

DON'T MISS IT!

CHHA B.C. Conference 2002
Sheraton Guildford, Oct. 25 & 26

Parent Workshops — Teen Konnection
Kidz Konnection — Kiddie Kare

Workshop topics this year include: Hearing aid access, classroom acoustics, social interactions, ototoxic drugs, family dynamics... SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

See INSIDE and INSERT for Details...

A.G.M. Announcement: The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association - BC Parents' Branch 5th Annual General Meeting will be held Saturday, October 26, 2002 – 9:15 am at the Sheraton Guildford Hotel, Surrey, BC

Call for nominations: If you would like to let your name stand for a position on the Board, or would like to nominate someone, please contact President Teresa Kazemir at 604-552-2254 or Email: tkaz@lightspeed.ca

Next Cochlear Implant Parent Group meeting

October 7, 2002 – 7 pm Sunnyhill Health Centre
RSVP Sarah Lecky (604)986-1466 or Mary Li (604)945-0477

Meeting for Parents of Surrey Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

October 16, 2002 - 7 pm Georges Vanier Elementary School

For additional information and to RSVP, contact: Sharyn Johnston @ 604-596-9325
The purpose of this meeting is to establish a parent group for families with children who are deaf/hard of hearing and who are enrolled in schools in Surrey. District Hearing Teachers and representatives from the Family and Community Development Services will present information on their services and discuss how they can meet families' needs. Sponsored by the Surrey District Hearing Teachers.

"Education – Expand Your Horizon"

Parents are welcome at the 2002 BC conference of the Canadian Association of Educators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

October 24 and 25, 2002

Location: BC School for the Deaf in Burnaby and Eaglequest Golf Centre in Surrey

Information: Email bscd@south.sd41.bc.ca or call 604-664-8560 Ext. 4234

CHHA – B.C. Parents' Branch November workshop...

Bullying and Teasing: What can we do?

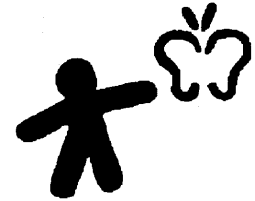
Professionals will join us for a discussion about bullying and teasing, and what we can do to prevent it, deal with it, and stop it.

Thursday, November 28th, 7:30 pm

Victory Hill Residence Meeting Room

4334 Victory Street - Burnaby (off McKay, at Imperial - near Metrotown)

September 2002



Canadian

Hard of

Hearing

Association

B.C.

Parents'

Branch

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www.CHHAparents.bc.ca

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

It's time for our annual conference!!! October 25 and 26, 2002

THE SPEAKERS...

We're very excited to have Dr. Neil Bauman as our featured speaker for this year's conference. Dr. Bauman has a severe hearing loss himself, and in recent years has focused his attention on helping other people to cope with their hearing losses. He is a trained "hearing loss coping skills instructor," and published various books and articles on hearing loss issues. Dr. Bauman answers numerous emails every day (neil@hearinglosshelp.com) from people who contact him with questions.

Dr. Bauman will be speaking once on Friday and once on Saturday. He will cover topics ranging from the effects of various ototoxic drugs (what we need to be aware of when our hard of hearing children are prescribed drugs) to how to create functional families despite hearing loss. His books will also be available for purchase.

We are also thrilled to have Dr. Janet Jamieson from UBC speaking to us once again along with her colleague Dr. Murray Hodgson. Dr. Jamieson will present findings from a recent study on social interaction among hard of hearing children and their peers. Dr. Hodgson will present an overview of classroom acoustics - what it is and why we should care.

The Minister of Health Planning, Cindi Hawkins, or her representative Alan Moyes (Executive Director of Legislation and Policy) will discuss the new college of health professionals replacing the current Board of Hearing Aid Dispensers and Consultants, and the resulting implications. If your family includes hearing aid users, have your questions ready!

As usual, we will meet for our A.G.M. and planning session... a chance to talk about our kids, share what's working and what's not, and figure out what Parents' Branch can do to help. We will also have a session moderated by past-president, Donna Chisholm, with a mixed panel of hearing and hard of hearing family members who will give their perspective on what happened (or happens) in their family... exploring the attitudes, influences and expectations of siblings, parents, community and friends.

