

# Family Game Night!

Inviting all hard of hearing children and families to join us for a night of fun!

**Saturday, February 6, 2010**

7:00 - 9:00 pm

BC Family Hearing Resource Centre  
15220 - 92nd Avenue, Surrey, BC

**Please bring a game and  
appetizer snack to share!**

Questions? [info@CHHAp Parents.bc.ca](mailto:info@CHHAp Parents.bc.ca)

November 2009



**C**anadian

**H**ard of

**H**earing

**A**ssociation

**B.C.**

**Parents'**

**Branch**

**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](mailto:info@CHHAp Parents.bc.ca)  
[www.CHHAp Parents.bc.ca](http://www.CHHAp Parents.bc.ca)

**Membership**

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

**In this issue...**

- Review & photos from Family Weekend 2009 @ Zajac Ranch!
- Role of the Itinerant Teacher
- Managing Noise in the Classroom
- Tips for Improving Communication
- Movie Theatre Captioning
- Promoting Social Interaction

**President's Message ...** As our warm weather changes into Fall, we also have some changes in the people that you have seen on the CHHA BC Parents Board.

Simone Felker, our president for the past year, will be stepping down to pursue other ventures; Simone will continue to be an active member of our team. On behalf of the CHHA BC Parents Board, I would like to thank Simone for all the work she has done as President this past year. Lisa Woogman, who has been our Administrator for the past 4 years or more, will be leaving her position, as she has been trying to juggle this part time job with her regular job. I would like to thank Lisa for all the work she has done over the years applying for grants and keeping up the correspondence so that the rest of the Board could concentrate on other matters. She will be missed. Fortunately, we have Willetta Les who is willing to take on some more duties. All these women are amazing and have given so much of their time – the reason our Parents Branch is successful.

My name is Teresa Lonn and I am the newly elected President for this coming year. A lot of you will recognize me as I have been involved with the Parents Branch for at least 10 years. I am married to Bo and have two sons; Nolan (HOH) is 15 years old and Nathan who is 12 ½ years old. I work part time in the accounting department for the Health Sciences Association and also do bookkeeping for my husband's contracting business. Leila Lolua, whom many of you know, also works at Health Sciences Association; Leila was the one who told me



about the Parents Branch when Nolan was diagnosed at 4 years old with bilateral sensory neural hearing loss. For a number of years I organized the Kidz Konnection program at the annual CHHA BC conventions and it was wonderful to work with all the hard of hearing children and their siblings. The years have passed and those children have grown up into amazing teens and young adults on their path to independence. Even now, I get tears in my eyes when I see all these young people staying connected through our organization's different events and joining the Young Adults Network. It's also wonderful to see Nolan as a teenager staying in contact with the other HOH Teens on Facebook and meeting them socially on a regular basis. I am very thankful for all the support and knowledge that we as a family gained by talking with other families and attending the workshops and various activities that the Parents' Branch sponsored over the years. I'm happy to stay involved to pass on the torch for all the new families and kids!

We had a great time at the Family Weekend at Camp Zajac in early September, meeting old friends and making new friends as well. Please see more details about this event in Leila's article (pg. 4)

Also coming up Saturday February 6, 2010 will be the annual Games Night. This is a family fun filled evening of socializing and board games and of course snacks! Mark your calendar already!

Our next newsletter will be out in January 2010, so from our family and CHHA BC Parents Board, we wish you all the best this coming Christmas Season!

*Teresa Lonn*

.....

## The Role of the Itinerant Teacher

Early interventions resulting from universal infant hearing screening and early access to technologically advanced hearing aids and cochlear implants are resulting in significant demographic shifts in the deaf and hard of hearing student population and their corresponding needs. There is an increasing demand for access to itinerant teachers who are both knowledgeable and skilled in the areas of listening, speech, language, and auditory-verbal approaches that support a challenging curriculum. Research acknowledges that integration is facilitated when there is a partnership between families, professionals, communities and children.

