Patulous Eustachian Tube: *An annoying condition in which the eustachian tube, which normally opens and closes, remains open. This condition can result in an increase in an individual's perception of the sound of their own voice.*

Pediatric Audiologist: *An audiologist who specializes in the evaluation and (re)habilitation of children.*

Perforated Tympanic Membrane: *A hole in the eardrum.*

Peripheral Hearing Loss: *Hearing loss due to a dysfunction of the auditory structures located outside of the central nervous system.*

P.E. Tubes: *Pressure equalization tubes placed into the tympanic membrane (eardrum) for the purpose of keeping pressure levels in middle ear cavity equal to atmospheric pressure.*

Pinna: *The auricle. The cartilaginous structures of the external ear located peripheral to the skull.*

Potentiometer: *An external screw-adjusted control on the outside of a non-programmable hearing aid utilized to change the performance of the hearing aid's amplification parameters.*

Power Hearing Aid: *A hearing aid designed specifically for individuals with severe to profound hearing losses to provide the appropriate amount of extra gain needed to match their specific losses.*

Prelingual Hearing Loss: *Hearing loss that occurs prior to a child developing speech and language skills.*

Presbycusis: *Hearing loss that is attributed to the aging process.*

Probe Microphone Measurements: *Also called Real Ear Measures (REM). The use of a soft tube placed in the ear canal near the eardrum to evaluate the performance of a hearing aid while it is in the ear or the ear's natural resonance. The soft tube is attached to a microphone that is connected to a real ear analyzer.*

Programmable: *A helpful feature on more current hearing aids that allows them to be attached, via a cord, to a computer in a hearing healthcare professional's office. Once attached, the various parameters of the hearing aid's performance can be more easily adjusted to better match an individual's communicative needs. More expensive hearing aids tend to have more parameters available for adjustment than less expensive hearing aids, often making them more adaptable.*

Pts (Permanent Threshold Shift): *The presence of some amount of hearing loss that is permanent.*

Pumping: *A fluctuation in volume noticed by a hearing aid wearer due to the instrument's compression characteristics.*

Pure Tone Audiometry: *Refers to the part of a complete hearing evaluation that includes the measuring of air-conduction and bone-conduction thresholds while using non-complex (pure) tones.*

Pure Tone Average (PTA): *The average of the air-conduction thresholds of the three middle frequencies, usually 500 Hz, 1000 Hz, and 2000 Hz. For flat or gently-sloping shaped hearing losses the Pure Tone Average often correlates with the Speech Reception Threshold. Sometimes the average includes other combinations of frequencies (i.e., a high frequency average may include 3000 Hz or 4000 Hz).*

Quality Of Life: *In hearing terms, it refers to the increased ability to enjoy and pursue daily activities when a hearing loss is addressed with amplification.*

Real Ear: *A measurement made with a dedicated piece of equipment (real ear analyzer) that shows the performance of a hearing aid while present in the user's ear. A real ear assessment usually requires that a small probe be placed into the ear canal so that measurements of both pre- and post-placement of the hearing aid can be analyzed. Real ear testing generally utilizes an input of a series of tones that are then measured inside the ear canal after passing through the hearing aid.*

Real Ear Aided Response: *The sound measurement achieved by a probe tube placed into an ear canal when a hearing aid is inserted into the ear and turned on.*

Real Ear Unaided Response: *The sound measurement achieved by a probe tube placed into an ear canal without a hearing aid in it. This is the measurement of an ear canal's natural resonance.*

Real Ear Occluded Response: *The sound measurement achieved by a probe tube placed into an ear canal when a hearing aid is inserted into the ear and turned off. This is the measurement of a hearing aid's occlusion effect on the ear.*

Receiver: *The speaker inside a hearing aid that converts the amplified electrical energy to sound waves.*

Recruitment: *A condition often occurring with a sensori-neural hearing loss that results in an abnormal growth in loudness. For someone with hearing loss who experiences recruitment, a specific increase in intensity is perceived as a significantly larger increase in loudness than a normal hearing individual would perceive the same increase in intensity.*

Relay Service: *An operator who helps TTY users communicate via telephone to non-TTY users by listening to the auditory signal and typing out the words or reading the TTY user's words and relaying them to the non-TTY user.*

Retrocochlear: ***A designation for the part of the human auditory system that includes the acoustic nerve, the brainstem and the brain.***

Reverberation: ***The interference noted when an individual hears sounds "bounce" around the inside of a room.***

Reverse-Slope Audiogram: ***A description of the graph of an individual's thresholds in which the hearing is poorer in the lower frequencies and the hearing loss is less pronounced or the hearing is normal in the higher frequencies.***

Screening (Hearing): ***An evaluation of the auditory system that is generally not as in-depth as a traditional hearing test and often does not include the actual assessment of an individual's thresholds, but instead results in "pass" or "fail".***

Semicircular Canals: ***The three fluid-filled tubes in the vestibular portion of the inner ear that helps with equilibrium and the interpretation of the body's position.***

Sensori-Neural Hearing Loss: ***A decrease in an individual's ability to hear a particular sound due to a problem in the inner ear (cochlea) or the neural system (Cranial Nerve VIII). The designation of a hearing loss as sensori-neural suggests that the sound makes it way through the outer and middle ear systems efficiently, but is not picked-up by the hair cells in the cochlea or transmitted by the hearing nerves as well as an average normal human ear's system.***

Signal-To-Noise Ratio: ***The relationship between the intensity of the desired sound (signal) and other undesired sounds (noise). The louder the speech signal is presented in comparison to the background noises, the better chance a person has at understanding the speech signal.***

Sign Language: *The use of ones hands using hand-shapes, placement and movements with specific syntax and in order to communicate through an organized visual language.*

SNHL: *Sensori-neural hearing loss.*

Sound Booth: *A sound treated enclosure that is designed to attenuate the interference of extraneous sounds during a hearing test. Sound booths lessen but do not eliminate reverberant and ambient noises.*

Sound Field Hearing Aid Testing: *The analysis of the performance of a hearing aid in which a patient's thresholds are measured, while in a sound booth with the stimuli presented through a speaker system, with and without a hearing aid inserted.*

Speech Audiometry: *The portion of an audiological evaluation that uses speech stimuli to measure the auditory system. Speech audiometry testing often includes the measurement of Speech Reception Thresholds (SRTs) utilizing two-syllable spondee words and the assessment of Word Recognition / Speech Discrimination scores utilizing single syllable words in a carrier phrase. Some speech audiometry tests use sentence materials instead of single word materials.*

Speech Mapping: *A variation of the traditional real ear analysis, during which a professional uses a special device to measure the performance of a hearing aid using speech as the input instead of a series of tones.*

Speech Reading: *The use of lip reading and other visual cues produced by a speaker to help with the understanding of spoken words.*

Speech Reception Threshold: *The use of familiar two-syllable spondee words by a hearing healthcare professional to assess the lowest intensity level at which an individual can repeat the words more than half of the time.*

Stapes: ***The smallest and last bone in the ossicular chain. It attaches to the oval window of the inner ear.***

Swimplugs: ***Material used to keep water out of the ear canal. They can be custom or non-custom made and are often used to prevent infections that can result from water getting into the ear canal or middle ear cavity.***