Take Care of Your Child’s Voice

ENCOURAGE:

- Water/Fluids: Infants (6 to 26 pounds) 3-6 cups/day. Children (26 to 100 pounds) 4-8 cups/day or check urine colour. If it is clear, your child is getting adequate fluids!
- Breaks: Your voice needs 15 minutes of rest for every hour it is used.
- “Good talking” rules: No screaming or shouting, no interrupting, no talking over the TV/radio, no yelling from one room to another.
- Good health habits: Eat well and sleep well. Avoid a hectic lifestyle. Make sure your child has regular “downtime”. Avoid exposure to cigarette smoke and dust.
- Your own good voice habits: Talk with normal loudness and use a slower speaking pace. When upset or angry, get your point across by talking firmly and getting down to your child’s level.

INSTEAD OF:

- Cheering, yelling, screaming, or shouting: Use whistles, horns, clap, jump up and down to show excitement or touch someone’s arm to get his attention.
- Clearing your throat or coughing: Swallow a sip of water.
- Talking over noise: Turn down the TV/radio/hair dryer or move to another room.
- Talking a lot with a cold or sore throat: Take cold medication or cough syrup as per doctor’s advice, drink plenty of liquids, and get lots of rest.
- Breathing through your mouth in cold weather: Stay indoors or put a scarf over your child’s mouth to warm the air as he breathes in.
- Using sound effects (e.g., car zooming, growling, imitating a siren, using cartoon voices etc.): Name the sounds instead (e.g., beep, beep, zoom, go fast, etc.)
- Whispering: Talk using a very soft and quiet voice.
- Talking when you are tired: Go to bed!