Itinerant teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing are best able to provide support services to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. Students should receive the amount and type of support deemed

necessary, through consultation and collaboration with other team members, to foster successful academic progress and social integration. Factors to be considered will include degree and type of hearing loss and other possible mitigating challenges. Each child, school, family and community is unique, and itinerant teachers will best recognize and appreciate the individual strengths and needs of the students with hearing loss they serve.

*The Itinerant Teacher's Role is multi-faceted and includes:*

- Advocating for and encouraging self-advocacy by students with hearing loss throughout their school years.
- Providing regularly scheduled, direct withdrawal instruction in the development of auditory skills, speech and language, as required, including the pre-teaching of classroom curriculum.

- In-servicing school teams, including classroom teachers, on the educational impact of hearing loss and making suggestions about classroom acoustics. In-servicing students' peers as appropriate.
- Liaising effectively with teachers, parents and support staff, such as educational assistants, deaf-blind interveners, interpreters, and note takers.
- Developing strategies with classroom teachers to most effectively enable the student to access curriculum. Communicating goals and strategies to parents as educational partners.
- Remaining current in knowledge of technological advancements. Understanding and monitoring the use of all amplification equipment and technical devices and assuring its timely availability through consultation with an Educational Audiologist.
- Remaining current in grade level curriculum and incorporating such curriculum in the development of foundational speech and language skills.

- Attending team meetings, I.P.R.C. meetings, and helping to collaboratively develop and implement the student's IEP. Having direct contact with audiologists, physicians and other allied professionals, as required.
- Providing regular student progress reports, including up-to-date assessment information on hearing loss, cognitive, speech, language and auditory skills development of the student for the benefit of educators and parents.
- Fostering emotional well-being and encouraging social interaction with hearing peers within the school community. Providing opportunities, where possible, for social interaction among peers with hearing loss.
- Providing information on transitional needs for students with hearing loss.
- Monitoring the academic progress of students using amplification who are not receiving direct withdrawal support through routine contact with classroom teachers.

*Source: VOICEforHearingImpairedChildren*



## Tips for Improving Communication with People Who Have a Hearing Loss

Family and friends play an important role in the life of a person with hearing loss. Advancements in hearing technology have helped to assure that even those persons with profound hearing loss can fully participate through spoken language. Hearing loss is variable and not all strategies may be relevant - be sensitive to individual needs. With a little understanding and a few minor adjustments to your typical communication style, you can make a difference in hard of hearing people's ability to fully participate and enjoy group conversation and activities.

### Things that don't help:

- Avoid shouting at a person who has a hearing loss. Some hearing aid and cochlear implant users are especially sensitive to loudness. Don't let paper or other objects like jewelry rest against a personal FM system.
- Avoid distracting movements such as smoking, chewing or putting your hands in front of your face.
- Do not speak too quickly or exaggerate your lip movements.

### Things that help:

- Be sure to have the person's attention before you begin to speak by saying their name clearly and making eye contact before beginning to speak.
- Look in the direction of the person with hearing loss, making sure your face can clearly be seen.

- If the person doesn't understand you, try to say the sentence in another way by rephrasing or repeating your idea substituting different vocabulary.
- Be sure to speak in your normal tone of voice. Sometimes people with a hearing loss may be lip-reading. Use appropriate facial expressions, gestures and body language to assist with your communication.
- Extend extra consideration when you are in a group. Common courtesy is that only one person should be talking at a time. It helps if the person is alerted to a change in speakers by a visual cue e.g. a hand signal or a gesture or saying the speaker's name.
- Be aware of competing noises or sounds. Air conditioners, music, cafeteria noise, other people talking and even wind noise, can all interfere with the ability to hear the speaker. Ideally, move away from the noise so that your voice can be more easily heard or stand closer to sound absorbing materials, like a booth in a restaurant, a corner in a crowded room or against a wall.
- Some people with hearing loss may hear only parts of a verbal message. Speech is heard but often misunderstood. "Watch" may be mistaken for "wash", "fin" for "shin" and "pen" for "spent."

*Source: <http://www.voicefordeafkids.com/>  
Re-printed with permission.*



**W**hat a wonderful weekend! Over 90 people trekked out to Zajac Ranch in Mission on a glorious sunny September weekend. Many families returned from last year to join young adults and new families, all of whom are connected to a child with a hearing loss. Connections made last year were instantly renewed (-wow have the kids grown in a year!-), and first-timers soon joined in.

