

Spring Workshop...

Thursday, March 7 - 7:30 pm

B.C. Family Hearing Resource Centre - 15355 102A Avenue, Surrey

Special Guests: Audiologists Susan Clark (Vancouver Hearing Centre) **Bonnie Wood** (Fraser Valley Health Region)

Topics for discussion: audiograms, hearing aids, ear molds, newborn hearing screening, etc.

Call Teresa for info. 604-552-2254

Parents, family members, professionals -- ALL welcome!

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A HUGE **thank you** to CHHA-BC from the Parents' Branch for a most excellent Annual Conference. Thanks also to the **Jeremy Chiao Foundation** who provided a grant to assist parents' expenses. Thanks to **volunteers** and **attendees** - the conference was educational and inspirational!

President's Message:

The CHHA - B.C. conference was a great success again this year! It was wonderful to chat and catch up with friends from years past, and to see how the children have changed after another year. There were several new faces, and lots of opportunities to socialize with other parents as well as hard of hearing adults, who were happy to share their experiences. The adults were kept busy with workshops covering a wide range of topics (negotiating, children's writing, speech therapy, technology, access to information at school, traditional Chinese medicine for hearing...)

The children were entertained in the Kiddie Kare and Kidz Konnection (a huge thank-you to Teresa Lonn for all her hard work, and also to our much-appreciated volunteers Diane Goodman, Laura Davidson, Pamela Day, and Jane Miller!). One of the highlights for the adults was a performance by the Kidz Konnection "robots" on Friday evening.

The youth had their own workshop this year, the BEST Program with Pamela Spencer. We hope to draw out even more teens as well as young adults in future years, as this group has a lot to offer to us as parents and to each other.

We were very pleased to be able to assist nine families with the Jeremy Chiao Foundation Grant of \$1500. This money was used to assist with conference fees as well as travel and accommodation expenses. Our sincere thanks to the Jeremy Chiao Foundation for enabling these families to attend.

And thank you finally to CHHA-BC for their ongoing support and for allowing us to take such an active role in the conference each year. *Teresa Kazemir*

January 2002



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association B.C. Parents' Branch

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Membership: \$20 annual includes subscription to *Listen/Écouté* magazine and *The Loop* newsletter

KIDZ KONNECTION 2001

By Teresa Lonn



The children's programs at the 2001 CHHA-BC Conference were a huge success

If you didn't make it to the CHHA Conference – Kidz Konnection 2001, you missed out on a lot of fun and friendships. Eighteen children from around the province enjoyed a fun filled two day program.

Friday we constructed and decorated robot costumes and the kids got to wear them for their performance of the "New Wave of the Future", written by the Sherwoods of Osoyoos. There was a little problem getting the kids up the two steps onto the stage, since they had robot legs, but with a little help from Jane Miller and myself, they made it up there. Everyone at the conference thoroughly enjoyed the show! The kids were great! After that, the kids had a video and junk food!

Saturday was also an action packed day. Mad Science came and did a workshop with all the kids. First item on the agenda was learning about flight and how to make paper airplanes that actually fly. There was even flying contests! Next, the scientist demonstrated all the things you can do with dry ice. Making smoke vapours and Halloween magic potion, sending out large milky bubbles out of plumbing pipe, that poof into smoke when popped. All of us were fascinated!

Next came the giant pumpkin pinata! What kid can resist bashing a piñata with a Canadian hockey stick. I suppose the candy was a bonus as well. After lunch we all walked across to the recreation centre where we played soccer, dodge ball, badminton etc. After all that running around we needed something cool, so we went back to the Kidz Konnection room and made our own ice cream sundaes.

Soon the parents came to collect their worn out kids. A good time was had by everyone. For myself, it was great to see a number of new kids this year. New and renewed friendships were had by all. I learn so much from these kids. There are no barriers and everyone is accepted without question. I love doing this program because I see how important it is for our children, both hearing and hard of hearing to be together, even if it is only once a year for some of them.

My thanks to my husband Bo, who helped me out so much this year by painting and cutting robot costumes to fit the kids and running errands for me. Thank you to Jane Miller who volunteered with me all day Friday in rehearsing the play with the kids. I could not have done it without you Jane! Also thanks need to go to Steve Kazemir who took the kids on tours of the technology booths and helped out with many varied tasks.

