

June 2010



**C**anadian  
**H**ard of  
**H**earing  
**A**ssociation  
**B.C.**  
**P**arents'  
**B**ranch

**Mailing Address:**  
c/o Willetta Les, Editor  
10150 Gillanders Rd.  
Chilliwack, BC V2P 6H4  
  
Phone: 604-819-5312  
Fax: 604-794-3960  
info@CHHAp Parents.bc.ca  
www.CHHAp Parents.bc.ca

**Membership**

\$30 annual fee includes  
subscription to  
*Listen/Écouté* magazine  
and *The Loop* newsletter

CHHA BC PARENTS BRANCH PRESENTS

# FAMILY WEEKEND

September 17, 18, and 19, 2010 | Friday - Sunday

New Venue!

## Timberline Ranch

located in Maple Ridge, BC

- Fun outdoor activities
- Make new friends
- Comfortable accommodations
- Swimming pool, Petting Zoo, Campfire Ring
- Ping pong, air hockey, foosball
- Volunteer opportunities



**WATCH YOUR MAILBOX FOR REGISTRATION INFO -  
COMING TO YOUR MAILBOX SOON!**

venue info: [www.timberlineranch.com](http://www.timberlineranch.com)

info@chhaparents.bc.ca (604)819-5312

**In this issue...**

- President's Message - Spring Workshop review
- Games Night & Spring Workshop photos
- Care of Hearing Aids
- Cochlear Implants... the basics
- Assistive Listening Devices

## President's Message ...

Hello Friends,  
The sun is shining, the weather is warming up and summer is almost upon us! I am staring out my home office window watching our pigs sunning themselves and our two llamas, Dolly and Lily as they graze. Life is good! Then I look at the weeds in the garden. I could have sworn I weeded those two weeks ago! It's time to invite my friends over to help me weed and then I feed them. I call it a Weed N Feed party!

It is also graduation time and we would like to congratulate all the HOH Grads for a job well done! Now you are starting a new chapter in your life's journey. All the best to you!

Another job well done was our Spring Workshop! Thank you to all that helped with the planning. A special thank you to our presenters, Penny and Pam from Pacific Assistance Dogs (PADS). PADS raises and trains dogs to be assistance dogs for clients with special or individual needs such as wheelchair clients, the deaf or hard of hearing and many other needs. PADS do not train dogs for the blind - that is a separate organization. Penny is a puppy raiser and she brought Cayleigh with her. Cayleigh is a pup in training. Pam Zimmerman is a trainer for PADS and she brought Bowen with her who is a retired Hearing Dog. Pam has some simulated sounds



such as a doorbell, telephone and smoke alarm. Bowen demonstrated how he locates the sound, runs to Pam and touches her and then takes her to the source of the sound. Pam went into great detail the time and effort it takes to train each dog for a particular client. It is also a big commitment for the clients as they have to continue training the dog so it doesn't lose its special abilities. For more information contact [www.pads.ca](http://www.pads.ca).

## Spring Workshop 2010



Sharon Miller is responsible for Communication Aids for the Western Institute for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing. Sharon herself is hard of hearing and it was very enlightening to hear her story and strategies for coping with hearing loss. She also demonstrated signalers, alarm clocks and various other gadgets. For more information on communication aids contact [www.widhh.com/onlinestore](http://www.widhh.com/onlinestore).

Dan Paccioretti, audiologist was very interesting and forthright as he talked about the research into new technology coming up in hearing aids, fm systems and cochlear implants. Dan also talked about the struggles for hard of hearing children in poor acoustical classrooms and addressed various concerns from our families that attended the workshop.

Once again, we had an open forum with some of our hard of hearing teens and young adults that discussed their struggles, strategies and successes at school, university, the workplace and socially. The workshop was videotaped. If you would like to borrow a copy please contact Willetta at CHHA BC Parents.

Don't miss our Family Weekend which is coming up September 17 – 19 at Timberline Ranch in Maple Ridge. Mark it on your calendar now! It will be a great to meet new and old families & friends! Take a look a [www.timberlineranch.com](http://www.timberlineranch.com) to see all the amenities. Look forward to seeing you all there!

Have a Great Summer!