Finally, there will be sessions by Dr. Jeff Small on processing speech, and Lisa Dillon on help-seeking for adults with hearing loss. **See the conference schedule on page 8.**

THE FORMAT...

The format of the conference has changed slightly this year, with more opportunities to socialize!! After the Friday afternoon workshops, we will be on our own for dinner, but will meet again for a wine and cheese (finger food provided, no host bar) while the kids are back in their groups. The exhibits will also be open during this time, so we will have more time to check out the displays. On Saturday lunch will be provided and the workshops will run until 4:30.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Thank you to the Jeremy Chiao Foundation for again providing a grant to help families attend our conference! We are accepting applications for assistance for the conference fee, Kidz Konnection fee, or travel expenses. To apply, please **send a note** (fax, email or mailing address on page 1) to our treasurer, Janet Les. Include your name, hard of hearing child's name and age, address, and details of assistance requested. Applications will be processed on a first-come basis but may offer partial reimbursement to facilitate assisting a greater number of families. Preference will be given to parents who have not benefited from this program before but we invite previous recipients to apply as well! Please apply ASAP so we can administer this fund effectively.

ACCOMMODATION

For those of you looking for a place to stay, we are pleased to offer some options. A limited number of rooms are available at Victory Hill residence in Burnaby (part of the Provincial School for the Deaf). There is no cost for these rooms, but a small donation is appreciated. For more information please phone Cathy Chow (604 251-6989). We are also willing to arrange billeting: please contact Teresa Kazemir (604 552-2254)

CONGRATULATIONS

Steve, Teresa, Jesse,
& Ethan
Kazemir!

WELCOME
baby Tori!

Best Wishes
from all your
friends at CHHA - B.C.
Parents' Branch!



Summer Picnic

A big THANK YOU to Teresa and Bo Lonn for holding another fabulous FAMILY DAY PICNIC (July 20) on their wonderful property in Langley.

Parents lounged and chatted in the shade while the kids tore around the large yard, in and out of the sprinkler, up and down the jungle gym, playing badminton, dancing in the rec room, throwing water balloons... all the simple summer pleasures including great food and company! (Miniature horses and pot-bellied pig added to the country charm!)

Thank you to everyone who cooked, shopped, organized and attended this relaxing and fun event. With special thanks to Teresa, Bo, Nolan & Nathan Lonn for your fine hospitality. We'll be back next year!



Children's Programs — 2002 CHHA-BC Conference

October 25 & 26, 2002 — Sheraton Guildford Hotel, Surrey, BC

Under 5: KIDDIE KARE

Childcare will once again be provided for infants, toddlers and preschoolers! Two to three adults (including a former daycare owner) will take care of the children in a room close by the main conference. Various activities will be planned, with lots of toys, games, and crafts on hand. Please bring snacks and drinks for your child in a labeled bag. You will be responsible for your children at mealtimes. We will also have a circle time each day focusing on stories, songs and games. For registration, please see insert; for information, please contact **Jamie Mulligan at (604)463-7180** or email riana@telus.net. Space is limited, so please phone early!! We especially hope to accommodate families travelling from out of town.

Age 6 to 11: KIDZ KONNECTION

We're planning a whole lot of fun! Games, crafts, movies, gym time, Mad Science and lots of socializing! Get your creative juices flowing when you paint your own t-shirt. In addition we will be learning some basic sign language – one hour each day. Want to try a little hip-hop dancing? Our teens will show you how. Meet old friends, meet new friends. Refreshments and snacks will be provided. Parents, you will be responsible for your children at mealtimes. If you have any questions in regard to this program, please contact **Teresa Lonn, at (604)533-9878**.

