Dear speech-language pathologist,

I am a faculty member in the Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at New York University. I am writing to ask if you would be interested in becoming a clinical partner in a research project investigating a computer-enhanced intervention for /r/ misarticulation. Many children have difficulty producing the /r/ sound, and some are not able to eliminate their errors even after years of speech therapy. We are testing different types of intervention for /r/, including treatment using a newly developed iPad/iPhone app. We want to find out if our methods can help children make a better /r/ sound.

I am inviting speech-language pathologists to help me test our new app for /r/ therapy. If you choose to become a partner in this research effort, I will ask you to do the following:

- Complete two requirements to become eligible to assist with the conduct of human subjects research:
  - Fill out and submit paperwork to become a volunteer affiliate of NYU
  - Complete CITI Human Subjects Training (Basic Social & Behavioral and Good Clinical Practice)
- Identify children who might benefit from this treatment. Share informational materials for the children and their families to consider. Interested families can then contact me directly or through you.
- Help our research team obtain informed assent and consent from the participant(s) and their families, and transmit signed documents to the research team.
- Conduct a screening evaluation (hearing, oral-motor structure and function, language comprehension, speech production, and/or speech perception) to determine eligibility for participation in the study.
- Guide participant(s) through a course of app-based intervention for /r/.
  - You will need to supply your own iPad device. We will provide the app free of charge. We can help you obtain an appropriate external microphone for use with our app—please inquire.
  - You will be asked to adhere to a standard protocol for data collection and treatment delivery.
  - All treatment should be provided on an individual basis using our app.
  - For the duration of the study (estimated at a maximum of 15 hours over approximately 11 weeks), this protocol should replace any /r/ therapy currently provided to the participant(s).
  - Treatment should take place in the setting where the child typically receives his/her speech therapy services, or in another quiet room.
  - This study has three phases.
    - In the first phase (between 1 and 3 sessions over approximately 1.5 weeks), you will be asked to record participant(s) producing /r/ in various contexts without any feedback. You may also be asked to collect perceptual measures.
    - In the second phase (approximately 8 hours over approximately 8 weeks), you will be asked to follow app instructions to provide intervention for the /r/ sound. Our preferred schedule involves two 30-minute sessions per week over 8 weeks, but there is flexibility for you to adjust the schedule of treatment delivery to fit your needs (e.g., three 20-minute sessions per week would also be adequate).
      - Over the 8 weeks, individual sessions will be randomly assigned to be with biofeedback or without biofeedback (traditional). We will contact you with a schedule of random assignments for each participant.
      - You may be asked to record a brief word list at the start and end of each session.
After each session, we will ask you to transmit session recordings to our research team, if the child’s family agrees to share these recordings with us. This will allow us to monitor participant progress and identify any major deviations from the standard study protocol.

- In the final phase (between 1 and 3 sessions over approximately 1.5 weeks), you will again be asked to record participant(s) producing /r/ in various contexts without feedback, and you may also be asked to collect perceptual measures.
- You may be asked to conduct one follow-up recording session one month after the end of treatment.

I am looking for children between 9 and 15 years of age who have difficulty producing correct /r/ sounds. We are especially interested in enrolling participants who have received speech therapy targeting /r/ for at least one year with limited success. Participating children must be native speakers of English who do not have problems hearing or understanding language.

There are no known risks associated with participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Participants’ privacy is very important to us, and information that could be used to identify participants (such as name or birthdate) will not be disclosed to anyone outside of the study. Your voice may be recorded and your statements may be monitored as part of this study. We will ask for your permission to share de-identified recordings of your therapy interactions an academic context, such as a conference or classroom. You are free to tell us not to share these recordings. We will not share any recordings of you without your consent.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you, the participating child, or the participating child’s family will be free to terminate your involvement in the study at any time.

We hope that both you and children on your caseload will benefit directly from the opportunity to try out this new approach to /r/ therapy. We also hope that our study will help other people with /r/ errors get more effective treatment.

Neither you nor the participating families should incur any cost in connection with participation in this study. You will be offered a small honorarium (up to $100) to offset your time spent in non-treatment activities such as completing background questionnaires and uploading materials to our research team. Because the bulk of this time commitment occurs during the initial consent and screening process, participating clinicians will receive $60 after this process is complete. An additional $40 will be paid upon completion of the study. If you or the participant drop out of the study prior to completion, compensation will be prorated at $5 per session completed (up to 8 sessions).

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me using the information listed below. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Tara McAllister, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
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