Listen and Speak Up!
A summer preschool program for children with hearing impairments

This summer preschool program was created to promote the spoken language skills of children with hearing impairments regardless of the child’s mode of communication. Listen and Speak Up! meets at The University of Iowa’s Wendell Johnson Speech & Hearing Clinic two mornings each week for six weeks. The program was created to meet the needs of children with hearing impairments in the state of Iowa. In addition, Listen and Speak Up! provides training for professionals who work with this population, particularly students enrolled in graduate programs in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Therapy techniques used in the program promote skills necessary for developing spoken language, emphasizing auditory skill development in children with hearing impairments. Structure for Listen and Speak Up! Group Sessions are based on weekly themes scaffolding auditory / speech / language goals into naturalistic learning. They promote communication skill development in natural learning situations. Individual sessions include two 30-minute speech / language therapy sessions each day and one 30-minute audiological diagnostic session each week which focus attention on each individual child’s needs.

Parent Conferences – held once each week -- promote family participation in the therapy process. The agenda includes a summary of their child’s goals; strategies for parents to implement at home to reinforce auditory, speech, language and general communication skills; and a forum to answer and respond to parents’ questions and concerns.

Weekly audiological test sessions allow the necessary amount of time to train preschool children to specific audiological tasks, and allow ample time to determine and verify auditory thresholds. These frequent audiological sessions also allow clinicians to obtain and verify important information for setting hearing aids and cochlear implants optimally for the child. Finally, this close management allows the staff to troubleshoot and remedy any difficulties with the children’s amplification devices. Individual sessions provide services to the client by allowing the clinician to work on child specific auditory, speech production and language skills. They include daily listening checks of amplification devices.

Music Therapy is conducted in collaboration with Iowa’s Cochlear Implant Music Therapy faculty and students. This partnership creates a unique opportunity to focus on listening through music while reinforcing the child’s auditory, speech production and language goals.

For additional information and / or registration materials, contact:

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