If you are interested in helping out next year, please contact me, Teresa Lonn at (604)533-9878. I promise you great fun and fatigue!

The Best In You

This year's BEST program for teens was a first for the CHHA Conference. There were eleven teens involved in the ten hour/two day program. Pamela Spencer from the WIDHH led this workshop on self advocacy and leadership. I know that many benefited from the workshop. For some, the transition from fun and play in the Kidz Konnection program last year to a more serious learning forum was a bit of a struggle. For others, it was good to have a more age appropriate workshop that addresses some of their concerns.

Overall it was a success, as many of the teens met for the first time and have developed new friendships that will continue outside of the convention.

PS. TEEN ALERT! If you have ideas of what you would like to see at the teen program at the next conference, please send your ideas to

**Teresa Lonn, Kids/Teen Programs,
20058 Fernridge Crescent, Langley, BC V2Z 1X5**

**"How to help your hard of hearing person" by
the ALL EARS TRAINING SCHOOL...**

Kidz Konnection page...

MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

By: Lauren Sherwood, Osoyoos, BC

Hi, my name is Lauren Sherwood. I'm 12 years old and I was born in Vancouver on July 22nd, 1989. I have bright pink hair. Oops, my mistake! I really have golden brown hair with blonde streaks. I have blue eyes and I wear hearing aids. Now you know almost everything there is to know about me, so... let's move on!

My ancestors came across on the "Mayflower". Ha, ha! Just kidding! Actually, I don't know how my ancestors came to Canada! But I do know that my ancestors are from England. I've never been to England but I've been to... are you sure you want to hear all this? Okay then! I've been to Hawaii, Barbados, Mexico, Belize, Texas, Florida, New York, Disneyland and a lot of other places too. (I think my parents like to travel.) Oh, yes! I would like to go to Paris one day and see the Eiffel Tower. And I'd like to visit Australia and snorkel at the Great Barrier Reef.

Now for my pets, well, I don't exactly have a lot of pets, but I have a hamster and my brother has some fish, but not all of them are alive! I'm hoping to get a dog soon because I've always wanted one, but my mom and dad are allergic to cat and dog fur. So I have to get one that doesn't shed fur.

For sports, I play golf, soccer, and track and field. I also tube, wake board, hike and ski. For non sports, I play the piano and I take singing and dance lessons.

What I would like to be in the future is... I have no clue! I can't think of what I want to be! It's just that I want to be so many things I can't write them all down. But I do know that I plan to graduate from high school and university one day. My pet peeve? When I say "What did you say?" and people answer "Never mind." Grrr...I hate that.

So, that's it! That is the end of my biography. Thank you very much!

CAMP instead of CONFERENCE?

At the November Parents' Branch meeting Maggie Dodd, President of CHHA-B.C., was our guest and threw us an exciting proposal. What about having a CAMP instead of a CONFERENCE? This could be done alternate years if successful. There would be activities for kids of all ages, workshops for hard of hearing adults and parents, family sessions, etc. We are looking into various venues and dates, but need **YOUR INPUT** too!

Please let us know (contact info on page 1) if your family would be interested in a camp. Would Labour Day week-end 2003 suit you? Alternate dates? Please give us suggestions for location, activities, promotion, funding...

Calling All Kidz!

CHHA - Parents Branch Newsletter is devoting a page just for you. That means we need stories, jokes & cartoons from you to fill this page. Help us make it a success by contributing your own work. Send by mail to **Janet Les, Editor**
10150 Gillanders Road; Chilliwack, BC
V2P 6H4 Email janetles@canada.com

A satisfied customer...

Kidz Konnection was so much fun! My favourite thing was the science guy making magic potion and smoke from dry ice. It was so cool! I like playing with Cameron and Luke and Tim.
By Nolan Lonn

The BC Ministry of Education has a comprehensive new web site:

Graduation Info. for Grades 8 - 12

Check it out and find out:

"What it takes to graduate"

"Other ways to earn grad credits"

"Life after graduation"

"etc. etc."



<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/information/>

What do Hearing Resource Teachers Do?

(adapted from a handout from Coquitlam School District)

Hearing Resource Teachers have been hired specifically to help students who have a hearing loss. We are teachers who are specifically trained to work with these students.

