

## TAKING CARE OF YOUR VOICE FOR SPEAKING AND TEACHING (AND SINGING, TOO!)

Teaching involves speaking, and it can often be challenging and even damaging to your voice, especially when leading large groups (like instrumental or choral ensembles) or in spaces where your voice doesn't carry easily.

“Teachers are among those professionals who make great demands on their voices, often in rooms with poor acoustics and inadequate ventilation. Unfortunately, this stress on the voice can lead to problems such as vocal fold swelling, vocal fold nodules and excessive muscle strain with voice use. These conditions can severely limit voice quality and stamina which can alter quality of life but can also lead to occupational disability for a classroom teacher. If left untreated, these problems can cause permanent vocal damage.” --Joseph Spiegel, M.D., co-director of the Voice and Swallowing Center at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

- See more at: <http://www.stoneearthnewsletters.com/why-teachers-lose-their-voices-in-the-fall-and-what-they-can-do-about-it/education/#sthash.VY1MXVB5.dpuf>



### TIPS FOR USING YOUR VOICE WISELY:

- **Stay hydrated – balance caffeinated drink intake (caffeine is a diuretic)**
- **Avoid drying medications such as antihistamines, if possible**
- **Find time for vocal rest throughout the day (esp. end of the day)**
- **Don't abuse/overuse your voice (shouting, yelling, screaming)**
- **Use amplification if necessary**
- **Don't smoke!**

### TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR VOICE PROJECTION:

- Warm up before you teach/speak for extended periods (humming, etc.)
- Use good posture – helps align the vocal instrument for best function
- Use deep breathing (from a low diaphragmatic position)
- Project your voice using your lungs and head resonance, not from your throat
- Use clear enunciation and speak slowly
- Focus your sound

<http://www.trainingzone.co.uk/develop/talent/practical-tips-for-projecting-your-voice>

Vocal Health and Wellness Links:

To maintain a healthy speaking voice:

<http://www.livescience.com/4078-10-tips-healthy-voice.html>

<http://www.texasvoicecenter.com/advice.html>

<http://www.entnet.org/content/tips-healthy-voices>