



SOUND Support

Updates from our Department

Happy 2017! Please join us in welcoming some new members to our department.

Stephanie Nagle Emmens, Au.D., Ph.D. joined us at Connecticut Children's in November. Stephanie recently moved back to Connecticut after spending 6 years living in Maryland and working as an audiologist and audiology professor at Towson University. Stephanie has experience working with kids and adults of all ages and many different types of hearing loss. She has taught audiology courses at Towson University, UMass – Amherst, UConn, and the University of Hartford. She is a triple UConn alumnus and is very excited to be back

in UConn Country! She will be working in our Glastonbury and Hartford locations.

Ashley Carrington, Au.D. joined us in January. Ashley completed her doctorate in audiology (Au.D.) at Salus University in Philadelphia, PA. Ashley came to us after completing her externship at ENT Associates of New York/Total Hearing Care in Flushing, NY. Clinically, Ashley has experience working with both adult and pediatric patients performing audiologic and vestibular diagnostic testing, and providing rehabilitative services involving cochlear implants and hearing aids. Ashley is trilingual; fluent in American Sign Language, Spanish, and of course English!" While Ashley was

completing her undergraduate degree at Andrews University, in Berrien Springs, MI, she started pursuing her interest in ASL. That experience led her to continue her ASL education at Galludet University in Washington D.C. Fun fact: Ashley is an avid traveler, having been to all but 2 continents! She will be working in our Hartford and Farmington locations.

Congratulations to Hannah Vollinger and her husband Dan, who welcomed their first child, a little boy, at the beginning of the year! And congratulations to Stephanie Emmens and her family who welcomed their second child, a boy, in March!

New To Our Department: The Vestibular Balance Program!

We are very excited to announce our new Vestibular and Balance program here at Connecticut Children's Medical Center. This program will be run by our very own Dr. Dizzy: Dr. Courtney Ewell. This program will look to provide a comprehensive team approach to the diagnosis of and treatment for balance and dizziness disorders in children. Children can be referred to the Vestibular and Balance Program from a variety of providers, and will receive

expert level care from specialists trained in the diagnosis of vestibular conditions in pediatric patients. This program will take on a multi-disciplinary team approach with collaborations with the Ear Nose and Throat, Physical Therapy, Neurology, and Sports Medicine Departments.

To learn a little more about this new word: Vestibular, we decided to have a little Q & A with our Dr. Dizzy.

continued on page 3.

HEARING FUN FACT

Fish do not have ears, but they can hear pressure changes through ridges on their body

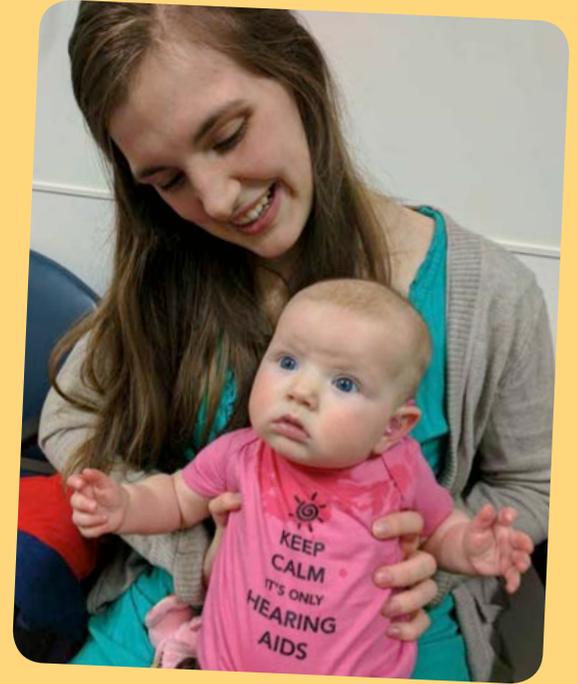


Kidz Corner

Annabelle was first seen by our department at four weeks old, after having failed her hearing screening at her pediatrician's office; where her parents reported she had been moving a lot and been making noise. At her follow up screening Annabelle once again did not pass. The possibility of a hearing loss was discussed with Annabelle's mom and dad and a full diagnostic BAER was scheduled. At that appointment, a mild to moderate hearing loss was found in both ears. Annabelle's mother, Sarah, told us "a couple tears were shed" upon finding out about Annabelle's hearing loss, "but, we also knew it was not earth shattering. This is how her ears work, we trust God's plan, and we will adjust!"