The help given to students is on a one-to-one basis and may involve the following:

- Assessment of language proficiency and auditory processing
- Liaison between the classroom teacher, the parents and the other professionals
- Sessions to help the student learn to use a hearing aid or learn to use their hearing more productively
- Remedial work and program support
- Emotional support and education regarding the implications of having a hearing loss

Parent to Parent . . .

Tennis Balls Anyone? By Leila Lolua

The first time I entered my daughter's grade four classroom, I was horrified by the acoustics. I considered talking with the principal about having the classroom's carpeted area enlarged, but then remembered hearing about using tennis balls on the bottom of chair legs to quiet down the noise of 27 chairs scraping on tile floors!

The classroom teacher was receptive to the idea, (though she did express concern that some kids might have a field day throwing the balls around.) I collected old tennis balls from co-workers, and amassed a huge haul from a local tennis club.

Each chair requires 4 tennis balls. Make 2 cuts in the shape of an 'X' in each ball with a utility knife. We did this at home to save time. Then push one tennis ball onto each leg of the chair.

This is a cheap, easy way to deal with some of the noise problems in the classroom. The teacher and the other students are enjoying the quieter environment. The tennis balls have remained on the chairs, and everyone is happy! In fact, the teacher is collecting tennis balls for her class' chairs next year.

Editor's Note: Another parent reports that in addition to tennis balls on chair legs, they also covered table legs in a primary classroom with Styrofoam tubes (available from hardware stores--used for covering pipes). This reduced the noise from chairs clanging on the table legs.

Make your own Dry Aid Kit

Kristine Bernhard, a new audiologist at B.C. Children's Hospital and Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children shared this suggestion for making your own dry aid kit. Use a glass jar with a tight fitting lid (e.g. a jam jar). Fill it about 1/3 full with dry rice. Put a piece of foam on top. Place hearing aids on the foam and close the lid. Submitted by Teresa Kazemir

Chinese Support Group for Parents of Hard of Hearing Children

Chinese parents meet monthly to share information and support each other as they face the unique challenges of raising their hard of hearing children. Meetings are held on the first Friday of each month from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm at SUCCESS Pender Office, 28 Pender Street, Vancouver. For information, call Mr. Jason Chan 604-408-7274 ext. 2160 or Ms. Terry Lai 604-802-0028

Books and Videos available

The Family Resource Library at B.C.'s Children's Hospital will mail books out to people who live outside the lower mainland. Families can borrow from this library even if their child is not a patient. Loan period is 2 weeks for books and 3 days for videotapes.

The library catalogue can be accessed on their web site at www.cw.bc.ca Select Family Resource library from "Department Listings." Choose catalogue button and then search for what you would like.

Audibility vs. Intelligibility

Submitted by Janet Les

We recently had the interior of our home painted and this motivated me to do some major sorting in the paper jungle around here. I found files of information from our early days in the world of hearing loss. Among them was a paper which Curtis' TDHH gave to his teachers, "**Preferential Seating is NOT Enough: Issues in Classroom Management of Hearing-Impaired Students**," written in 1989 by several professionals who are still active in the field.

Here's an interesting bit from this excellent paper:

"The audibility/intelligibility distinction is a difficult 'hearing' concept to appreciate because it is so ambiguous. A child with a mild-moderate hearing loss, or a child who is wearing a hearing aid which is not coupled to an FM unit in the classroom, may appear to hear just fine. However, in reality, the child may hear in the teacher's voice and the intonation patterns, but may not hear individual speech sounds clearly enough to differentiate one word from another. Words like *ladder*, *leader*, and *little* may all sound the same to a child with poor intelligibility. Words like *talked*, *talks*, and *talking* may all sound like 'alk.' Yet, if the teacher were to ask the child, 'Do you hear me?' the child would likely respond, 'Yes.' One would not expect a young child to answer, 'I hear your voice, but I can't hear the unstressed linguistic markers of plurality and tense; nor can I hear articles, voiceless consonants or new vocabulary words clearly enough to distinguish them from other, known words.' Yet, educators are surprised when this same child evidences a lack of vocabulary, a poor intuitive feel for linguistic structures, and trouble keeping up with the 'slow' reading group." ☺



The following letter was submitted to the B.C. Ministry of Children and Family Development during their recent exercise of hearing from "consumers"... We thought you might find it helpful in writing your own advocacy letters. You are encouraged to add personal anecdotes when making submissions. It is important that we add our voice as individuals as well as a group.