Age 12 to 18 TEEN KONNECTION

At our teen planning session many of the teens wanted to focus on learning sign language. So here it is! Family and Community Development Services (under Provincial Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) will be providing a teacher for 5 1/2 hours of instruction over Friday and Saturday. Some of our HoH Teens will be teaching others some hip-hop as well. A small performance for the conference is planned for Saturday at 1:00 pm. Other activities include crafts, games, painting t-shirts and lots of socializing! Come and join us and meet old friends and make new friends! Refreshments and snacks will be provided. If you have any questions in regard to this program, please contact **Teresa Lonn at 604-533-9878** or Email lonns@primus.ca

Friday Oct 25/02	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Registration
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Welcome & Introduction
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Sign Language
3:00 – 5:00 pm	Paint T-Shirts, crafts
5:00 – 6:30 pm	Free Time, Dinner with Parents
6:30 – 7:30 pm	Mad Science (to be confirmed)
7:30 – 9:00 pm	Childrens Video
Saturday Oct 26/02	
8:00 – 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 – 9:15 am	Walk over to Rec Centre
9:15 – 10:15 am	Sports at Rec Centre
10:15 – 10:30 am	Walk back to hotel
10:30 – 10:45 am	Refreshment Break
10:45 – 11:45 am	Sign Language
11:45 – 12:15 pm	Performance Rehearsal
12:15 – 1:00 pm	Lunch with parents
1:00 – 1:15 pm	Kidz Konnection Room
1:15 – 1:30 pm	Performance
1:30 – 2:30 pm	Crafts, Lego
2:30 – 2:45 pm	Cleanup
2:45 – 3:30 pm	Story Teller
3:30 – 4:30 pm	Program Review

Friday Oct 25/02	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Registration
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Welcome & Introductions
2:00 – 5:00 pm	Sign Language
5:00 – 6:30 pm	Free Time/Dinner (order in pizza)
6:30 – 7:30 pm	Mad Science (join kids) or Hip Hop Practice
7:30 – 9:00 pm	Paint T-Shirts/Socialize
Saturday Oct 26/02	
8:00 – 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 – 11:30 am	Sign Language
11:30 – 12:15 pm	Hip Hop Practice
12:15 – 1:00 pm	Conference Lunch
1:00 – 1:15 pm	Teen Konnection Room
1:15 – 1:30 pm	Hip Hop Performance
1:30 – 3:30 pm	Crafts/ Games and Guest Speaker
3:30 – 4:30 pm	Program Review

Please Note: Assistive Listening Devices will be provided for all three programs. All programs will be supervised by qualified volunteers. All volunteers have had criminal check clearance.

REGISTER NOW — FORM ENCLOSED

(Deadline is October 14, 2002)

Call CHHA-BC's toll free line 1-866-888-2442 (Voice) or 1-866-888-2443 (Fax)

All children and teens attending MUST be registered in ADVANCE

COST: \$15 per day, \$25 for both days
age 5 and Under: \$10 per day

Together we can make these programs a SUCCESS!
(Adult conference schedule is on page 8)

KIDS CAMP AT AG BELL

Hi, my name is Lauren Sherwood. I live in Osoyoos and I'm 13 years old. In this article, I'm going to tell you about the A.G. Bell Convention that I went to at the beginning of the summer.

First of all, there are three programs for kids. One is for kids ages 6 - 9, another is for older teens, and the one that I was in was for 10 - 14 year olds. (There's stuff for little kids too.) My leader was Kaitlyn and there were three other girls in my group. Of course, there were a lot of other groups usually with three to four kids and a leader.

There were a lot of activities that we did like playing games and going for ice cream, but none of that compared to our field trips! For the first day my whole age group went on a steamboat ride down the Mississippi River on the Betty Thatcher Riverboat (just like in Tom Sawyer). I wasn't there yet (I slept in!) but my group said it was really interesting. In the afternoon we went to the St. Louis Zoo! Now that was fun! We saw gorillas, zebras, sea lions, reptiles, orangutangs and lots of other animals as well.

The second day we went to a pro-baseball game! It was so cool! We watched the players get home runs, balls and strikes. Although I'm not too much of a baseball fan, it was still fun. I got a hoarse throat from cheering on the St. Louis Cardinals.

The third day we went to the Science Centre. That was so awesome! We got to do stuff hands-on and watch a fun movie and have our weight weighed on other planets! After that we went to a gym and played volleyball, basketball, soccer and other games.

Because we were so hot from playing we went to have some famous Ted Drewes Ice Cream (well it's famous in the States) on the way back to the hotel. My friends kept on telling me "Choose this", "No, this is better!" "Uh, uh, this one is!" .It drove me nuts. I finally picked something that nobody had even suggested! It was delicious!

