

PRESS RELEASE
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CONTACT:
Michelle Yadoo
Marketing Communications Coordinator
(516) 922-4100, ext. 231

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Is Your Child Struggling in School? *The Experts at Mill Neck Audiology Can Help*

As the school year progresses, kids continue to be busy with school assignments, homework, extracurricular activities and more, leading some children to become overwhelmed. Is your child struggling in school? Did he/she fail a school hearing screening? If so, now is the time to visit the Mildred and Frank Feinberg Community Center for Hearing Health at Mill Neck Audiology. Audiologists at the center, who are experts in their field, can determine if your child has a common condition known as Central Auditory Processing (CAP) – and will help guide him/her on a path of better learning.

Children are often diagnosed with CAP, a condition in which they may have normal hearing and intelligence, but are unable to understand, identify or differentiate between sounds. “It’s almost a ‘disconnect’ from what enters the ear to what gets interpreted by the brain,” says Tanya Linzalone, Director of Mill Neck Audiology. Without proper coping skills, complex commands may be too much for a child to handle. Linzalone gives an example: “If a parent asked a child to get an item from the car, located on the backseat, on the passenger side, the child may not be able to get the order straight.”

The condition is sometimes noticeable when children are ready for pre-reading skills, a multi-step process. “Students learn a letter, the sound of the letter and how words go together. It’s not that the child can’t hear, they just can’t remember the order” notes Linzalone. Despite learning difficulties, a proper CAP diagnosis can’t be made until age eight, as “any testing before that age is not truly valid. There is a maturation level that has to be taken into account, and at age eight, there are more academic school demands, making the test more justifiable,” says Linzalone.

After a CAP diagnosis, says Linzalone, “help is available. There are many useful techniques to improve a child’s academic success. Speech therapy helps children cope with the problem, improves their auditory memory and facilitates dealing with difficult learning situations that may arise in school.” In addition, Linzalone stresses that “early intervention is key because the subject material in each grade becomes more challenging.”

Any advice for parents who notice their child struggling? Linzalone and her team always take their clients’ concerns to heart. “I believe that it’s a good diagnostic audiologist who listens to parents, who may realize prior to age eight that their child is struggling. Many parents call us when they suspect, at age four or five, their children may have CAP issues, but it’s important for them to remember that maturity plays a big role in the diagnosis. If at age eight a child is still struggling, we recommend talking with the child’s teacher. If a child is unable to follow along in class, the teacher will recommend a test,” she says.

Interestingly, many adults suffer from CAP as well, Linzalone says, because they have never been diagnosed. “We see many adults who have been struggling with the condition for years. As a result, it has affected their self esteem, but it helps many of them, as well as children, to receive a diagnosis, realize what the problem is and take steps to address it. I’ve heard our clients say, ‘this was the problem all my life’ and finally, they feel relieved.”

When visiting Mill Neck Audiology for a CAP test, audiologists at the center first perform a hearing exam. “We need to see if the client has normal hearing before we perform a battery of tests, which take only 45 minutes to an hour and a half,” explains Linzalone. After all the scores are added and evaluated, a diagnosis is made within a week, and a report is given to the parent, pediatrician and school. “We can then recommend an appropriate accommodation, such as a qualified speech therapist,” says Linzalone.

As many people with CAP have normal hearing, Linzalone says “sometimes, a hearing test is really just the start of uncovering a problem. At Mill Neck Audiology, we not only perform the necessary testing, we can give clients referrals for speech therapists that can make a difference in their lives. If referrals are not based on insurance, we always recommend that a pediatrician or primary care physician make a referral as well,” says Linzalone.

The experts at Mill Neck Audiology have a tremendous amount of experience in the area of Central Auditory Processing. “We go further than just a hearing test. Many companies view the process as ‘your hearing is fine, so...goodbye,’ whereas we really listen to the initial complaint of our clients,” says Linzalone.

Part of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, the Mildred and Frank Feinberg Community Center for Hearing Health at Mill Neck Audiology features separate, state-of-the-art adult and pediatric testing areas, an assistive listening display and an observation room with a parent observation area. The Center also dispenses hearing aids, distributes assistive listening devices and provides amplification adjustments. If you are or if someone you know is experiencing hearing difficulties, call the experts at Mill Neck Audiology at (516) 628-4258.

In addition to Mill Neck Audiology, the Mill Neck Family of Organizations includes Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf, established in 1951 to help Deaf children unlock their potential through quality education, Mill Neck Manor Early Childhood Center, Mill Neck Foundation, Inc., Mill Neck Services for Deaf Adults and Mill Neck Interpreter Service. For more information about any of these programs, please call (516) 922-4100 or visit <http://www.millneck.org>.

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