November 30, 2001

To: Minister of Children and Family Development

From: B.C. Parents' Branch - Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

As a province-wide network of parents of hard of hearing children we welcome this opportunity to provide feedback regarding our experiences as consumers of services provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. We represent families of children with a range of hearing loss (from mild to profound, bilateral or unilateral) who generally

use speech and audition as their main mode of communication. Our children vary as to what supports they need (hearing aids, cochlear implants, FM systems, sign language) but they have an acute need for service regardless of the level of hearing loss.

Early intervention services provided by your ministry are critical to our hard of hearing children. A large number of families enroll in an early intervention program specialized in providing services for the families of children with hearing loss (e.g. the B.C. Family Hearing Resource Centre, The Vancouver Oral Centre). These programs are a wonderful resource, a life-saver for many families, and completely *necessary*. Children who are hard of hearing have great potential to function as contributing members of society, as long as they are given the support they need. The early years are critical for developing language, as hard of hearing children are at risk for significant difficulties in this area. With support early on, parents are able to develop the skills needed to work with their children, as well as learning to become advocates for their children as they grow older.

While we appreciate the existing services, we do not feel that the current level of service is sufficient to meet the needs of all families of children with hearing loss, especially outside of the lower mainland and Victoria. Our network of families has also identified several specific areas that we believe need to be implemented or improved:

1. **Universal new-born hearing screening** Research has clearly shown the benefits of early diagnosis of deaf and hard of hearing children.

2. **Hearing aid funding, assistive listening device (ALDS) funding** British Columbia provides very little funding for hearing

aids for children, as compared to several other provinces in Canada. This is a huge cost for families to bear.

3. **Increased services of Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TDHH) to work directly with children as well as provide direction to families and other professionals** There is a shortage of Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and their services are a necessity for our children.

4. **Increased speech-language pathology (SLP) service provision for hard of hearing children of all ages and degrees of hearing loss** Waiting lists for speech-language pathology services are extremely long in some communities, as there is also a shortage of Speech-Language Pathologists.

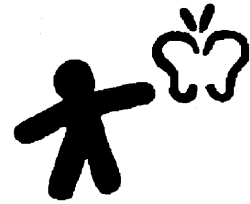
5. **Professionals (audiologists, TDHH, SLP) with experience in working with children using cochlear implants** There is an ever-increasing number of children with cochlear implants in B.C., but a lack of professionals trained and experienced in working with them.

6. **Co-ordination, sharing and transferring of information especially during critical pre-school to school transition** Our children would benefit from an organized, coordinated approach to services.

The costs in providing these services should be considered by the Ministry as an INVESTMENT rather than an EXPENSE. Cost-benefit analysis and research bears out that early identification and high quality intervention for children with hearing loss results in greatly reduced costs during later years. Services need to be made available when parents and professionals have identified their need and they need to be of a high quality. There is a huge price to pay if they are not, a cost much greater than providing them.

CHHA - B.C. Parents' Branch would be pleased to provide further information and/or documentation on these issues. Members of our executive are available to meet with Ministry representatives to discuss the needs and potential of children with hearing loss in British Columbia.

Respectfully submitted, Teresa Kazemir, President - CHHA - B.C. Parents' Branch



NOTE: All submissions to the Ministry of Children and Family Development Core Services Review can be accessed at: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/core_review/mcfd_submissions.htm

Taking A Walk In My Son's Shoes

By

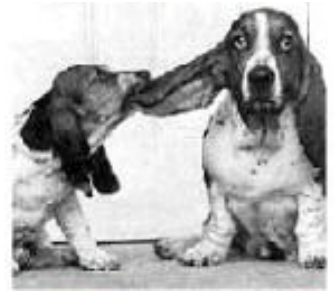
Brandy Penman

With a recent acute middle ear infection that has resulted in a perforated ear drum in my left ear and fluid in my right ear I've been having a first hand experience living as a hard of hearing person. Struggling to understand the muffled speech of others speaking to me from another room. Having to focus and lip-read carefully to understand what is being said to me. Having to remind my husband that I can't hear him when he speaks to me from upstairs or another room. Reminding him to be patient with me because I can't always hear or understand what he is saying. When my husband has tried to raise his voice to get me to understand him it's just uncomfortably loud muffled speech to me. Having to remind my hard of hearing son that I can't understand what he is saying if he's "talking to the wall" and not facing me. Missing what others around me are talking about. Finding myself using some of the Signed English we know, as a family, to communicate at a distance.

