



The theme for World Voice Day 2011 is *We Share a Voice*. In a few short words, this brings to mind so many ways in which the human voice links us all together. Indeed, the voice is at the core of what connects and defines us as human beings.

Pause for a moment on World Voice Day and consider that:

Even in this age of texting, e-mail, Facebook and Twitter, the spoken word remains the primary mode of communication worldwide for most people; *true* communication and not just dissemination of information or media. Even an individual who frequently utilizes e-communication will have had the experience of needing the spoken word to clarify a point or resolve a conflict that developed over a misinterpreted text, e-mail or posting. The mutual understanding that comes through the human voice cannot be duplicated.

While the words to a song may be inspiring or heartfelt, do you really need to understand the language being sung in order to be moved? Is it not the beauty of the human voice itself that stirs us through singing?

Have you ever had the experience of traveling in a country where you did not speak the language and yet somehow seemed to communicate? While waving hands and pointing fingers can certainly help with directions, the shared human voice quickly allows us to discern who is a new friend ready to provide assistance and with whom we can connect vocally.

What about laughter or crying of young children? Whether they live nearby or on a different continent, the voice of a joyous or distressed child is something that engages our emotions and cannot be ignored.

The voice that we share is what we celebrate on World Voice Day! At this time and throughout the year, the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery and vocal health professionals worldwide, encourage you to take care of your voice. A few simple vocal health tips include:

- **Keep yourself well hydrated.**
- **Don't smoke.**
- **Don't scream or shout. Use a microphone if you need to project your voice.**
- **Rest your voice if you have laryngitis.**
- **Get evaluated by an Otolaryngologist (Ear, Nose and Throat physician) if you have persistent hoarseness.**