On the last day we went to another gym and played California kickball. We all had fun even though everybody had a slightly different version of the game. Heh, heh! It was actually pretty funny watching everybody shout different ideas around!

After that we headed back to the hotel in a bus (with TVs, unfortunately they weren't on) to watch a movie. We watched Shrek and everybody sang along to the songs. We sounded awful, but nobody cared!

Later that night there was a family dance, we had a great time! We did the macarena (of course!), the YMCA and some other dances too. All my friends were there, so we had an even better time! I could've danced all night!

Well, that concludes my article. The next AG Bell Convention is at Universal Studios in California - I hope I see my friends there because they promised they'd be there!

P.S. My Mum said I didn't say anything about being hard of hearing and being with lots of other kids who are hard of hearing - but, you know what, we never thought about being hard of hearing, we were just having fun! Besides, the Kids Camp was for hearing and HOH kids, everybody got along fine!



President's Message

Hi everyone! I can't believe another year has gone by and it's almost conference time once again! It's been a busy summer for my family, as we had a baby girl on July 1st. It's amazing how much time and space one little infant can take!! Our boys are 5 and 7, so it's been a few years, but we're right back into diaper changes, baby swings, night time feedings, and non-stop laundry.

I have enjoyed the past two years as president, and have met many people and learned so much. I am concerned, however, that I'm not going to have the time needed to do a proper job now that we have our new addition. So if anyone is interested in taking over my job, or joining us in some other role, please let us know. This is a very worthwhile organization, and an important voice for families of hard of hearing children, so we need people to stay involved and keep it going. We welcome your input and participation!!

Teresa Kazemir

What is Family and Community Development Services?

By Linda Ramsey

Family and Community Development Services (FCDS) is a provincially funded program which offers a variety of programs for families who have deaf or hard of hearing school age children (ages 5-19) who require or benefit from the use of sign language. We are located in Burnaby and offer on-going services throughout the year such as Sign Language Classes for parents, extended family and siblings, educational workshops, family events, an Immersion and Outreach Program.

For information on our upcoming programs and sign language classes please contact us at:

Voice: 604) 660-1800 (604) 660-5507

TTY: (604) 660-1807

Fax : (604) 660-1859

Or email us at: psdhh@gems1.gov.bc.ca
For families that live outside the Lower Mainland you may contact us through Enquiry BC at no charge: 1-800-663-7867
Monday to Friday between 8:30 - 4:30 pm

Parent to Parent...

My Summer Camp *by Deb Sherwood*

Well, I promised I'd write something about the A.G. Bell Convention in St. Louis this summer. But where to begin? Over the five days, there was something for everyone who has any kind of interest in hearing loss. From kids and parents, to audiologists, speech therapists, deaf adults, teachers of the deaf and administrators - there is not just something for everyone, but lots for everyone. This was my families' fourth AG Bell - they're held every two years - and every time we come away with new information and the affirmation that our kids are going to be fine.

There were over 100 short courses, presentations, panels and workshops to engage our minds and spirits. Topics included new technology, advocacy, parenting issues, social issues, accessibility and many more. Newborn screening was almost hohum this year, as so many states have implemented programs. There was a special half-day research symposium on cochlear implants - new advances, speech and language development, neurobiologic considerations - and several sessions on classroom acoustics.

My husband went to the techie stuff, while I went to the "softer" sessions like "Overcoming Challenges: Mothers and Daughters Speak", "Parent Advocacy Training", "The Language of Science", "Jazz up your IEP", "Remediating Bad Speech Habits" and my favourite, "High School and College: The Facts of Life, Dating and Socialization." Bob and I both enjoyed the parenting short course "My Teen Won't Communicate With Me." Did you know the frontal lobe of your brain - the centre for logic and structure - isn't developed until you're in your early twenties? So yes, your teen still needs you!

At one of Bob's sessions, he discovered new hearing aid technology for our kids who both have a high frequency hearing loss. The AVR hearing aid transposes high frequency sounds to low frequency sounds. Transpositional hearing aids aren't new on the market, but they have improved considerably in the past few years. Could this mean the end of speech therapy for Lauren? Stay tuned, the kids got their new hearing aids last week!

