

The Southside Scene

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In the Livingston Health
Services Building

Welcome to our newsletter! We hope you will find the information it contains to be helpful, and encourage you to pass it along to friends or family members who might also benefit from it. Please feel free to suggest topics for further newsletters – call us or let us know at your next visit!

WE HAVE NOT MOVED!!

You may have read in our last newsletter about some of the physical changes that will be taking place here in our office. Here is an update for those of you who haven't been in since the changes began in September.

Genesee Valley Ear, Nose & Throat (aka, Dr. Sobota) closed its doors (figuratively speaking) on September 9th. SOUTHSIDE HEARING CENTER REMAINS OPEN AND FULLY OPERATIONAL, AND we are still in the same place!

We now share our suite with Stonybrook Pediatrics, who moved here from up the hall in November. As before, you will need to ring the doorbell at the reception window when you arrive. We will then come out to escort you to our new waiting area. We found it critical to separate our waiting area from Stonybrook's, due to the high number of germs and illnesses that young children can spread.

Southside Hearing Center will eventually end up with even more space and our own separate entrance, as well as a new location for our waiting room—and even a reception area of our very own, which means no more doorbell, once the renovations are finally complete! As you can imagine, we are VERY excited about these changes.

Once the renovations are complete (but NOT YET!), you will need to take a RIGHT when you get off of the elevator, and another right just before the entrance to Tri-County Family Medicine. Our entrance will then be on your right. Once you walk in our new entrance, Kathy will be visible and available to greet and assist you. The waiting room will be in that same area. Sue's office will move to what is our current waiting room, and we will maintain the other two rooms that we now occupy as well. Finally, we won't be tripping over each other!

But where do you go now for ENT services? Let us reassure you that we are familiar with most of the otolaryngologists in the region and can easily assist in finding an ENT that will help with your concerns. If you need assistance finding a new otolaryngologist, give us a call or let us know at your next visit. We have a list of ENTs, and can recommend specific physicians based upon individual concerns and needs. The yellow pages offer a nice summary of local otolaryngologists, as well.

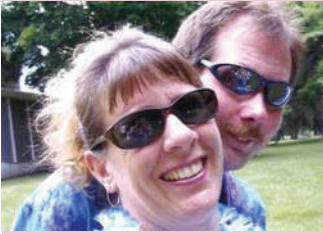
You continue to have a job to do as well because of this change. YOU need to spread the word that I am still here and that I am taking new patients!

The bottom line remains the same—Southside Hearing Center is staying in Geneseo, in the Livingston Health Services Building on the second floor! The same comprehensive care and service will be here...and perhaps enhanced! ■



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Sue Says...

When Do Babies Hear?

We all know that babies' ears are fully developed and capable of hearing when they are born (assuming full gestation pregnancy); but when can babies *actually* start hearing?

The in-utero development of the human ear is so intricate it takes almost an entire pregnancy for the entire ear to develop and mature enough to be able to actually respond to sounds. The ear virtually starts developing from the get go.

One will recall that the ear is essentially made up of 4 parts (some may only refer to three, combining the third and fourth parts) - the outer ear, the middle ear, the inner ear and the nerve. The inner ear houses both the hearing sense organs and the balance organs. Each of the four parts will develop separately but virtually simultaneously. Some parts of the ear actually develop from the same tissues that form other major organs, like the kidneys.

At approximately 22 days gestation one can microscopically see the first hint of an external ear. The embryo itself may only look like a little speck or have a little worm-like shape. At the same time, the labyrinth (the balance organ) is just starting to develop its membranes. Just 6 days later the labyrinth has become much more involved and extensive. By that same 28 days, the three middle ear bones can now be detected. The Eustachian tube, the opening that connects the middle ear space to the back of the nasal pharynx (the nose) has also started its development. By 32 days (roughly 4.5 weeks), the balance organs are more developed, the middle ears bones are bigger and more defined, and a plug has formed that will become the eardrum. The ear canal has not yet started to form, nor has the cochlea (the actual organ that does the hearing), or the hearing/balance nerve. However, by the fifth and sixth weeks, one can now detect an eardrum (still not an eardrum as we would know it, but a very thick solid plate or plug), the middle ear bones are more defined, the semicircular canals have developed from the labyrinthine membranes, and what will become the hearing and balance nerve has now started its development. The ear canal has finally started its development as well (no ear wax yet though!) It isn't until 8 weeks that the cochlea takes on its familiar snail-like coil shape, but is still not wired for sound!

