Pediatric Vocal Abuse

Treatment for pediatrics is important because vocally abusive behaviors can affect involvement in classroom activities, causing the child to be unnoticeable and even feel embarrassed (Senkal & Cyriltepe, 2013). Many parents believe that their child will outgrow the voice problem that emerged from vocal abusive behaviors. Although this may be the case for some children, it is not for all. Children with vocal nodules are more likely to act out, and feel like they attract attention because of their voice (Abbot, 2013).

Respiration Training: For this technique, a good tool when working with the pediatric population is a yawn. This will help the child practice extending the length of exhalation (Boone et al., 2014). Changing the Yawn-Sigh Technique while talking for long periods of time and experience vocal fatigue (Verdolini & Ramig, 2001). The clinician will teach the patient how to change the yawn, and what the yawn should feel like. A light phonation can compensate for the yawn – sigh, and the patient can feel more comfortable, easy phonation (Boone et al., 2014).

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Singers: Singers use their voice much more frequently, and in a more demanding way than most other professionals (Verdolini & Ramig, 2001).

Implementation of Treatment for Adults

The adult population may experience behaviors that can be abusive to the vocal folds. This is very common while in a job environment. Many adults with voice problem feel that it negatively affects function at work. Patients experience an increase in depression, social isolation, and have a hard time communicating in background noise (Verdolini & Ramig, 2001).

• Counseling and Eliminating Vocal abusive Behaviors: Busy schedules often interfere with available time to voice therapy. Family involvement is not as crucial for adult populations as it is for pediatrics. For adults, it can be beneficial to plot daily abusive behaviors on a chart. This can help increase awareness of how many times abusive behaviors are being used (Boone et al., 2014).

• Respiratory Training: This is very important when working with professional voice users, such as teachers and singers. Breath support is very important when working on respiration, especially for vocal performers. Formal expiration may be needed for singers and teachers. It is important for the client to be aware that the abdominal cavity gets smaller during expiration, and larger on inhalation. Greater air volume will decrease the strain on the vocal cords, allowing for greater ease of speaking (Senkal & Cyriltepe, 2013).

Chronic Coughing

Many patients use inappropriate loudness when speaking. Exceeding typical loudness is an abusive behavior, and it can cause damage to the vocal folds. This can also cause vocal nodules to appear. It is important to make the patient aware of the loudness of their voice (Boone et al., 2014).

Counseling and Eliminating Vocally Abusive Behaviors

It is very important to identify the abusive vocal behaviors the patient is using. The clinician should demonstrate appropriate behaviors to the patient (Boone et al., 2014).

Respiration Training

While this therapy is useful for all populations, it is more prevalent for professionals such as teachers and singers. This therapy operates by increasing abdominal muscle participation. It is important to work on good posture, which will develop good respiratory control. It is also important to explain that an increase in air volume will allow for more speech per breath, which can be done without having a strained quality at the end of a phrase (Boone et al., 2014).