Three months later, Annabelle came back to audiology to have her third BAER, and her hearing loss appeared to be stable. At that appointment with Dr. Courtney Ewell, Annabelle's parents expressed that they were motivated and ready to move forward with hearing aids. This picture is from the day of Annabelle's hearing aid fitting (her onesie was a present from her grandmother), where she got pink hearing aids with swirled pink ear molds with silver glitter.

Annabelle's older brother, Oliver, is also a big part of the process. Whenever Annabelle takes her hearing aids out of her ears or they fall off, like a good big brother "he alerts us right away". "When we are going to the appointment, we always tell our son 'We are going to see Courtney today!'. It doesn't feel as though we are going to the doctor when we come to audiology. Courtney has been super helpful, sweet, and great to work with". "Because of Annabelle's hearing loss, we know that she can hear. But when she is wearing her hearing aids she blinks at everything and smiles more," her mom told us. "Also, they are definitely her favorite teether".



Where in the World is Bob?

Last year, our friend Bob Benoit retired from being a full time audiologist at CCMC, but became a full time world traveler! He is still a good friend and comes in to help us from time-to-time; so if you're lucky, you may get

to see Bob and ask about his latest adventures! Last December Bob and his wife traveled to a remote area of India, called Nagaland and then crossed the border into Myanmar, previously known as Burma. This trip

was not so much to site see as to experience different cultures first hand. One thing they learned is that KIDS ARE KIDS whatever the culture. They like to play. They like to learn and they LOVE to have their pictures taken!



Q: What is the vestibular system? Where is it in your body?

A: The vestibular system is a portion of the inner ear that works together with other parts of your body, like your eyes, legs, and brain, to keep your body upright and balanced. The vestibular system is made up of 3 loops called “semi-circular canals” that sense your movement side to side, forward, backward, and around. There are also two tiny organs that sense motion up and down (like riding on an elevator) and forward and backward.

Q: What are some of the things that the vestibular system helps you to do?

A: Your vestibular system helps you do all sorts of stuff! It helps you look around while walking and allows you to balance to ride a bike. Your vestibular system also lets you keep your eye on a ball you want to catch or kick, and figure out which direction is up and down when swimming under water. It helps you read your favorite books or count cars on a train that’s going by.

Q: If there were something wrong with my vestibular system, what would that look like?

A: People who have weaknesses, or problems, with their vestibular system can have a lot of different symptoms. Sometimes people will feel dizzy, like the room is spinning or maybe feel lightheaded. Some people have headaches. A lot of people feel unsteady, like they have trouble keeping their balance, especially when it’s dark. Some people have upset stomachs (nausea/vomiting). In a lot of cases, people find their symptoms get better over time, or never experience any real trouble at all.

Q: What are some of the things this program will offer (testing/assessments)?

A: Our Vestibular and Balance Clinic will offer a lot of different types of tests to check all parts of your balance system. For a lot of the testing you will wear goggles that have special video cameras in them to watch your eyes moving. You will watch some objects move around on a screen, and you will do some tests lying on a table like you’re in your bed. You might get your hearing tested as well. Some tests might make you dizzy, but it’s only for a minute. Depending on what kinds of results we get, we might make recommendations for you to go see an ENT, a neurologist, or maybe have some more evaluations with our physical therapy department.

