You are invited to attend CHHA BC Parents' Branch 2008 Family Weekend at Zajac Ranch!

"Connections" - a whole weekend of learning, sharing and getting to know one another in a beautiful setting with many exciting outdoor activities.

See enclosed brochure for more details…
send in your registration before August 15 for a discount!

Final registration is September 10.

We look forward to spending the weekend with you!

Upcoming Events

July 2-6 – CHHA & IFHOH Congress 2008
August 15 – deadline for discounted Family Weekend registrations
September 10 – final day for Family Weekend registration
October 3–5 – Family Weekend @ Zajac Ranch!

Summer 2008

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

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President's Message ...

By Simone Felker

Hi everyone,

Wow! It's hard to believe that spring is here. I hope that you are out enjoying the warmer weather, flowers and the return of our beautiful feathered friends. I sure am.

This is turning out to be one of our busiest years with the Parents' Branch. It will definitely go down as one of our most memorable. We've just had our Spring Workshop, which most of you may not have heard about. We were in the process of canceling it because of low registration, but I'm glad to report that we went ahead on the off chance that people would come, last minute. People did come and I'm delighted to say that we had about 30 people who attended. To top it off, we had a wonderful group of people, of all cultures. I feel really proud of the fact that we try very hard to include everyone and the most important reason we do what we do, is for the Hard of Hearing children and their families.

We all want the best for our children and we want them to succeed just like any other child. Education plays an important factor in this equation. The Spring Workshop really focused on how we can help our children to be more successful and how we can best advocate for them. We had two speakers - Karen Taylor addressed navigating the public school system and Loretta Richardson addressed navigating the private school system. Both speakers were insightful. Two of our moms took notes and have submitted an article for those of you who did not have a chance to attend. It's a very good article and it encapsulates the high points.

I am very excited to have the International Congress for persons with hearing loss come to Vancouver. This congress happens every four years. It will be hosted by National CHHA (Canadian Hard of Hearing Association). There will be delegates coming from all over the world. The congress will have a vast array of workshops with the focus on global challenges, quality of life, technology, education and early childhood prevention. I did attend a conference in Kelowna a few years ago and I found it to be very helpful and educational. The best part is feeling like you are part of a big family, with hard of hearing being the common thread. There will be a youth and young adult forum to discuss issues globally. I'm looking forward to this congress and I hope to see some of you there.

Our executive has been busily planning our October Family Weekend to Zajac Ranch. I'm thrilled to have it at Zajac. This year we decided it was time to try something new. In past years at our yearly conferences, we have focused on educating families through workshops. This year the focus will be on learning from each other and FUN! Zajac offers a lot of different activities, some of which are horseback riding, high ropes, low ropes and archery. I'm looking forward to this weekend and I'm sure it will be memorable for all who attend. Please sign up early to help our planning committee.

Looking forward to seeing you,

Simone Felker

www.bctf.ca/teachingtodiversity/
This site is an amazing resource for parents, teachers and professionals. There is a large glossary of terms, resources and links to other useful websites.

If you are not receiving our email updates, please let us know at info@CHHAparents.bc.ca
Email is our most cost-effective way to give you information.
If your mailing address changes, please let us know via email or phone.
Thank you!

The Hearing Aid

A man was telling his neighbour, "I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but it's state of the art. It's perfect."

"Really," answered the neighbour. "What kind is it?"

"Twelve thirty."

SUPPORTS FOR YOUR MAINSTREAM STUDENT

On Saturday, May 3rd over 25 parents attended our Spring Workshop which focused on the supports available to Mainstream Students. Karen Taylor, the administrator for the Provincial Outreach Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, is truly a gem. She travels throughout BC, at the request of school districts, to provide consultations to help meet the needs of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Her knowledge ranges from Preschool to University. While her experience as a person with a significant hearing loss living in an oral world has given depth of understanding about the barriers our children face, as a consultant she does not speak from personal experience. She brings her vast knowledge to fill in the knowledge gaps for school district staff and parents, to help them make the best decisions. If you have concerns about your child's educational supports, you can request that your school district contact the Provincial Outreach Program for D&HH Students to get the latest information and resources available.

The following are some of the main points from Karen's presentation:

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

School districts receive supplemental funding for Special Education Services. Part of the requirement for funding is that an IEP must be in place. Karen emphasized that "**all roads lead to an IEP**". The IEP is a written plan which describe the program modifications and supports (personnel and equipment), needed for the student. It is a legal document which summarizes the plan for the student's education program.

An IEP should be done every year before the 15th of November and reviewed later in the year. The team players for the IEP should include some or all of the following: Special Education Assistant (SEA), Learning Assistant Teacher (LA), Psychologist, Speech/Language Pathologist, Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (or Itinerant Teacher), School Principal, Classroom Teachers, Special Education Coordinator if applicable (for transition planning when advancing through the school system, eg. from elementary to secondary school,) and **Parents**.

