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**DOES THE USE OF REMOTE-MICROPHONE HEARING AID TECHNOLOGY ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROSODY PERCEPTION TRAINING IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)?**

We are seeking **children who have ASD, with no hearing difficulties, aged 7-13** years old.

Studies have shown that processing emotional cues in facial expressions and in speech is an area of difficulty for people with ASD. We want to pair the use of remote-microphone hearing aids (RM systems) with computer-based training tasks to see if it will improve the perception and production of emotional cues in faces and speech.

The study requires a time commitment that spans 10 weeks. The researcher will be more than happy to conduct the sessions at a location that is most convenient for you.

There will be four assessment sessions, each taking about 1 hour. These will include:

* A standardised screening test, the “Childhood Autism Rating Scale” (CARS)
* A “Childhood Communication Checklist” questionnaire
* An assessment that requires listening to some segments of speech, and then matching them to an emotional facial expression
* Saying some sentences in different emotions, that will be recorded with a microphone
* And listening to speech samples and identifying the underlying emotions

There will be two assessment sessions before, and two after, a 3-week training period. During this time, the child will first be given the opportunity to get used to wearing an RM system. They will then get to participate in some training activities on a laptop computer. Three 30-minute sessions per week of the participants’ time will be required. The child will also be given the option to try wearing the RM system at school.

In addition, there is an optional part of the study that involves recording the brain activity of the child in response to different emotional tones in speech. This part of the study is not mandatory.

A $20 voucher will be gifted to you upon completion of your participation in the project.

By doing this research we hope to gain a better understanding of communication difficulties in children with ASD; to assess the feasibility of using an interactive and technological approach to emotion training; and to explore whether social communication difficulties are based on auditory processing problems.

If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact:

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