I really enjoyed the AG Bell Luncheon that featured Kathy Buckley, a stand-up comedian who happens to be deaf. She was hilarious, especially when describing one dating experience when her amorous date licked her ear and got quite a shock! Her wit offered a complement to the sometimes intense learning experiences at the Convention.

Between sessions, I enjoyed hanging out in the Parents Hospitality Room - breakfast, lunch and snacks are available, round-table discussions, silent auction and souvenirs, even an internet and video corner. Best of all, I enjoyed the camaraderie of spending time with other parents in similar situations, exchanging stories, sometimes exchanging hugs and tears. I think that's why I go to A.G. Bell. sherwood@otvcablelan.net

Meningitis Alert

Shareen Carhoun (mother of cochlear implant user, Jordan, age 9) alerted us to an article in the *Province* on July 26, 2002 that reported a high incidence of meningitis among users of one type of cochlear implant - 13 incidences in the U.S. and over a dozen in other countries are being investigated. The U.S. government has warned that "the implants might allow an infection to fester deeper in the ear."

Although after checking with local doctors, Shareen learned that **the implant in question is NOT the same manufacturer as used here in Canada**, it was nonetheless recommended that all users should be immunized as a safeguard. She had all three of her children immunized against meningitis by her family doctor.

Meningitis is an extremely virulent, rapidly developing infection that inflames the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord. The main symptoms are fever, severe headache, nausea & vomiting, dislike of light, and stiff neck. It can cause brain damage, deafness and death. Young children are particularly vulnerable. Immediate treatment with antibiotics is necessary. Talk to your physician about your family's risk of meningitis. Submitted by Donna Chisholm

Telephone Fund raising *by Janet Les*

I was recently discussing telephone soliciting with extended family members and discovered that relatives were donating to groups providing services for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Because our son has a hearing loss they are keen to donate to such a worthy cause!

The use of telemarketing firms is necessary for survival of some charities but the telemarketing folks take MUCH of the income raised this way. Further some organizations providing services for the deaf are raising funds by telephone soliciting in B.C. but spending almost all their funds in Ontario!



If your friends and relatives would PREFER to contribute to an organization working **exclusively with BC hard of hearing children**, let me suggest they give to CHHA - BC Parents' Branch! Donations should be sent to CHHA - BC with a note directing the gift to the Parents' Branch. A tax receipt will be issued. Send to CHHA - B.C. - 45774 Patten Avenue; Chilliwack, BC V2P 1S1

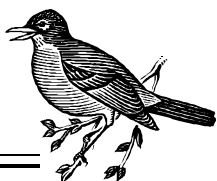
Our son Jesse has a somewhat uncommon condition called "atresia" (no openings for ear canals) and "microtia" (outer ears that are not fully developed, and sometimes even absent). My husband runs an email group for other parents and individuals with microtia/atresia, and one of the mothers shared this poem that she wrote for her child. Her child has unilateral atresia. We thought it was really touching.

Teresa Kazemir

I'm Special

By: Crystal A. Bickford

On my way from Heaven,
 God delayed my trip that day.
 He said that I was special,
 and then sent me on my way.
 But not before he kissed me,
 Right upon my ear.
 He left his blessed mark
 to carry with me here.
 He whispered in my ear right then,
 that He loved me without doubt,
 and then He closed my ear up tight,
 so the whisper won't get out.
 He told me both my legs were strong
 and would help me stand up tall.
 He told me both my arms would work
 to catch me if I fall.
 My eyes would catch my memories
 to store within the pages of my mind,
 My heart would fill with all the things
 I would love,
 so many things, I would find.
 He told me I could fall asleep
 to my Daddy's bedtime tales,
 and listen while my Mother sings
 of seas and boats with sails.
 One ear, He told me, could hear the
 sounds
 that little birdies make.
 The other ear was his gift to me,
 a blessing for my sake.
 For when I'm feeling sad, he said,
 my other ear would hear,
 His whispered words of
 eternal love,
 left waiting for me there.
 I'm special.