It is the right of parents to be actively involved in meetings to develop and monitor IEP's. As parents, it is crucial to be informed and to ask the right questions to be able to work collaboratively with school and district staff to ensure that your child's program is appropriate to meet their needs. For more information on IEP's please go to www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/iepssn/whatiep.htm.

Equipment

Supports that should be available to all students include: Equipment (such as FM Systems, Free Field Systems, etc.). Wireless equipment reduces distortion and improves clarity of sound when used with FM equipment. Parents who have concerns about equipment can seek letters of support from their audiologists and itinerant teachers to help back their requests. Technological advances such as videophones can assist children in remote areas hook up with a 'video pal'. In an IEP, the educational need for this would be to help the student develop a positive self-esteem. The Provincial Outreach Program could assist with an idea like this.

New technology can help support our children, such as iChat through iMAC computers, and Blackberry's. Cell phones with text message capability are a wonderful tool as your child moves into the teenage years. Parents should teach their HOH child to use items such as Vibrating/Light Alarm clocks at a young age to encourage independence.

Personnel

Students with a hearing loss should receive services from a Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing. In addition, support from others such as Speech Language Pathologists, Visual Language Interpreters and Special Education Assistants who have the skills to accommodate the preferred mode of communication of the student they serve, may be required. For more information on Special Education Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing please go to www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_10.htm.

Provincial Resources

Services from all of these provincial programs are child focused.

- Provincial Auditory Outreach Program (Equipment) – Joe Coelho
- Provincial Oral Program
- PERCD – Provincial Education Review Committee (needed for placement in the Oral Program)
- Provincial Outreach Program for Autism
- Provincial Outreach Program for Deaf/Blind Students
- Provincial Outreach Program for Deaf & Hard of Hearing – Karen Taylor
- Sunny Hill Hospital & BC Children's' Hospital
- Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers, SEA's and Parents
- Access to the Provincial Resource Library

Research

Deaf & Hard of Hearing people tend to "hear with their eyes". Research shows that visual language is very important. Parents need to be aware that research indicates the children with a significant hearing loss develop apathy about whether or not they miss hearing something. By age 15 and older, the combination of low expectation and hearing loss requires more intelligence and support to acquire the same amount of information. As parents we need to have a high level of expectation of our children to encourage them to not miss out on information, and ensure that visual information from captions, signs and written information is available.

Support in the Private School System

Loretta Richardson has worked as an auditory oral teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing at the Vancouver Oral Centre (VOC) for many years. She is currently the Preschool 3 teacher, the Family Support Worker and also provides itinerant services. Loretta discussed the VOC's role in the independent school system.

While districts in the public school system employ itinerant teachers, independent schools do not have this built in system. VOC contracts with an independent school to offer these Itinerant Services for K-12. An independent school must apply for a grant from the Ministry of Education for the Hard of Hearing Student and then the principal of the independent school negotiates a contract for service with the principal from VOC for itinerant services based on the student's need. Loretta reinforced the fact that schools who receive Special Education funding (about $16,000/student) must have an IEP in place and must receive services from a Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

VOC offers a comprehensive program customized to meet the specific needs of the student and school. The services include: Communication Skill Development, Student Development (self-advocacy, independence, and social issues), Assessment and Report Writing, Academic & Classroom Support, Teacher Support and Technical Advice (aids, FM's & other equipment), assisting with grant applications, etc. The Itinerant Teacher is very involved in the IEP development. For more information on these services please go to http://www.deafeducationcentre.org.

It is worth noting that Loretta promoted the importance of good communication with the parents, and using email is a great way to ensure that parents do not have to rely on notes brought home by their child.

Parent Networking

The combination of presentations from experts in their fields, combined with an informed, caring group of parents resulted in great sharing of information and support. Parents discussed their experiences with Psychological Education assessments. Many parents found these assessments useful in determining their child's learning style, and helpful in finding out if their hard of hearing child had any other learning issues which needed be addressed in the school system. These tests can also help in finding areas that the child is excelling in and could use some enrichment. Although these tests can be done by many psychologists (in school districts and privately,) many parents believe it is much better to have the assessment done by a psychologist that has expertise with Hard of Hearing children. Sunny Hill offers this service with Dr. Sharon Arnold but there is a long wait for the testing.