I can't hear the kettle click when it's boiled and ready and have to check that the switch has popped up. Tracking down the elusive cordless telephone when it's ringing

somewhere in the house is a game in itself. Thankfully our dog lets me know when someone is knocking at the door. I now personally appreciate the difficulty imposed by background noise from the electric fan driven heater in our living room. Watching television has become a chore and I've found that some of my favourite educational programs on the Discovery channel aren't closed captioned. My husband teases me about the volume of the television and how it vibrates through the house. Talking on the phone is a challenge. I have to make sure I'm in a quiet spot in the house so I can focus completely on the person speaking on the phone. I've found myself "tuning out" during conversations because it gets tiring trying to lip-read and decipher what is being said. I find myself saying the phrases "I can't hear you, come here please." and "Please tell me again." repeatedly.

With time, my eardrum is expected to heal and my hearing is expected to return. My son and other hard of hearing people live with these and other challenges every day. Experiencing hearing loss first hand has given me a much deeper



appreciation for the challenges my son lives with daily and his resiliency and desire to function as a hard of hearing individual. His hearing loss is now severe in both ears. He is very determined to communicate orally and is very successful. His language skills and general knowledge are quite amazing for his age.

This time spent living with my own hearing loss has reminded me that patience and understanding are the keys to communicating with someone who is hard of hearing. Even though I've read about hearing loss and the day-to-day challenges it creates for my hard of hearing son I didn't fully appreciate what it's like to "walk in his shoes". I am thankful for this experience and will make an effort to be even more aware of my son's needs related to his hearing loss.

Question answered:

How many school aged children in B.C. are Hard of Hearing?

We asked Mr. Joe Coehlo, Ministry of Education Special Education contact for students with hearing loss...

For the 2000/2001 school year, school districts claimed 1444 students under the category of deaf and hard of hearing. 66 per cent of those students were in K to grade 7 and 34 per cent in grades 8 to 12. Ministry data does not differentiate between deaf and hard of hearing.

The enrollment of 1444 does not include students attending Provincial Resource Programs which last year served about 155 students in Langley, Sooke and Burnaby.

A consideration you have to give to the enrollment of 1444 is that these are the students districts claim for supplemental funding and does not represent the total number of students who may be hard of hearing in the school system. For example, if a student is not being provided with regular, frequent and ongoing services from a qualified teacher of the deaf, the district cannot claim supplemental funding. This would happen for example if a student is

hard of hearing but with assistive technology (hearing aids and FM) can follow the regular curriculum without the need of specialist assistance. Also, some deaf and hard of hearing students may have other needs which allow districts to claim supplemental funding under other low incidence categories (same



amount of revenue to the district).

What is an Individual Education Plan? - Notes from our evening workshop, September 2001

What is an IEP?

- It outlines the child's needs, as well as specific goals related to school curriculum
- Goals can be social, academic, related to equipment, etc.
- Includes both goals and strategies
- A tool used to monitor progress
- Contract between teachers and parents and other team members
- Something that validates the need for services
- A guide for the classroom teacher
- IEP helps to make everyone accountable
- Helps to establish systematic documentation for adaptations/accommodations

What are the purposes of the IEP Meeting?

- Chance to sit and talk with teachers
- To talk about expectations and plans
- Important venue for informing the school about the child's needs, looking at issues from the parent's, teacher's, and hearing resource teacher's perspective
- To bring together the whole *team* of people who are working together
- To identify goals, develop a plan of action, and an evaluation process

What are some Guiding Principles?

- Development of IEP is done within the context of collaboration and partnerships between team members (parents are part of team)
- Ministry Guidelines specify that the IEP should address the following (if applicable):
 - adaptations/modifications
 - support services
 - goals for language/speech
 - goals for independence/responsibility
- Should be a living document, used, looked at, evaluated; should not be used just to get funding
- Used as reference for new team members, a good start for next year
- Goals need to be attainable and measurable
- The IEP should be reviewed during the year (how often it needs to be reviewed will vary from student to student)
- The IEP should specify who will do what

Adaptation versus Modification

Adaptation (i.e. "adapted program"):

- Student will get a "Dogwood Certificate" and graduate
- May involve adapted teaching strategies and assessment methods, use of different resources (e.g. equipment, preferential seating, giving tests orally...)