The teens helped new arrivals get settled into their dorms, and helped to orientate everyone to the set-up at the ranch. After a quick dinner and welcome, the lure of the campfire beckoned to cook up S'mores (graham wafers with roasted marshmallows and chocolate chips – so good you want 'some more'). Groups soon formed; parents, young adults, teens, tweens and youngsters. I loved seeing the group of teens who gathered to play charades, difficult to do in the dark. They figured out how to communicate with flashlights and the stage light, and had a grand time. The stars were out in force, and we were on our way for a great weekend.

Saturday was jam-packed with activities – walking across logs and high wires 10m in the air, rock wall climbing, group challenges in the gym and the woods, scavenging to build a fire (the parents ruled in a race against the teens in our group, while the teens in another group beat their parents with a roaring fire), archery, crafts and horseback riding. What a day! Based on feedback from last year, the groups were formed to keep similar ages together. It was a great suggestion, and the result could be described as packs of squealing youngsters playing non-stop, teens hanging out and dropping their parents from the moment they arrived, young adults catching up with each other, and parents together sharing their worries and their joys. It was hot and sunny, and everyone was ready for the

*"Daddy, I like it here. Lots of kids have hearing aids!"*

Our Dear Friends:

*I would like to express my thanks for the beautiful and very useful time we could spent at the Zajac Ranch. My daughter Judy made new friends and is in contact with them on the internet. Before, she felt lonely and disconnected. I could see she was happy and relaxed.*

*Also our Granny, who was born hard of hearing, is very grateful to the organizers. She didn't have such opportunity in her youth. At her age of 86 years, she rode a horse for first time in her life, wow! It was for her a revolutionary experience she will always remember. Also me, I met old friends and made new friends; this was to me very uplifting experience with great and dedicated people!*

*In our Jewish terminology, we say that people were real Mensch, Humans who make the world better place. Thank you that you made it possible for us.*

*We will always keep this gathering in our heart. God bless and protect all you special people!*

Yours, John Cerny

BBQ and a rest on Saturday evening. (What a difference from last year, still fun but awfully wet!)

Saturday night is unstructured time. Families with young children gathered in the lounge in their dorm while the children slept. Kids gathered in various places to play board games, or join the group dancing in the gym. The kitchen is always open, so the seemingly-forever hungry teens congregated to eat, again. Tim brought his Zulu sticks and rookies could be seen trying to master a few tricks. This time to socialize is so precious because 'our families' are spread around the province, and the opportunities to gather are few.

Everyone is included, and the range of ages enriches the experience. A highlight was grandma Cherny who sat on a horse for the first time in her life at the age of 86. She had tears streaming down her face, as did the staff and others who shared her joy. Because the ranch is set up to run camps for children with physical disabilities, staff can also accommodate adults who need assistive equipment to be able to participate.

On Sunday, the teens led the children in a scavenger hunt, while the parents gathered for their annual meeting. While there were a few bumps (like trying to make sure that communication challenges are accommodated in all of the settings at Zajac, and some uninvited critters)

consensus was to continue with this 'camp' style of Family Weekend next year. As long as we continue to receive financial grants, the Parents Branch is adequately resourced to run the programs we offer. So we continue to focus our efforts on securing funding because we know how important it is for us to connect.

*"We will be back next year - thanks so much. It meant so much to my family. You were all so friendly and caring, we've never felt so welcome. My kids were so excited and begged me to bring them back next year....."*

Woven into the fun of Family Weekend was the chance to connect with others who understand what it's like to deal with hearing loss. Our children are at risk for being isolated, and the connections made by getting together endure and help them thrive. While we said our goodbyes on Sunday, many of us remain connected. Our newsletter connects us. We will have another family games night in the new year, and a spring workshop. Many of the teens are now Facebook friends and make efforts to try and get together. The young adults are involved the Canadian Hard of Hearing YAN – the Young Adult Network. They are terrific role models, as they go to college and university, and start their careers. It was great to have them join us at the ranch this year. Thanks to everyone who was able to participate – we so appreciate the opportunity to connect with all of you.

