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SURVEY FINDS THAT COSMETIC EAR SURGERY HAS THE YOUNGEST AGE OF PATIENTS

Chicago, IL (June 10, 2009) – So many classic childhood movies (Dumbo) and sing-a-longs (Do your ears hang low? Do they wobble to and fro?) emphasize large and protruding ears. But it turns out that having protruding ears is often-times a humiliating feature for a teenager.

According to the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery's 2008 Procedural Survey, 27.7% of otoplasties - a reshaping of the ear by placing small incisions behind the ear then reshaping or trimming the cartilage to define how and where the ear bends - are performed on those ages 13-19. Additionally, the survey found that otoplasty has the youngest mean age of both invasive and less invasive cosmetic procedures at 29.

“While cosmetic surgery is not for all adolescents, there appears to be a trend in otoplasty for younger patients,” states Dr. Patrick McMenamin, MD, President of the AACS. “The bottom line is that if the teen is of appropriate psychological and physical maturity, then the teen can reap the benefits of an early age otoplasty. In my experience, it is the youngster who comes in adamantly requesting the procedure.”

Generally, ears reach their full growth potential by age 6 which is drastically earlier than other parts of an adolescent body. In fact, it is preferred to have an otoplasty at a younger age because the cartilage is extremely flexible, thereby permitting greater ease of shaping and a better result.

The survey results and doctor interviews are available by contacting the Academy. Information on choosing a cosmetic surgeon and questions to ask before having cosmetic surgery can be found on the AACS website, at www.cosmeticsurgery.org.

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The American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery is a professional medical society whose members are dedicated to patient safety and physician education in cosmetic surgery. Most members of the AACS are dermatologic surgeons, facial plastic surgeons, head and neck surgeons, general surgeons, oral and maxillofacial surgeons, plastic surgeons, or ocular plastic surgeons – all of whom specialize in cosmetic surgery. AACS is an organization that represents all cosmetic surgeons in the American Medical Association through its seat in the AMA House of Delegates.