- No change to curriculum, just change in strategies to help child succeed

Modification (i.e. "modified program")

- Substantially different program or learning outcomes when student is unable to achieve a passing grade
- Results in a "School Leaving Certificate," NOT a Dogwood at end of schooling
- Changes are made to the curriculum

When and How Do You Include Kids in the IEP?

- Kids start early setting goals (e.g. "What are you able to do well?" "What would you like to improve?")
- "Student Learning Plans" are done in many classrooms with the classroom teacher...this is different from an IEP
- The team decides when it's appropriate to include the student in the IEP meeting; the student may be included in only part of the meeting. As the child progresses through high school and learns to advocate for themselves, the parent may not be included in the meeting

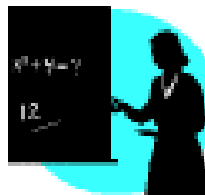
Transition between Early Intervention Programs and the School System

- Parents should be informed about IEP's and terminology and what to expect
- Some have been told child will be given special education assistant instead of teacher of the deaf / hearing resource teacher
- Printed material needs to be distributed to parents entering the school system
- "Parents' Guide to the I.E.P." available through CAEDHH

What If Your Child is Not Getting Enough or Appropriate Service?

- You should determine who has what role within the school
- Write letters identifying your child's needs for specific services
- If not enough service, keep asking, writing letters ("Squeaky wheel gets the grease")
- Be clear about what you want
- Explore alternatives (talk to other families, etc.)
- Use whatever allies you can
- Ask to participate in sessions so that you can help carry over at home

Note: These suggestions are based on comments made at a round table discussion about IEP's at a CHHA- Parents' Branch sponsored workshop. Contributions came from both parents and Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. These are meant to serve as guidelines and suggestions only, and do not reflect any specific policy of any specific school district.



Membership is open to any individual or organization who supports our objectives. Annual membership fee is \$20. Donations are welcome and needed by CHHA - BC Parents= Branch.

Membership in the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association entitles you to vote on any CHHA matter, and to receive a subscription to LISTEN magazine, CHHA-BC's newsletter *The Loop* and the Parents= Branch newsletter.

NAME Parent(s) Professional Other

MAILING ADDRESS H of H Child(ren)

PHONE FAX - if applicable

New Membership Renewal Donation \$ _____

Thank you! Your support benefits deaf and hard-of-hearing children in BC...

Payable to: CHHA - B.C. Parents= Branch - c/o 10150 Gillanders Road; Chilliwack, BC V2P 6H4 - Phone: 604-794-3772

Parent in the Support Team

As a parent, you are the head of the support team working to help your child get the best possible start in life.

Securing the absolutely best care possible takes dedication, energy and determination. The task can be frustrating at times as you sort through information and options, but the victories along the way make it all worth while.

Following are some suggestions to help prepare you for your role as a parent in the support team.

Trust your instincts

If you at any time question the advice given by the experts, or feel that you have received inadequate information, or observe that your child's hearing aids are no longer functioning as they were, or if you have any other concerns, seek help. You are the one that knows your child best.



Become informed

The more you learn about hearing impairment and the help available, the better you can be at securing the best possible care for your child. Learn about your child's rights and options and strive to understand the specifics of your child's hearing loss and the function of the available technology.

Expand the support team

A broad support team is a good base for your child's future. In addition to the professional group consisting of hearing healthcare professionals and teachers, you can find great support and resources through organizations, parent groups, publications, etc.

Take care of yourself

In addition to all of the typical demands of raising a child, the special needs of a hearing impaired child can sometimes overwhelm. Before "busy" turns to "stressed" it

may be a good idea to take a look at how well you are taking care of yourself.

Patience and pacing will help make any task more manageable, so take things one day at a time, **be realistic** in your expectations and remember to **celebrate the victories**. No accomplishment is too small to be celebrated. But when things are tough, **share your fears and feelings** with family or friends. Their support and understanding can help you see problems or setbacks in a better light. And don't be afraid to **ask for help** when needed. But most important, whenever possible **relax and have fun!**

A happy parent is a wonderful gift for any child.



Adapted from "Parenting a Child with a Hearing Loss"
<http://www.widex.com/children>