*By Leila Lolua, Vice President*



## Rear Window Captioning in Movie Theatres

A new movie just came out this weekend. It's the one you've been waiting for months to come out. You've seen the TV trailer. You watched that entertainment show for all the actor and director interviews. You've seen the oversized billboard ads. You've visited the movie website to get all the dirt on the plot and characters. You are absolutely bursting with anticipation to watch this movie. You pay your \$11.95 (+ taxes) at the box office. You buy your popcorn and drink. You sit down in those great new comfortable reclining theatre seats. As a bonus, the movie you're watching was filmed in digitally enhanced surround sound. And that silver screen is larger than you remember. Ah yes, the perfect movie theatre experience.

The movie starts. There's some action one moment. A funny incident happens the next moment. This movie is looking as good as you thought it would look. Then, people start talking. The lead actors are having a conversation, but you're starting to strain. You miss one word here, two words there, and then an entire sentence. It's a quiet moment in the film and the voices are barely audible. Then music comes flowing in. Nice touch. The music is loud and clear, but what are the actors saying? You thought there was digitally enhanced surround sound. It's plenty loud at times, but you just can't understand what they are saying. At the end of the film, you are totally frustrated and exhausted from concentrating so hard in order to understand the dialogue.

Has this ever been your experience when you go to the movie theatre? For almost all hard-of-hearing individuals, the answer is a guaranteed yes. With a hearing loss, it doesn't matter how good a theatre sound system might be, hearing loss cannot overcome very soft voices and competing sounds in order to understand words.

Wouldn't it be nice if you could go back and watch that film and understand every single word? Maybe you could understand every single piece of dialogue even better than your non-hearing impaired friend.

Some theatres in Canada are now equipped with Rear Window Captioning. Rear Window Captioning involves using a portable, transparent acrylic panel that can fit into your drink holder. It's sort of like reading words in a rear view mirror in a car. Basically, you must get a Rear Window Captioning (RWC) panel from the box office or guest services desk of the movie theatre. The panel is attached to a long flexible metal bar with a base on the other end. You place the base into the drink holder. If you look

at the back of the theatre, you'll see an LED display with words on it. However, the words are reversed. So that's when you adjust the bar and the panel so that the words at the back of the theatre can be reflected upon the panel. This way, you can read the dialogue as the movie is running.

### THEATER TECHNOLOGY

#### For the hearing impaired

Closed-captioning system lets hearing-impaired patrons view dialogue. A device at the back of the theater projects captions onto a hockey-puck-size screen that is attached to an adjustable arm anchored to the cup holder.

#### ENLARGED CAPTIONING SCREEN

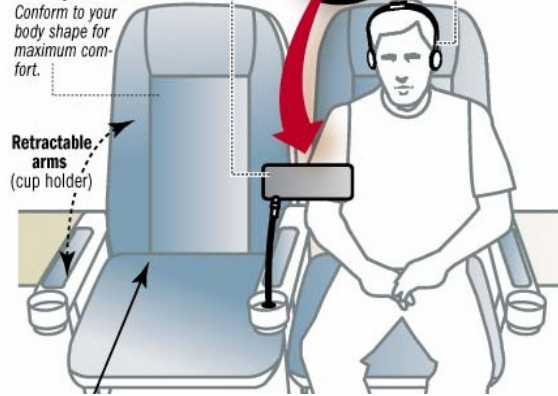
#### For the visually impaired

A headset provides narration of onscreen action, as well as dialogue. This eliminates the need for a sighted individual to explain what is going on in the movie.

#### Memory foam seats

Conform to your body shape for maximum comfort.

#### Retractable arms (cup holder)



A few notes from my own experience: I was unlucky enough to get a bar without a drink holder-sized base. Mine had this vice-like clamp that needed to be twisted onto the drink holder to hold it in place. If you get one of these clamp panels, see if they have the other version. It's just not as easy to use and is prone to slipping off of the drink holder. Also, it can be a little difficult to adjust the RWC panel to be exactly under the projected picture and still be able to read the words at the same time. Make sure you go early enough to fiddle around with the panel to get the reflection right. There are also a limited number of these panels available in each theatre, so go early to get them. I think I saw a total of about 8 panels at the theatre I went to and they were all out when I went back to the desk to ask for one more.