Kelsie's Voice of Experience

We were very lucky to have Kelsie Grazier attending our Workshop with her Mom. Kelsie is a 19 year old college student and she spoke about the difficulties for hard of hearing students in post-secondary education. She offered very insightful suggestions of supports that should be included in an IEP and that helped her through her schooling.
Some of these were:

- preferential seating (different for each student; doesn't necessarily mean front & centre)
- buddy system (to ask a friend for clarification and not get in trouble for talking in class)
- extra time for oral tests (takes a hard of hearing child longer to process and respond to a question)
- closed captioning on the T.V. for movies or shows being watched in class
- lip reading (child needs to be able to see the teacher's face and lips. Many HOH children have learned to lip read and rely on visual cues in the classroom)
- having teachers repeat questions or paraphrase a question (HOH children may hear the teacher through the FM but they don't hear a question from a student at the back of the classroom so they miss crucial information)
- writing important PA announcements and homework assignments on the board.

We really learned a lot from this very inspirational young lady!

It was a very informative day, thank you to all who participated!

Congratulations to our Congress Scholarship Winners!

In our last newsletter, we invited students to apply for two scholarships available for Congress 1008.

We are pleased to announce the scholarships have been awarded to:

Rosalind Ho
and
Cai Glover

You will find their inspiring essays in this newsletter.

Congress 2008 will feature special workshops for young people including:

Students with Hearing Loss: Post-Secondary Voices and Universal Design for Learning

Putting Numbers and Words on the Problems Young People with Hearing Loss Face in Their Everyday Life

Power Me Up! – An Hour of Empowerment for Young Adults

CHHA-AMEC
IFHOH
presents
Congress 2008
"A Global Community of Communication"

BRITISH COLUMBIA
Provincial Outreach Program
for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

BRITISH COLUMBIA
PROVINCIAL SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

The BC Provincial Outreach Program and the BC School for the Deaf are proud to welcome back Debra Nussbaum and Susanne Scott to present a follow-up workshop

"Sign Language and Spoken Language: Optimizing Learning for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children"

August 25th - 26th, 2008
Byrne Creek Secondary- Centre for Dialogue
7777 18th Street, Burnaby, BC

Debra Nussbaum and Susanne Scott from the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University will present a two-day workshop on developing and incorporating spoken language for children who also use sign language. This workshop is intended for teachers of the deaf, speech-language pathologists, sign language interpreters, educational assistants, parents, and other interested professionals.

Cost: $35.00

For more information and/or to register, please contact Helen Armstrong:
Ph: 604-664-8300
Email: Helen.Armstrong@sd41.bc.ca

The Congress will be held at the Sheraton Wall Centre in Vancouver July 2 – 6, 2008. For more information, please visit www.chha-ifhohcongress2008.com.

The Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WIDHH) has started a discussion group on their website. It is a great place for hard of hearing people or parents to ask questions, find some answers and share information. The blog address is www.widhh.blogspot.com.

WIDHH has also started a wonderful program called "Lend an Ear". It operates a hearing aid loan program to assist people who are not able to afford a new hearing aid. To maintain the program, the agency depends on donations of behind-the-ear hearing aids from companies and individuals. Some of the hearing aids have been previously used, and others are discontinued models. To find out if you are eligible for this program or would like to donate, please contact the WIDHH head office at 604-736-7391.

Congress 2008 Scholarships: Winning Essays

An Opportunity for Dialogue and Learning at Congress 2008

Rosalind Ho

The International Hard of Hearing Congress 2008 is a truly international scene, with presenters and participants from all over the world. The opportunity to meet other young people with hearing loss and exchange dialogue about issues relating to my areas of interest is what drew me to apply for the Congress scholarship.

I hope to bring a unique perspective to the Congress as a UBC student with a profound hearing loss. I use cochlear implants to hear, and am well versed in spoken English and American Sign Language, which will allow me to interact with a wide range of participants at the conference. As a post-secondary student with hearing loss, I can share the everyday challenges of living with hearing loss at an institution of higher learning; large lecture halls and fast-talking professors who have little experience with students with a hearing loss. I am also planning to minor in psychology, and so I have both personal experience of living with hearing loss as well as more in-depth knowledge of the psychological effects of living with special needs.

I enjoy meeting new people and have always had a keen interest in global issues and challenges facing those with hearing loss, so the opportunity to meet other people with hearing loss from outside North America would be a unique opportunity for me, having lived in Canada my whole life.

Two of the Congress themes discuss technology and quality of life issues for the hearing impaired, which would have a direct impact upon me as a young adult with a profound hearing loss. I could also benefit by participating in dialogue about the challenges facing young people with hearing loss, learning more about better assistive technologies such as real-time captioning and improved FM systems.

Attending Congress 2008 would be a major boon to me because of the opportunity to keep myself up to date with hearing loss issues and participate in discussion about the major challenges and issues facing all young people with hearing loss today. I will be able to use what I learn to improve my life and that of other hard of hearing people.

Growing up Hard of Hearing

Cai Glover

I had never heard of The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, or maybe I had, but I hadn't been aware of it. I am the first to admit that this is a fault of my own ignorance, ignorance that I am intent on replacing with experience.

