Did you know that communication extends far beyond the specific sounds and words that we use to convey messages? It includes all those intricate things we do to navigate through the social interactions that we engage in every day. We call this wider part of communication, social communication or pragmatics. Social communication includes things like using gestures, body language, eye contact, picking an appropriate topic and sticking with it for an appropriate amount of time, adjusting your behavior based on your partner’s reaction, etc. For younger children, it could include sharing toys, taking turns, understanding that friends might have different opinions on what to play next, and noticing when you’ve hurt someone’s feelings and saying you’re sorry, etc.

For more information on the components of social communication, see: http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/ASHA/Practice_Portal/Clinical_Topics/Social_Communication_Disorders_in_School-Age_Children/Components-of-Social-Communication.pdf

Thankfully, these skills develop fairly naturally for most of us, however social communication is actually quite complicated and incredibly nuanced. Developing appropriate social communication skills is critical for making friends and succeeding at school and beyond. For children who struggle to relate to others or experience difficulties communicating within fast-paced interactions due to speech, language, or attention issues, there is help. Licensed speech-language pathologists can provide consultations, evaluations, and treatment for children with suspected social communication disorders.

Individual or group treatment may use direct teaching, games, role play, structured practice, and videos to target skills such as:

- Active listening
- Using our eyes to learn about others
- Staying with the group
- Being flexible when plans change
- Initiating/maintaining/ending a topic of conversation
- Thinking about how our behaviors are perceived by others

If you have not already shared your concerns regarding your child’s social skills with his/her pediatrician, please do so, as referrals for more specialized assessment may be recommended. In addition to consultations and
evaluations, The Speech Pathology Group offers ongoing therapy and summer camp sessions that provide facilitated, small group opportunities to acquire and practice social communication skills within natural, peer-based contexts. Before joining a social language group, children/teens have an individual consultation with one of our speech therapists to determine readiness and/or suitability of that child to the group. We may recommend deferring group placement in favor of individual therapy so that foundational communication skills, such as expressive-receptive language, turn-taking, or attention may first be addressed. For more information, please contact SPG at 925.945.1474 (or visit www.speechpath.com) to talk about next steps.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Special Needs Resource Fair
Please join SPG at A Special Needs Resource Fair to learn about different types of interventions, therapies, support groups, services, and strategies that are helpful when raising a child with special needs.

Thursday, April 30, 2015
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Lafayette Library, Community Hall
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd
Lafayette, CA 94549
Sponsored by the Friends of the Lafayette Library, P.O.I.S.E. Lafayette, Seed Lafayette, and Special Parents for Special Kids Lafayette

MAY IS BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH

Lisa Roeder, M.S. CCC-SLP

Identify The Signs of Communication Disorders

The Identify the Signs campaign aims to educate the public about the warning signs of communication disorders. Speech, language, and hearing disorders are treatable and early detection is a major contributor to speedier recoveries, shortened treatment periods, and reduced costs for individuals and society alike. Find out more at http://www.identifythesigns.org

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

36th Annual May Festival
The Speech Pathology Group is excited to be a part of Walnut Avenue Preschool’s 36th Annual May Festival. Carnival fun for the whole family: train rides, jump houses, games, face painting, entertainment, food, prize giveaways and more...

Saturday, May 9, 2015
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
260 Walnut Avenue
Walnut Creek, CA 94598