

Wondering if your child's speech is on track? Read our great article on important signs that may signal a speech and language concern.



September Newsletter 2015

We hope you all had a safe and happy summer. September is Back to School for many SLPs and students...read our article on speech and language development for the school child.

[Visit Our Website](#)



In the Spotlight: Meet Amanda Charney, SSIS Founder

Small Steps In Speech is a national non-profit, but founder Amanda Charney's mission to help the less fortunate extends beyond the borders of this country. For the past six years, after losing Marc, Amanda has embarked on summer journeys.

Some have been focused on healing and personal challenges, such as in 2011 when she ran a marathon in Alaska after a TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors) session for women who lost loved ones in the military. Other years she has travelled to impoverished regions of the world to do charity work with children. She's done this on her own means, without the help of a sponsoring organization or tour guide. Amanda travelled to India in 2012, Tanzania in 2013, and China, Vietnam, and Cambodia in 2014 to volunteer her services as a Speech Language Pathologist in orphanages and schools.

"It started as a pact between Marc and me for our bucket list," Amanda says. "We wanted to see the seven wonders and continents." After his death, fulfilling this pact became a way for her to remember him and self-reflect while still finding ways to help others. And more, she did it in order to prove that she could do it. "The best part is figuring out what as a human you can do by yourself. You have to put yourself in a scary situation, then put your faith in your gut and god."

Going to these countries involved moments of culture shock for Amanda. At times she faced grim and unimaginable living conditions. "I did not expect the extreme poverty, the neglect for women and children with disabilities, and the lack of precautions for children with malaria. But I don't mean to disrespect these places. There was still so much beauty there." Though no plans are finalized, Amanda hopes to go to Peru, Argentina, or Chile in the future to help orphans in South America. "It's my passion," Amanda says, "Babies are my passion."

This summer Amanda's travels kept her a little closer to home but on the road for six weeks. On July 27th, she travelled to Idaho with nine other military widows for a program with the [Travis Manion Foundation](#) and No Barriers USA. This technology-free wilderness experience incorporated physical challenges with a focus on healing and celebration of life. She then independently hiked and traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest. After several independently driven charitable journeys, this is another way for Amanda to learn more about what she's capable of doing, for others and for herself.

Back to School Article by Joyce Tierney, MS, CCC-SLP, Board Member SSIS and owner of Speak to Me Kids private practice.

Are you worried about your child's speech and language development? Look below to help you determine if you should seek help for your child...

What is a speech and language disorder:

Any disorder that affects the way a person understands and produces speech and language such as but not limited to :

- difficulty with comprehension of language
- speech sound disorder (articulation, pronunciation)
- motor incoordination of articulators (tongue, lips, jaw)
- difficulty with forming organized, grammatically correct statements
- struggles with word finding
- difficulty understanding body language, sarcasm and social pragmatic language

- stuttering
- hearing loss

Signs of a speech and language disorder:

- between the ages of 6-12 months your child is NOT smiling, babbling, reacting to sounds around them, closer to 12 months your child is NOT pointing to objects/people
- between the ages of 12-18 months your child is NOT imitating, waving, using new words, demonstrating an understanding of simple instructions
- between 18-24 months your child is NOT demonstrating a burst in language with up to 200 words by age 2, labeling familiar objects/people/pets, developing play skills, identifying body parts, requesting
- at 3 years of age your child is NOT commenting about their environment, engaging in simple conversations, demonstrating an understanding of basic concepts such as colors, prepositions, etc
- at 4 years of age your child is NOT asking questions regarding their environment, using up to 5 words sentences, following more complex directions, identifying shapes, colors and letters

Ways to promote speech and language skills:

- Model language- through song, play and routine activities
 - nursery rhymes
 - pat-a-cake
 - talk through daily routines (dressing, bathing, etc)Read books to your child daily
- Respond to your child's communication attempts
- Describe the world around you
- Use short, simple, slow speech
- Engage your child in turn taking activities and games

If you are concerned about your child's speech and language development:

1. Contact your pediatrician!
2. Under the age of 3: contact your county's early intervention program
3. 3 years+: contact your public school system's child study team and request an evaluation
4. Visit asha.org for a list of ASHA (American Speech and Hearing Association) certified Speech-Language Pathologists practicing in your area

Thank you from a grateful mother...

February 4, 2015

Board of Directors,

Gabriel has just finished the speech therapy visits allotted to him by Small Steps in Speech. We can't thank you enough for giving our son the opportunity to

receive speech therapy especially at a time when our resources were very limited.

Gabriel very much enjoyed the weekly therapy. He warmed up to his new therapist in no time and worked hard throughout each session. As Gabe's mom, I was grateful to be allowed to sit and observe during all of his visits. Hopefully, that experience will enable me to further Gabriel's progress at home.

Gabriel continues to make slow but steady gains. He is currently enrolled in the Preschool Program for Childhood Disabilities at our local school where he will continue to receive weekly speech therapy.

Thank you again for taking the time to read about our son and his challenges. Approving Gabriel for the Small Steps in Speech grant has been a huge blessing to him and to our family. May God continue to bless you in your very important work.

Sincerely
Gabriel's mother and father, Texas



SLPs: Do you know a family who is struggling to afford speech therapy? We want to help!

- Please share the SSIS grant program with your clients who most need financial assistance.
- Next Deadline: November 1st, 2015
- Application can be found at www.smallstepsinspeech.org.
<http://www.smallstepsinspeech.org/grant-application/individuals/>
- Applications are accepted for speech therapy, materials and supplies, speech generating devices and software, as well as camps and workshops.
- Children with a diagnosis of Childhood Apraxia of Speech are invited to complete the CAS application. We are pleased to report that funds are provided through a partnership with Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America. <http://www.smallstepsinspeech.org/grant-application/childhood-apraxia-of-speech/>

- Children who receive Prompt Therapy: We are also pleased to announce that through a partnership with The Prompt Institute, special funding is available for those receiving Prompt therapy. Please be sure to note in the grant request that you are requesting a grant for a Prompt-trained SLP.
- Questions? Call us! 1-888-5-SPEAK-6