"Sharing Our Stories" - Cochlear Implant Conference

by: Janet Les

Congratulations to the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre (BCFHRC) for a most excellent conference on June 8! The attendance was amazing, both in numbers and interest. Cochlear implants are obviously here to stay. Susan Lane of BCFHRC observed that a recent survey by their staff revealed that all newly diagnosed children in B.C. with profound hearing loss were implanted or going through the evaluation procedure.

BC Children's Hospital has a new Coordinator of Cochlear Implant Services who brought us up to date on the B.C. situation for pediatric cochlear implants. Kristine Bernard is an audiologist from Winnipeg where she specialized in pediatric cochlear implants and also provided auditory-verbal therapy.

Kim Schafer was the key-note speaker at the conference. Her daughter Madisen (7) received a cochlear implant when she was 3. Kim has since been hired by Advanced Bionics, a C.I. manufacturer, as Pediatric Coordinator working as a support and resource for parents. She addressed both parents and professionals, emphasizing the need to see each child as an individual who needs to feel successful. Teamwork and communication are the key to success. Many of Kim's practical suggestions were most applicable to ALL children with hearing loss. These included

- Ask for help or advice
- Make changes when needed
- Share ideas, but don't compare
- Build a relationship with professionals
- Be your child's commentator on life
- Keep a "communication book"
- Record listening successes and problems
- Teach the difference between "I can't hear" and "I can't understand"
- Be involved in a support group (such as CHHA- Parents' Branch!)
- Keep up to date by participating in forums and conference
- Build your child's self-confidence and independence
- Have high expectations, but not too high!



Advanced Bionics is distributing "Cecilia's Story," a documentary about a cochlear implant recipient named Cecilia which chronicles her life from infancy to age 8. Get your free copy, in DVD or VHS, by calling 1-800-678-2575 or via their website at <http://www.BionicEar.com>

A panel of BC parents of children with cochlear implants presented varied and interesting stories. Each situation was very different but it was apparent that all these children are doing well socially and academically. The commitment of these parents is obviously the key to success: **WHAT ELSE IS NEW!?** As Kim said, "Success is 20% implant, 80% hard work!"

Children with cochlear implants have some unique challenges but they function much like hard of hearing children in general. I feel it is important for parents of HoH kids to be familiar with C.I. issues as we will no doubt meet many C.I. users in future. Further, perhaps our child will be a candidate some day if his/her hearing deteriorates further or the standard for implantation moves towards more moderate hearing loss.

High-Tech Hearing Aids: Are They Right for Your Child?

An article in a recent issue of AG Bell's newsletter addresses the issue of programmable and digital hearing aids for children. The advantages of digitally programmable instruments include:

- ease of adjustment
- multiple programs
- advanced compression parameter control
- multiple band (multi-channel) compression
- long-term flexibility

Each of these characteristics are explained in the article, and comparisons to conventional hearing aids are made.

"Researchers have begun assessing the value of programmable and digital hearing aids for children. Children wearing digital or programmable hearing aids demonstrated between a 6.6% and 13% improvement in speech discrimination in both quiet and noisy situations.

In addition, there have been some studies done with children and directional or dual-microphone programmable digital hearing aids. These studies showed between a 4.7 to 6.5 dB improvement in the signal-to-noise ratio, meaning that they improved the child's ability to hear speech in the presence of background noise. While these decibel values may not sound dramatic, the improvements stated can, in fact, be very significant for people who are deaf or hard of hearing in terms of speech intelligibility in noisy environments.

An interesting development in many of these studies is that investigators, parents, and teachers often note that children wearing digital or programmable hearing aids have improved articulation and produce a wider range of speech sounds. While none of these studies have done any formal testing in this regard, this issue will likely be investigated more closely in future studies."

The authors also suggest caution:

"Because of the hype surrounding anything termed 'digital,' patients often expect miracles from these newer devices. For example, certain patients are disappointed to discover that these high tech instruments are incapable of eliminating background noise. Features unique to programmable systems, such as multiple programs and multi-band compression, can, in fact, improve the patient's perception in noisy listening environments. However, realistic expectations must be maintained. These aids do not eliminate background noise. It should be noted that elimination of background noise is neither realistic, nor necessarily advisable. A world void of background is analogous to a world limited to black and white. Even listeners with normal hearing have more difficulty in noise than they do in quiet. They are simply better able to extract the primary acoustic message and place it 'in front.' This, not the elimination of background noise, should be the goal.

