



Awareness

During a speech and language evaluation, many families express gratitude that their child is talking more than they realized.

They often think that words, phrases and sentences are “gibberish” or just sounds because they are so unclear. The speech therapist points out instances of true speech/language. Many caregivers are pleasantly surprised.

The distorted “gihme” was actually “give me”; “tank oo” was “thank you”; the misarticulated “no moeuh” was “no more”; “I wah ih” was “I want it”; “dop ih” was “stop it”; and “dat uhn” was “that one”.

The relief and happiness expressed by caregivers is very rewarding, not only to them but to the speech therapists as well.

One 6-year old boy had an “r” problem in the parents’ view. The physician referred him for a

voice disorder. The therapist demonstrated that severe hoarseness was the primary concern.

At the end of the voice therapy, the child usually said “r” correctly here and at home without any direct work on it.

To further enhance caregivers’ awareness of the child’s true speech and language, the speech therapist encourages caregivers to keep a log of words, phrases, and sentences (with no attention to perfect articulation).

Follow-up visits or phone contacts have shown an increased awareness on many caregiver’s parts and an appreciation of the beginning process of learning to talk. Caregiver education and awareness are vital parts of any speech, language or voice therapy program.