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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Charleston, Illinois

news

ART TATE, Assistant Director, University Relations
Office: (217) 581-5983 - Home: (217) 348-7553

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DELL HELPS FELLOW STUTTERERS

CHARLESTON, IL.--A stutterer for more than 40 years, Eastern Illinois University Associate Professor Carl Dell of Charleston is helping fellow stutterers learn how to improve their speech disorder through modification of stuttering.

Dell, who is on the staff of Eastern's Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic and teaches stuttering classes in the Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences, works closely with children and adults from the Charleston and surrounding area to teach them they don't have to be helpless and can live good lives "communicatively."

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Most individuals begin stuttering between the ages of 2 and 5 when they start putting words together, Dell explained. And while 80 percent of them outgrow stuttering by adolescence, the other 20 percent never do.

"People stutter because their speech motor system is more susceptible to break down," said Dell, noting that for years professionals believed stuttering was caused by an emotional rather than neurological disorder.

"While it is true that one becomes nervous and may develop psychological problems after stuttering for many years, research has provided new evidence that it is the physical makeup of the stuttering individual that is different from that of a normal speaking person," Dell said.

Even though many speech pathologists try to re-teach stutterers how to speak fluently, according to Dell, he has been successful with a little different approach.

Dell claims that individuals who cannot be re-trained to speak fluently can learn to modify their stuttering by admitting they are stutterers and by developing skills to reduce the abnormality of stuttering.

"When individuals begin to stutter, I encourage them not to let anxiety make them force the word out of their mouths. I instead tell them to relax their mouths and to let the stuttering word flow out. Once they learn that stuttering is something that happens and is not their fault and that something positive can be done to control it, the results are amazing," Dell said.

He said when youngsters and adults alike begin to feel they have control over their stuttering, they develop positive attitudes about themselves and are not afraid to speak.

"My clients are surprised to learn I stutter, said Dell, who does not let his stuttering get in the way of making presentations across the country and conducting inservice training to school speech-language pathologists.

"If I can make something out of my life, which I have, then I have an obligation to spread the word, added Dell, whose treatment was first introduced to him by one of his former speech pathologists, Charles Van Riper, the most recognized authority on stuttering in the world.

Since Dell's clients have different forms of stuttering, he develops an individualized therapy program for each one and assigns Speech-Language-Hearing graduate students, under his supervision, to work with the stuttering clients.

Services are free for University students and \$30 for non-University students, and include two weekly treatment sessions for 15 weeks.