Most important, it is essential to understand that even the most advanced hearing amplification system does not replace the need for developing and maintaining good listening and communication skills."

The complete article can be accessed at

<http://www.agbell.org/periodicals/sweetow.cfm>

or request a copy from Janet Les at 604-794-3772. The authors are Robert W. Sweetow, Ph.D., Lisa M. Tate, M.S., University of California, San Francisco Division of Audiology

We would WELCOME hearing about YOUR child's experience with new technology! Please call or write and share your story! Janet Les, Editor

WHY USE AN FM SYSTEM IN THE CLASSROOM?

In my judgement, FM systems, when used properly, are one of the most powerful educational tools we have for hearing-impaired children. They're the most effective way we have now to reduce the impact of poor acoustical conditions.

The best selected hearing aids in the world will be virtually useless when the noise level exceeds that of the speech signal. Furthermore, we know that acoustic conditions which have only a mild effect upon speech perception for normally hearing people can completely obliterate speech comprehension for people with hearing losses.

I can personally attest to the difficulty I've often had in carrying on a

conversation in noisy classrooms, particularly pre-school classes, with normally hearing colleagues. Now if I with an excellent command of the language could not recognize it in that situation, how on earth can we expect children to develop their optimum auditory capabilities in the same kind of situation? The answer is, of course, that we cannot.

Speech buried in a background of noise cannot be used to learn to associate meaning with sound. During the language learning process, the speech has to be as audible as possible. We need to, in other words, ensure a high speech-to-noise (S/N) ratio. This can be done in two ways, both of which are desirable: one is reduce the level of the ambient sounds in any way we can, and the other is to employ a close-talking microphone to deliver the speech to the child.

Any close-talking microphone will do, but the most educationally flexible is a wireless FM microphone. While locating a microphone close to a talker's lips does not guarantee that a child will receive an optimal S/N ratio, the relatively intense speech signals impinging on the microphone is a necessary precondition; if the input S/N is not maximized, then it would be impossible to achieve an optimum output S/N. By also controlling the frequency response and acoustic output of the environmental microphone circuit (that used by the child for self-monitoring and child-to-child communication), we can assure both a high speech-to-noise ratio and the desired sensation level output.

Adapted from a lecture by Dr. Mark Ross at the International Congress on Education of the Deaf in Israel.





CHHA - B.C. Parents' Branch

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association



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 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 \$ _____

Name

Birthdate

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

2002 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, Oct. 25th

- 12:00 - 1:00 Registration, issue Assistive Listening Devices
- 1:00 - 1:15 Welcome & introductions
- 1:30 - 3:00 Cindi Hawkins (Minister of Health Planning) and/or Alan Moyes (Executive Director of Legislation and Policy): Government Changes Affecting Hearing Aid Users
- 3:00 - 3:30 Break
- 3:30 - 5:00 Dr. Neil Bauman: Ototoxic Drugs: What we need to know regarding the effects of medications for people who are hard of hearing
- 5:00 - 6:30 Free time / Dinner
- 6:30 - 9:00 Meet & Greet (No-host bar, munchies provided)

Saturday, Oct. 26th

- 8:00 - 9:15 Registration, etc.
- 9:15 - 10:15 Parents' Branch Annual General Meeting and Planning Session
- Lisa Dillon: Help-Seeking for Advanced Rehab. By Adults with Hearing Loss
- 10:15 - 10:30 Break
- 10:30 - 12:00 Dr. Janet Jamieson & Dr. Murray Hodgson: Sound and Communication in Classrooms: Issues for Hard of Hearing Learners--and Everyone!
- Dr. Jeff Small: Processing Speech
- 12:00 - 1:30 Catered lunch
- 1:30 - 2:45 Dr. Neil Bauman: Building Functional Families
- 2:45 - 3:00 Break
- 3:00 - 4:30 Panel Session : "All in the Family"
- CHHA-BC Annual General Meeting

Web Page Updated!

Thanks much to Steve Kazemir for revamping our web-site! Visit www.chhaparents.bc.ca to have a look. We welcome your suggestions for further updates!