What I found most appealing about the flyer I read eliciting Congress 2008's numerous useful presentations was the heading : "Meet and network with hard of hearing people from around the world." Although my residual hearing loss has been profound since I was eight years old, I have not for a day since lived as a hard of hearing person, let alone interacted with them. I've only discovered amid early flirtations with adulthood certain undeniable facts about myself, of which I had previously been unaware, most importantly being that of my emminent deafness.

I am currently indulging in an unlikely vocation for a hard of hearing male; twirling and leaping night and day as a ballet dancer for the Atlanta Ballet Company. I wear a cochlear implant in one ear and a hearing aid in the other, using their collaboration to mesh and produce an appropriate syntax of sound, that I call my hearing. Every day I have lived has been spent immersed solely in the domain of the hearing. At eight years old I had known no other life but that as a hearing person and couldn't grasp the juxtaposition my new deafness imposed, and so I simply carried on. The older I got the more socially abstracted I became, confused about the subtle sounds I was missing that outcast me from my hearing piers. Interaction in social environments became too laborious and tedious as they now involved the structure of conversation rather than the spontaneity of play I was accustomed to in my earlier years of hearing loss. Needless to say, nothing has changed aside of my being more sensitive of the words I miss. I continue to live my life as a hearing man only semi-conscious of the existence of a deaf world. Now in my life, I have exceedingly become more and more enthusiastic about delving into this community and getting the chance to network with hard of hearing people. I have always managed to miss opportunities such as this Congress due to a lack of maturity.

I feel that I have come to a place in my life where I am ready to confront the things about me that make me, me. I am a deaf man ready to embrace the qualities that I have achieved in my hearing loss for what they have become having striven from an impairment. I am no longer a human with a deficiency but am stripped to the absolute simplicity and beauty of life; just a human. I strongly believe that participating in this event with the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association is a necessary step for me to take to discover and experience just what exactly these qualities about me and the hard of hearing world are.

You are invited to attend CHHA BC Parents' Branch 2008 Family Weekend at Zajac Ranch!

"Connections" - a whole weekend of learning, sharing and getting to know one another in a beautiful setting with many exciting outdoor activities!

Zajac Ranch is a wonderful place for children with disabilities, located in Mission, BC. There are many unique and exciting activities in a safe, fun atmosphere. We'll spend two days and nights together getting connected at this beautiful ranch.

DETAILS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Schedule:

Friday, October 3	Evening check-in, registration, ice-breakers and snack.
Saturday, October 4	Meals together, with activities scheduled throughout the day
Sunday, October 5	Breakfast and final activities. Goodbye after lunch.

Activities: Low & high ropes, climbing wall, horses, crafts, drama, nature, games, archery, etc!

Accommodations: Comfortable dorm style with shared washrooms. A limited number of private rooms are available, see registration form.

Deadlines: We must have early registration for this event in order to make arrangements with the Ranch. **For a discount, register before August 15. Final deadline for registrations: September 10.** Registration fees include two nights accommodation, Friday evening snack, Saturday & Sunday meals and lots of fun activities!

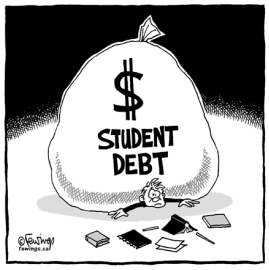
Registration form enclosed, or dowload at www.CHHAparents.bc.ca

WANTED: TEACHERS of the DEAF and HARD of HEARING

Do you know someone looking for a rewarding career? If you know someone who is going to university, talk to them about considering becoming a teacher of the DHH, also known as an itinerant teacher. There are shortages in this field, and the BC government is encouraging recruitment by including these teachers in the loan forgiveness program.

Teachers for the deaf and hard of hearing can have their B.C. student loans forgiven by agreeing to work at publicly funded facilities in British Columbia. If you qualify for the program, the government of British Columbia will forgive your outstanding B.C. student loan debt at a rate of 33 1/3 per cent per year. After three years, your B.C. student loans will be paid in full. While you are in the loan forgiveness program, the provincial government will also pay any outstanding interest that accumulates during each year you are registered in the program.
To qualify for the B.C. loan forgiveness program, you must:

- ✓ Have B.C. student loans in good standing.
- ✓ Not be enrolled in full-time post-secondary studies.



Teachers for the deaf and hard of hearing are eligible for B.C. loan forgiveness if:

- ✓ You graduated (or your study program ends) after April 1, 2007.
- ✓ You are employed at a publicly funded facility or school district in B.C.

See www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc for more information.

CHHA - B.C. Parents' Branch

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

Membership is open to any individual or organization that supports our objectives. Annual membership fee is $30. Memberhsip 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.

_____ ☐ Parent(s) ☐ Professional ☐ Other
NAME(s)

_____
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.

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