

# PREFACE

In early 1984, I received a phone call from Mike Marge requesting that I join Mike and Dan Boone in submitting a proposal for a short course presentation on the prevention of voice disorders to be made at the ASHA convention in Washington, D.C. I was reluctant to accept such a task, because I didn't feel particularly qualified to talk about preventative issues in voice—I didn't perceive myself as really being involved professionally in prevention issues. Mike would not take no as an answer and convinced me on the phone that I had already said quite a substantial amount about prevention in my work with the *Vocal Abuse Reduction Program*. It was not long before Mike had convinced me that perhaps I did have something to contribute to such an endeavor. The experience in preparing for and executing that short course was one of the single, best professional experiences I've had in my career. The opportunity to share the platform with Mike Marge, the father of prevention and epidemiological issues in the profession, and with Dan Boone, whom I respect highly as *the* voice clinician and whose enthusiasm and humor blend so well with his vast storehouse of knowledge, making him one of our profession's true "treasures," was not only a great experience for me personally, but also a highly valuable experience for the 400 to 500 people who attended the short course.

We worked out an evaluation format for the short course, and the results were, to say the least, highly gratifying. The thirst for knowledge and counsel regarding prevention of voice problems was remarkably clear, and because of the overwhelming positive response, we refined the presentation and presented it again at the 1987 New Orleans convention, this time as a miniseminar. It was during this time that Bill Perkins discussed with me putting together a *Seminars* issue on the topic. Regrettably, Dan was unable to participate in the project due to other pressing major writing commitments, but I was fortunate to have Mike Marge agree to participate. Along with Mike, I was able to enlist Robert E. (Ed) Stone, a professional colleague and friend with wide experience and interest in vocal disturbance; Dee Child,

a Utah State University departmental colleague, who had collaborated with me previously on several voice studies; and Tiphannie Kaufmann, a former student of mine, who had generated a very fine, mediated training package on the prevention of voice problems in educators as a part of her thesis project at Utah State University. I appreciate the work and effort each of these individuals made in behalf of this issue. Such an endeavor requires no small sacrifice in terms of time and sometimes even pain.

A vital new force gathering strength in the profession is the move toward the consideration of a preventative model of management. Prevention issues seem to be a natural progression in the evolution of a discipline, and recently a degree of credence was given to that maturation by ASHA's establishment of the Committee on Prevention. For years, Mike Marge has been a driving force in the profession in the area of epidemiology and prevention issues. In 1984, Mike and a few others met in conjunction with the ASHA convention and formed the Prevention and Epidemiology Study Group, which is still in existence and has become a clearinghouse for the exchange of information among members interested in the broad issues of preventative communicative disorders.

Prevention programming brings with it a host of new professional and ethical issues. It will bring necessary change and reform as well as new excitement and vigor. As the profession matures further toward specialty certification, professional doctorates, and other substantive changes, there is little doubt that prevention programming will likewise increase in importance and prominence.

Prevention of voice problems is a complex and fascinating topic. We could have opted to have gone in a variety of directions for this issue, but believed that our major responsibility was to lay the foundation of

what currently is known in a general way and of some approaches to the problem that may be helpful in the future. The lead article (by Child and Johnson) addresses the fundamental sense of teasing out those factors that impact the human voice and detailing the preventable and nonpreventable causes of vocal disturbance. My article on principles and practices attends primarily to my own experiences and biases and presents what Mike recognized to be functional prevention procedures as an outgrowth of the *Vocal Abuse Reduction Program*. Ed Stone's contribution took on the challenge of the future with respect to the needs for moving into prevention programming, by proposing some national directions for implementation. Tiphannie Kaufmann shares with the reader her experiences with a very fine, mediated prevention package she developed as a research thesis project. This type of package is but one example of many ways to convey the necessary information concerning preventative factors. An important conclusion to this issue is the study by Mike Marge on the context of demographics and epidemiology as being fundamental to the correct understanding of prevention issues, even beyond application to voice disorders.

I sincerely hope the reader will find that the information is useful and stimulating and, more importantly, that it will stimulate others to enter the prevention arena. Again, I thank the participants, including Dan Boone, whose influence (I hope) still pervades much of the material written herein. I also thank Bill Perkins and Christine Shade for their understanding, patience, and friendship in the process of compiling this effort, and more recently, Richard Curlee for his insightful editing. It has been a stimulating adventure.

Thomas S. Johnson, Ph.D.  
Guest Editor