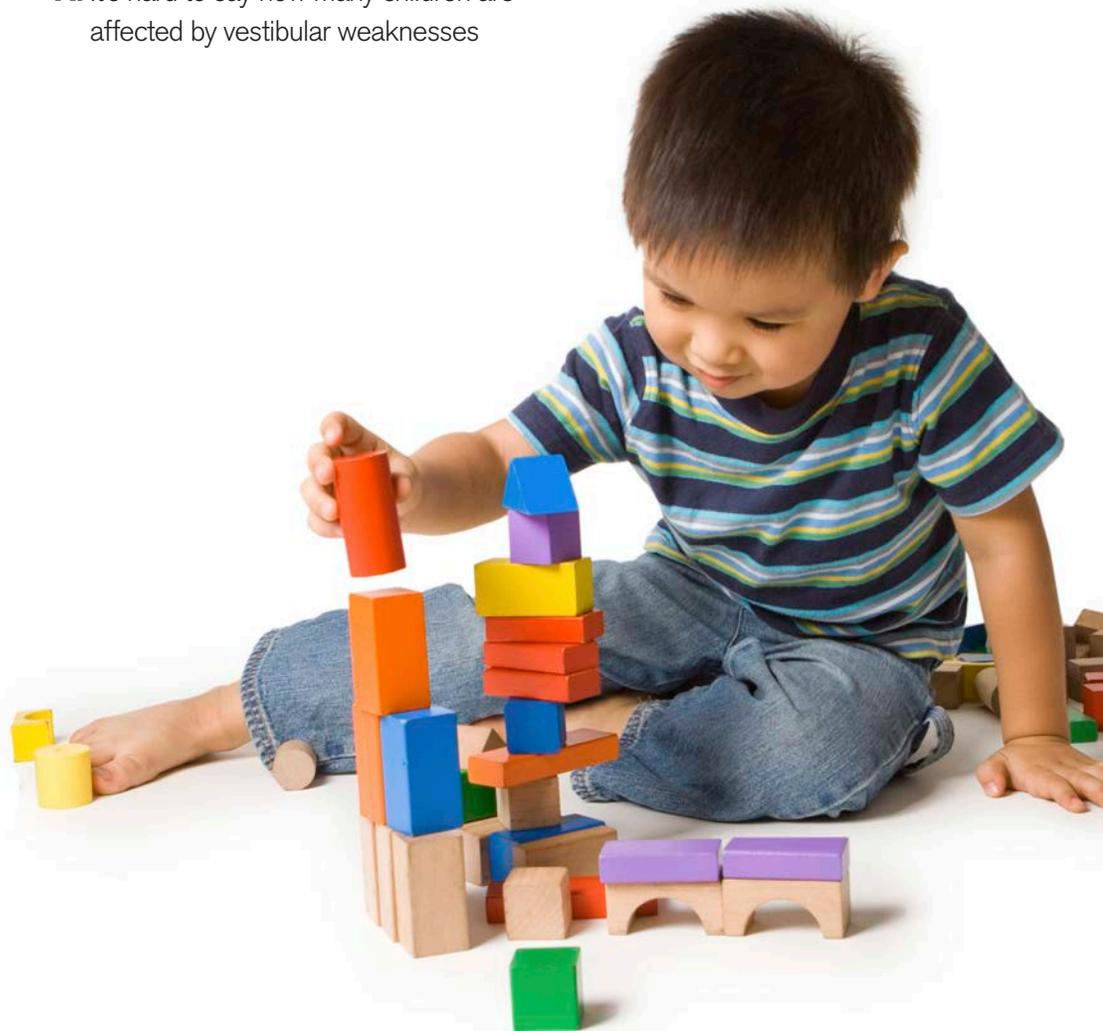
Q: How common is vestibular pathology/dizziness in children?

A: It’s hard to say how many children are affected by vestibular weaknesses

due to the fact that a lot of kids have no outward signs of there being anything wrong. Additionally, a lot of symptoms of vestibular problems just look like typical “clumsy” kids. It is estimated that about 20% of children in the general population have some degree of vestibular weakness. That number goes up drastically to about 50% of children with sensorineural hearing loss, and even higher (up to 80%) of children with profound hearing losses.

Q: If I do have a problem, how can your department help me?

A: The first step is to talk to your pediatrician about your concerns. You can also contact Dr. Courtney Ewell, audiologist, at 860.545.9165. Finally, you can call 860.545.9642 to make an appointment for a vestibular evaluation.





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Walk 4 Hearing

May 21, 2017

Walnut Hill Park, New Britain

9:00 AM registration

10:30 AM Walk begins

Distance: 5K (3.1 miles)

The Hearing Loss Association of American (HLAA) is the nation's leading organization representing people with hearing loss. According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, 48 million (20%) Americans have some degree of hearing loss, and about 2-3 of every 1,000 children in the United States are

born with a detectable hearing loss in one or both ears. That means that almost 15% of school age children (6-19 years old) have some degree of hearing loss. Thanks to Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI), every newborn born within the United States is screened for hearing loss prior to hospital discharge and the earlier a hearing loss is detected the better the outcome for speech and language development. However, hearing loss can also be gradual over time; affecting people of all ages. The HLAA works to raise public awareness about the need for prevention, treatment, and regular screenings throughout your lifetime.

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Walk4Hearing is the

largest walk for hearing loss awareness in the country. Every spring and fall thousands of walkers - children and their families, young adults, young at heart, and everyone in between - form teams and walk in their communities to increase public awareness about hearing loss, help eradicate the stigma associated with it and raise funds for programs and services. HLAA depends on generous volunteers to raise funds, generate enthusiasm and awareness at each of the Walk4Hearing sites. We appreciate any support that you can provide; whether that is monetarily with a donation or we would love to have you join our team: Connecticut Children's We Are Hear