Teresa Lonn

Spring Workshop 2010 is available on video. Includes all presentataions (PADS, WIDHH, Dan Paccioretti) and the teen/young adult panel.

Please contact Willetta [info@hhaparents.bc.ca](mailto:info@hhaparents.bc.ca) or 1-604-819-5312 to borrow or purchase a DVD copy.





Sharon Miller from the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing spoke at our Spring Workshop. WIDHH provides the following services:

**Audiology** – Our audiology department consists of licensed audiologists who are responsible for conducting hearing tests, hearing aid sales and evaluations, hearing aid loaner program, individual counseling, and supervised hearing aid trials.



WESTERN INSTITUTE FOR THE  
DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

**Communication Aids** – Sales of devices such as TTY's (text telephones), amplified phones, visual and tactile alerting systems, TV devices, and assistive listening devices. The Communication Aids also has a service department for product repairs as well as they can provide home equipment installation.

**Counseling Services** – Our counseling services include Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), psychological and psychiatric assessments, personal counseling, and life skills training.

**Employment Services** – WIDHH provides employment services for our clients. These services include job search assistance such as resume and cover letter writing, interviewing skill development, worksite assessment and adjustment, and follow up. We also have a fully accessible resource room which enables clients to have access to computers, internet, phone, fax, TTY, printer, employment publications, and College and University catalogues.

**Medical Interpreting Services (MIS)** - MIS provides interpreters where necessary, for people who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing. Our goal is to provide effective communication in the delivery of health care services for non-emergency and emergency situations such as admitting, assessments, doctor appointments, patient/family conferences, prenatal, midwifery, and hospital stays.

**Community Interpreting Services** – Responsible for services such as Legal interpreting, mental health interpreting, and vocational support interpreting.

*WIDHH has locations in Vancouver, Kelowna and an online store.*

# Care of Hearing Aids

## Hearing Aid

- Do not drop it.
- Keep it dry.
- When not using it, keep it in its case.
- Take the battery out at night.
- Wipe aid with a tissue to clean it; never use a damp cloth or other cleaner.

## Batteries

- Store them in a cool dry place. Before putting the battery in the hearing aid, wipe any corrosion (white powder) off it.
- Make sure the battery is put in the hearing aid correctly. The silver side of the battery has a + sign on it. This should match the + on the battery case.
- When a battery is dead, **Throw It Away.**
- Batteries are **VERY** poisonous, even when dead, so keep them out of reach of small children.



## The Earmold



- Keep the earmold clean.
- Check for wax every day before wearing the hearing aid.
- To remove wax, pick it out of the hole with a toothpick or pin. If it does not come out easily, remove the mold from the hearing aid and wash the mold in warm soapy water. Let the water run right through the tubing, then blow through the tubing to get all the water out before putting back on the hearing aid.

## To Check A Hearing Aid

- Put a fresh battery in the hearing aid, making sure the + side is up.
- Close the battery compartment.
- Turn the switch to "M" position.
- Turn the volume wheel up as far as it will go. You should hear a whistling sound; if it does not whistle check:
  1. if the earmold is clogged with wax
  2. does the earmold or tubing have water in it
  3. is the tubing twisted, so sound can't get through
  4. is the battery is in correct
  5. could the battery be dead



If it still doesn't whistle, it will likely need to be repaired at a service centre. If it whistles intermittently or shuts off and on when you move the volume control or switch, it will need repair.

When you put your finger over the hole in the earmold, the whistle should stop. If it does not stop, check if the earmold tubing or earhook is cracked or has a hole in it.

If the hearing aid whistles when wearing it, check:

1. if the earmold is in ear correctly
2. if the hearing aid may be turned up too loud
3. if the earmold is loose – then you will likely require a new one

Source:

[http://www.widhh.com/pdf/care\\_of\\_hearing\\_aids.pdf](http://www.widhh.com/pdf/care_of_hearing_aids.pdf)

The Western Institute for Deaf & Hard of Hearing operates a **hearing aid loan program** to assist people not able to buy new hearing aids. To maintain the program, the agency depends on donations of used hearing aids to supplement its stock of hearing aids for temporary and permanent loan.