So as not to bore you with the week-by-week development, suffice it say that by weeks 20-22, the inner ear has finally reached its full adult size and shape. (That's half way through the pregnancy.) But it still cannot hear yet. It isn't until the start of the third trimester that the fetal ear can start to actually function as a sense organ, but for loud sounds only. It is by the seventh month that the ear is capable of responding to sounds that are soft. Up until this point, the ear itself is still encased with thick membranes preventing the conduction of sound to the nerve itself. However, even at this stage, the fetus does not perceive sound as a baby or an adult would. The environment of the womb and the mother's body is very noisy. This background sound makes speech and other meaningful sounds almost indistinguishable. In general, the only sounds that the fetus can hear are those made by the mother and her body.

The limitations to the conduction of sound to the fetus through the womb, fluid, and bodily noises continue through the entire pregnancy. But does that mean the child would not benefit from external sound stimulation? If they do, what kind of sounds should be used? You have heard of mothers reading to their unborn child; or playing classical music to soothe the baby and enrich his or her learning. But does this work? Now knowing that the fetal ear cannot fully respond to sounds until the 7th month of pregnancy, and the womb is a very noisy place...how could it work? Well, surprisingly, studies show that newborn babies will absolutely recognize the voice of their mothers but not their fathers shortly after birth. If mother reads a rhythmic story to the fetus in the last few weeks of pregnancy, the newborn will recognize the story even if it is read by another woman. Also, a newborn can discriminate between his or her native language versus a foreign language.

The best conclusion from these studies is that prenatal exposure to speech in the last months of pregnancy (and especially the last weeks) will not make a child learn to talk any sooner than normal milestones, but can perhaps get them into a language-learning mode, and can serve to stimulate and fine-tune the auditory system. ■

Information for this article was obtained from the American Hearing Research Foundation Newsletter (Volume 34, Number 2, Fall 2005) and Hearing Health/Deafness Research Foundation. For more information, call the American Hearing Research Foundation at (312) 726-9670, or go to www.american-hearing.org.



Kathy's Korner

DO YOU KNOW A HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE STUDENT WITH HEARING LOSS WHO IS LOOKING FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TOWARD TUITION, BOOKS AND SUPPLIES?

Great news! Oticon, Inc., a leading hearing aid manufacturer, has teamed up with Sertoma International to offer a total of 12 \$1000 scholarships to hearing impaired students! The scholarship program is open to students with mild to profound hearing loss (minimum 40 dB bilateral hearing loss) who are pursuing a bachelor's degree in any discipline. Each \$1000 award is designed to cover tuition, books and supplies during any term during the academic year, including summer term. Interested students can either contact us at (585) 243-7690 for more information, or obtain the scholarship application online at www.sertoma.org. Deadline for applications is May 1, 2006 at 4 p.m. Central Standard Time.

HAVE YOU RECENTLY PURCHASED NEW HEARING AIDS, AND WANT TO DONATE YOUR OLD ONES? HAVE YOU LOST A LOVED ONE WHO WORE HEARING AIDS, AND YOU'RE NOT SURE WHAT TO DO WITH HIS OR HER HEARING AIDS?

We've always referred people in these situations to donate behind-the-ear hearing aids to the Lions Club, but we recently learned that they will accept ALL styles of hearing aids—completely-in-the-canal, in-the-canal, in-the-ear, AND behind-the-ear! This is a wonderful way to donate hearing aids that are not useful to you, while benefiting others who may need them—and you can also write off the donation as a tax deduction if you itemize your taxes! It's a win-win situation! For more information or to donate hearing aids, contact our office, or contact the Lions Club directly—our local Lions Club contact is:

Francis Matusak
Avon Lions Club Chapter
Phone: (585) 226-6333
E-mail: m65jm89@aol.com

Mr. Matusak is willing to accept donations directly at the Village Inn in Avon (13 Genesee Street). ■

ENJOY THE TASTES
of the season!





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*Discovering the Human Touch in Hearing
Technology*

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.SOUTHSIDEHEARINGCENTER.COM

Our Mission Statement

Southside Hearing Center, its owner, audiologists and staff are committed to the advancements of hearing healthcare. The Center will provide the most ethical and comprehensive services in Audiology using the most state-of-the-art equipment, procedures and techniques. The Center will provide these services in a clean, healthy and comfortable environment.

Education is at the center of this facility. Southside Hearing Center is committed to educating the patient regarding hearing healthcare issues. Southside Hearing Center is committed to the profession of Audiology, and educating the public that the audiologist is the highest qualified professional in hearing care. Southside Hearing Center will ensure that its staff is equally committed to these causes.

Southside Hearing Center will provide appropriate business in compliance with state and federal laws. Fair business will be this Center's business.

Above all else, Southside Hearing Center will provide THE HUMAN TOUCH to the overwhelming world of hearing impairment.