This program insures that each employee knows what his supervisor expects of him during the year, and understands exactly where his work fits in with the objectives and goals of the division, department and state government," Hunt said. "During my visit, I found that the employees are happy with the increased communication they are now having with their supervisors, and like knowing what is expected of them," he added.

The governor said the program will also enable merit pay increases to be given on a more equitable basis, with all employees' work being reviewed based on an agreed upon plan of performance.

Gov. Hunt reviewed three productivity programs in the Department of Transportation during his tour. Transportation department employees have been involved in programs testing an incentive pay concept,

creating work standards for equipment repair, and improving work methods in motor vehicle administration.

"I was particularly proud to learn more about the pay incentive program," said the governor. "I believe we need to reward employees for working more efficiently and finding ways to cut costs and save money."

Under the program's concept of "extra pay for extra work", the participants in the program will receive an equal share of one-fourth of the savings as a result of their increased productivity. Approximately 115 employees at the Division of Highways' equipment depot in Raleigh and 65 workers at the Rowan County maintenance facility will receive the bonus money.

State Transportation Secretary Tom Bradshaw, recalling the initial phase of the effort, said the project was a "demonstration of the governor's commitment to increase efficiency in state agencies."

Eye Exams Crucial Sight Protection

As children return to the classroom in the next few weeks, more than new shoes and notebooks will be involved. Children's eyes go back to work, too - scanning blackboards, skimming page after page of textbooks, and cramming the written word onto lined paper.

The N. C. Society of Ophthalmology reminds parents that periodic eye exams are important beginning in nursery school. Dr. Ernest W. Larkin, Jr., president of the society, cautioned that, "A child

should have his eyes examined for the first time by an ophthalmologist at the age of three. If an eye problem is found this early, it is usually easy to correct."

Dr. Larkin pointed out that the most frequent cause of poor vision in the young child is amblyopia, commonly known as "lazy eye." With this condition, the child can not see as well with one eye as he can with the other. It is particularly important that "lazy eye" be diagnosed before the age of

four since it responds to treatment more readily at this age.

Crossed eyes are the second most common childhood eye problem. Like "lazy eye", this condition can seriously impair the visual learning process if not corrected before age six. "When you say crossed eyes, many parents panic," said Dr. Larkin, who heads the 200-member group of physicians specializing in eye care.

"They assume that surgery is the only way to

correct the problem and this isn't always the case; sometimes glasses may provide effective treatment. When surgery is indicated, there's no cause for alarm since modern surgical techniques are safe and pose no threat to vision."

In recent years, dyslexia and learning disability have become fear catch phrases haunting parents of school-age children. "Certainly visual defects may play a part in learning disability," Dr. Larkin, "but they are rarely the only cause. Eye defects do not cause reversal of letters, words or numbers, and expensive visual training or unwarranted glasses will not increase the child's learning ability. A multi-approach from medicine, education and psychology is needed to diagnose and treat the problem on an individual basis.

"Parents can catch eye problems early by being sensitive to a child's complaints, appearance and behavior. If a child complains of blurred vision, letters that run together or eyes that burn, his eyes should be checked."

Headaches, dizziness, tiredness, even nausea after close eye work are further hints that should not be ignored. Frowning, squinting, stumbling over small objects, inflamed or watery eyes may also indicate a vision problem.

"It is not safe to assume that just because a child's vision has been rated perfect, it will remain so," said Dr. Larkin. "A child's eyes grow along with the child, and his vision should be checked just like his shoe size."

Whittaker Announces Pledges

MURFREESBORO - Chowan College has received gifts and pledges totaling \$1.6-million toward the cost of construction of its new gymnasium-physical education center.

The announcement was made by Chowan President Bruce E. Whittaker. He said that Chowan has now reached 80 per cent of its original goal of \$2-million through its "Accomplishing

Our Mission" program. He pointed out that the basic construction cost of the building is \$2,150,000.

"We are very happy to have reached the milestone goal of \$1.6-million, which represents significant progress. For this achievement, we are grateful to the campaign volunteer workers headed by national general chairman E. L. Hollowell of Edenton and national honorary chairman Mrs. Texie Camp Marks of Boykins, Va. We are also appreciative of the many friends and supporters of Chowan College who have helped us come this far with their gifts and pledges," Whittaker stated.

Continued Chowan's president, "Even as I'm making this announcement the contractor and his men are laying bricks and making steady progress leading to the opening of the building early in 1980. Therefore it is urgent that we raise the \$550,000 needed to complete the basic construction."

Whittaker said the new facility will be of importance not only to Chowan's students but many different groups, to include the boys and girls who attend summer camps on Chowan's campus.

"This summer we have entertained hundreds of campers. One camp alone, The Eastern Band Camp, attracted over 450 high

school students. Next year, the new gymnasium will help us better serve the various camps by providing a swimming pool and additional space for educational, recreational and athletic activities."

Hollowell joined Dr. Whittaker in saying he was confident Chowan will raise the full amount needed for the new facility. He emphasized the importance of the gymnasium-physical education center to the college. "The new facility will round out the major facilities to be constructed in the foreseeable future on Chowan's campus," Hollowell stressed.

Hollowell said the features of the new gymnasium-physical education center include: three full-size basketball courts, two classrooms, weight room, mini-gym, three handball and paddle tennis courts, and an Olympic size swimming pool. The facility will provide 63,000 square feet of space and seating for up to 5,000 people.

Scholarship Recipient

ELK GROVE VILLAGE, ILL. - Susan E. Spruill, Route 2, Windsor Woods, Edenton, was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship by the National Office Machine Dealers Association (NOMDA) Scholarship Foundation, Inc.

Susan, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell Spruill, is a 1978 graduate of John A. Holmes High School. She is attending N. C. State University majoring in veterinary science.

Susan was sponsored for the award by NOMDA member, Kermit L. Layton, Jr., proprietor of Edenton Office Supply, 501 South Broad Street, Edenton.



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