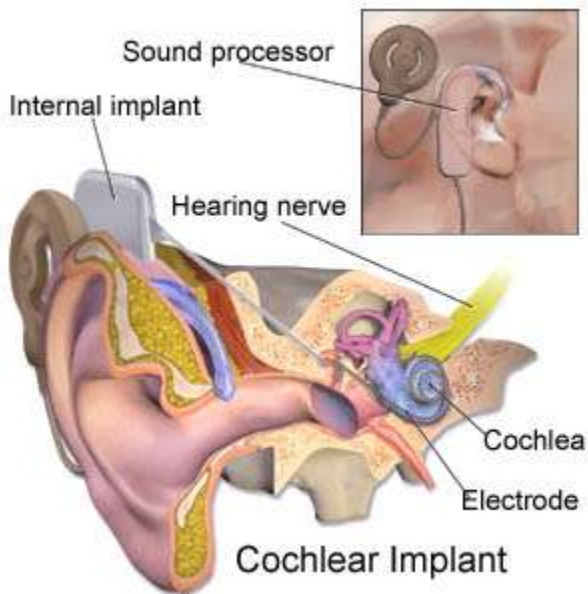
Donated hearing aids are evaluated and repaired, if necessary, and eligible candidates are fit with the appropriate hearing aid after testing by an audiologist. After receiving the hearing aid, recipients are asked to come back for at least one follow-up appointment to ensure that there are no problems and that they are satisfied with the hearing aid.

Individuals wishing to support the Hearing Aid Loan Program by donations of used hearing aids are asked to contact:

The Western Institute for Deaf & Hard of Hearing  
Audiology Dept.  
2125 West 7th Ave.  
Vancouver, BC V6K 1X9  
Phone: (604) 736-7391 Voice  
(604) 736-2527 TDD/TTY

## What is a cochlear implant?

- A cochlear implant (CI) is a small device that helps improve hearing. Normally, sounds are changed into electric signals by special hair cells in the cochlea. The signals are sent through the auditory (hearing) nerve to the brain, allowing a person to hear sound. The cochlea is inside the inner ear and is the main body organ for hearing. Damage to the hair cells causes hearing loss.



- With a CI, the user wears a plastic ear piece with a tiny microphone. This is attached to a speech or sound box. During surgery, electrodes (wires) are put into the cochlea. A receiver is put under the skin behind the ear. The receiver is a listening tool and it works together with a transmitter. The transmitter is a round plastic coil that is worn outside the ear. Some users have a CI in one ear, some in both ears.

## How does a cochlear implant work?

- A CI helps users understand sound by doing the work of the damaged hair cells. It changes sounds to signals that go to the hearing nerve and brain directly. The microphone receives sounds and sends them to the speech or sound box. The box changes the sounds into electric signals. These signals are sent through the transmitter to the receiver. The receiver sends the signals to the electrodes in the cochlea. The cochlea sends the signals to the hearing nerve, which then sends them to the brain.
- A CI is different from a hearing aid. Hearing aids make sounds louder so that a damaged ear may hear them better. A CI sends messages to the brain to help users understand sounds.

## resources

- **CHHA National webpage with information about various funding options and suggestions:**  
<http://chha.ca/chha/projects-funding.php>
- **Join the CHHA National group on Facebook**  
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=121377454560237&ref=mf>
- **JUST RELEASED! CHHA Young Adults second episode of HOHTV:**  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zi7RnMr\\_1mA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zi7RnMr_1mA)
- **BC Ministry of Education: a Resource Guide to Support Classroom Teachers of Heard of Hearing and Deaf Students:**  
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/hearimpair/toc.htm>

# Assistive Listening Devices

Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) assist persons with a hearing loss in their daily lives. There are a number of devices. There are systems that can be used with special receivers and/or hearing aids. Some commonly used systems are:

■ **Frequency Modulation (FM) Systems:** An assistive listening device (ALD) that functions as a mini-radio station on a broadcast frequency that brings a speaker's voice directly into the user's headset

■ **Infrared (IF) Systems:** Similar to the FM System, but instead of radio frequency, IR uses invisible light to transmit sounds, requiring an unobstructed path between the source and the receiver, or

■ **Audio Loop (AL) Systems:** An audio (induction) loop is a wire loop (or thin loop pad) attached to an amplifier. It creates a magnetic field that broadcasts sound, in pure, undistorted form, directly to people who are within the loop and have a hearing aid containing a telecoil. The T-switch on the hearing aid turns this feature on.

■ **FMs and RearWindow Captioning (RWC)** are also used in movie theatres. Contact your local theatres and places of worship to inquire if they have any of these systems in place.

■ **Devices for Residential Use:** ALDs can also be used to amplify sounds from televisions, radios, stereos, etc. FM systems can be individual or for use with a number of people. With the individual systems the receivers are hooked up to the persons hearing aids and the transmitter hooked up to a microphone which may be placed on a table in a small group setting or worn by the speaker such as a teacher. This particular system may be corded or cordless. Please speak to your audiologist for the system best suited for your child.

■ **Telephone Devices** are available to assist telephone communication such as a hearing aid with a T-switch (which emits an electromagnetic field making it compatible to some telephones) and a variety of assistive listening devices, volume amplifiers, ringer amplifiers, call display and TTY's. A TTY or TTY compatible

device allows users to communicate over a telephone line, using text. A special telephone



operator assists with communication with hearing people.

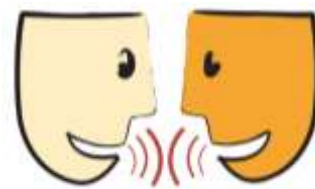
■ **Signalling or Alerting Devices** are available to indicate the telephone, doorbell, alarm clock, smoke alarm, and other loud sounds in the home or office by changing the auditory signal to visual or vibratory signals. Vibrating pagers, cell phones and even watches are also available. Please contact your audiologist for availability.

## Tips for Communication

■ **Do speak clearly.** Speak in a normal conversation volume and enunciate clearly and without exaggeration.

■ **Pace your speech** and pauses normally. It is difficult to follow rapid or slow speech.

■ **Do not shout,** speak slowly, or emphasize your mouth movements. This makes it harder to understand what is being said. Shouting actually distorts sound and is annoying. No one likes to be shouted at.



■ **Rephrase what was said.** This may present more or better clues to understand what is being said.

■ **Spell names** and use word to help identify a letter. Example: B as in Bob and P as in Peter.

■ **Use body language,** your expression give many clues whether the message was exciting, angry, boring, and even loving.

■ **Use eye contact** or a light touch to get their attention before speaking.

■ If possible have a conversation in a **quieter environment.** Background noise is very hard to filter out.

■ **Don't stand in front of a window** or light as it shades your face. It is easier to speech-read if the speaker's face is lit up and not shadowed.

■ **Face the person,** don't speak in their ear.

Source: [http://chha.ca/documents/en/fag\\_about\\_hearing\\_loss\\_booklet.pdf](http://chha.ca/documents/en/fag_about_hearing_loss_booklet.pdf)

# The Employee: Dealing with Hearing Loss

Your teen will soon be entering the work force. They may be asking these questions:

- Do I tell them I'm hard of hearing? If so, when should I approach the subject?
- What if I don't understand the interviewer?
- I'm afraid my hearing loss will make me seem uncertain and slow.
- How do I explain my hearing loss?
- Will they think I'm too demanding or expensive if I ask for an amplified phone, TTY, a desk in a quiet area, a flashing fire alarm, or captioning in meetings?
- How can I get them to see beyond my hearing loss to me?

If applying for a job is stressful for a person with typical hearing, it's doubly so for someone with hearing loss. On top of having the required education and experience, you must decide between disclosing your hearing loss and risk not getting the job, or hiding it and risk not keeping it. And while the frustration and anger of hearing loss are understandable feelings, they are ultimately counter-productive to your career goals.

Success on the job for you, a person with hearing loss, depends on taking responsibility for two important things:

1. Acknowledging your abilities, to yourself and to your employer.
2. Learning what accommodations are necessary to do the job well and working with your employer to make them happen.

As an informed and accepting hard of hearing worker, you will be able to:

- Overcome the fear of losing your job due to disclosure.
- Separate your hearing loss from your skills and abilities.
- Provide accurate information about your hearing loss with practical suggestions for easier communication with your employer and co-workers.
- Explain problems to your employer and ask for accommodation that will provide the best working environment.
- Be the solution – not the problem.

To reach this point, you must explore ways to manage your hearing loss in the workplace. These five basic principles can form the basis for new communication strategies support that support you in both your private and working life.

1. Be open about your hearing loss and take responsibility for improving communication and your quality of life.
2. Create the best possible listening environments for yourself. This includes anticipating what you will need, and making necessary modifications to the lighting, seating, background noise, prepared material, etc.
3. Let others know how to communicate with you. Offering good communication tips such as those listen to the left will make conversations easier and more meaningful. Be assertive about your needs.
4. Make the best use of any hearing you may have. Learn as much as you can about hearing loss and discover what tools will help you: hearing aids, assistive listening devices, visual communication, speechreading classes, support groups, etc.
5. Develop a positive outlook and keep your sense of humour!



## A New Workplace

The business world is going through a massive shift at very high speed. Technological changes have greatly accelerated the amount and speed at which information is being made available, which is good news for people with hearing loss. Communication and information is more accessible than ever.

## You Are MORE than Your Hearing Loss

Your skills and personal attributes are of primary importance to any job, so don't undermine them by making your hearing loss the focus of who you are. Job accommodation will not pose any problem if you are viewed foremost for the contributions you can make towards company goals. Adaptability, creativity and problem solving are skills demonstrated daily by hard of hearing people in a hearing world. By recognizing, cultivating and enhancing these strengths, you will be presenting yourself as the best possible resource an employer can acquire in today's continually changing business climate.

*Excerpted from a very helpful document from CHH A National "Working with Hearing Loss". Many more helpful tips are in the full 24-page brochure! Check it out at [http://chha.ca/documents/Working\\_With\\_Hearing\\_Loss.pdf](http://chha.ca/documents/Working_With_Hearing_Loss.pdf)*

## 2009-2010 Board Members

President	Teresa Lonn
Vice President	Leila Lolua
Secretary	Nicole Grazier
Treasurer	Lynne Page
Directors at Large	Simone Felker Lisa Woogman Cathy Higginson
Parent Support	Cathy Luther Tanya Grange
Email List	Cathy Higginson
Webmaster	Steve Kazemir
Administrator	Willetta Les

We operate as a team: working together to bring support parents of children who are hard of hearing.

**We welcome you to attend our next meeting...** please contact [info@chhaparents.bc.ca](mailto:info@chhaparents.bc.ca) for date and location.

## MISSION STATEMENT

We are a parent group who are passionate about connecting & supporting families throughout BC who have school-aged children living with hearing loss. Through fun family activities our children develop sustaining friendships as they grow into young adults. We educate and support parents through our newsletters, workshops and other events. As a parent group, we understand the power of meeting with each other.

### **Email is our most cost-effective way to give you important information on a regular basis...**

If you are not receiving our email updates, please send your address to [info@CHHAparents.bc.ca](mailto:info@CHHAparents.bc.ca). We won't fill your inbox - we send out a few emails between newsletter publications - don't miss out!

If your address changes, please let us know to avoid returned mail.

**We love to hear from our families.** If you have any suggestions regarding events, newsletters, issues you need help with, etc., please contact us! We welcome submissions for our newsletter.

[info@chhaparents.bc.ca](mailto:info@chhaparents.bc.ca) | 1-604-819-5312

Membership is open to any individual or Organization. Annual membership fee is \$30. Membership in the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association entitles you to vote on any CHHA matter, and subscriptions to *LISTEN* magazine, CHHA-BC's newsletter *The Loop* and the Parents' Branch newsletter.



NAME(s) \_\_\_\_\_  Parent(s)  Professional  Other

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

H of H Child(ren):

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

- New Membership (\$30 annually)
- Renewal (\$30 annually)
- Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please consider donating to CHHA BC Parents' Branch via United Way – our charity number is 86215 7302 RR0001.

We sincerely thank the Province of B.C. for their funding support for our Newsletter publication and Family Weekend.

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

Payable to: CHHA B.C. Parents' Branch – c/o 10150 Gillanders Road; Chilliwack, BC V2P 6H4 - Phone: 604-819-5312