However, overall, it was a good experience. Although I am not hard-of-hearing, I benefited from being able to catch dialogue that I would normally miss because it's either too quiet or too quick. During the film I saw, there was also a group of Deaf teens who were well aware of the benefits of RWC. Their friends had gotten a lot of panels and they were following the film just as well as everybody else in the theatre.

Check out the newspaper to see where RWC is provided in your area.

Source: WIDHH blog <http://widhh.blogspot.com>

# Announcing... 2010 Family Weekend!!

New Location: Timberline Ranch



<http://timberlineranch.com>

Mark your calendar:

September 17 - 19, 2010

Plan to join us!

## How Can We Promote Social Interaction in Hard of Hearing Children?

1. Parents and professionals should encourage frequent and close interaction between hard of hearing and hearing peers so they may cooperatively pursue shared goals. Interaction should be with peers who have similar characteristics with regard to intellectual level & academic skills, be required to share the same tools or equipment and be provided with social, experiential extracurricular activities (clubs, camping, outdoor sports) emphasizing fun and cooperation for same age and sex peers.

### *In Older Children:*

- Arrange the seating arrangement (regular, intensive contact in a small, stable, continuing group)
  - Have them plan and complete a structured (small) group project
  - Have a designated buddy
  - Provide exposure to regular contact with positive models
  - Equal numbers: positive interaction is more likely if the proportion of hard of hearing children is at least that of the hearing children
2. Educate hearing students
    - encourage patience, understanding, and sensitivity
    - provide information re: hearing loss, aids, what loss feels like, what being "different" feels like
    - practice in using appropriate communication techniques

*Note: In young children (pre-school and primary), education may be counter-productive, since it may exaggerate problems or differences, resulting in fears, a feeling of pressure to approach the deaf or hard of hearing student, self-consciousness resulting*

*in less frequent interactions and shorter duration of interaction. Therefore, it may be most appropriate to provide gradual, long-term exposure rather than condensed, short-term exposure.*

3. Educate hard of hearing students
  - encourage awareness of how their actions might be interpreted ( or misinterpreted)
  - encourage initiation of positive contact, making efforts to communicate, being patient
4. Work on adult's attitude and behaviour toward hard of hearing students (this influences resilience and self-esteem, etc.)
  - patience, nurturing
  - do not think of that child as helpless
  - set high but realistic goals and expectations
  - encourage interests/hobbies, autonomy, independence, self-reliance, responsibility, sense of security, risk-taking, assertive behaviour, respect, coping strategies for failure -share your values
  - "In this class/family, we" (e.g. commitment to excellence)
  - provide success experiences
  - provide accurate attributions for academic success ("I succeed because I am a diligent and competent person and when my effort is effective and sufficient")



Thanks to CHHA-Newfoundland/Labrador for this article.  
Dr. Ken Palmer (a Psychologist from the Ontario Ministry of Education) spoke at their 2007 conference.  
[http://www.chha-nl.nl.ca/documents/Newsletters/ Parents](http://www.chha-nl.nl.ca/documents/Newsletters/Parents)

## Looking for a Peer Group

My family lives in Vancouver and our daughter, Charlotte has been wearing hearing aids for the past 6 months. We are new to this group and looking forward to getting involved. Charlotte is in Grade 2 at Kerrisdale Elementary and we are looking for another family who live in the area with a daughter (Grade 1 to Grade 4) interested in doing an activity together once a week after school.

I can be reached at 604-899-8880 or [theduffys@telus.net](mailto:theduffys@telus.net)

Warm Regards, Susan Duffy

### 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

If you are not receiving our email updates, please send your address to [info@CHHApayers.bc.ca](mailto:info@CHHApayers.bc.ca)

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

we send out a few emails between newsletter publications - don't miss out!

If your mailing address changes, please let us know via email or phone 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!

If you have an article to share in our newsletter, please email it to us. **We also welcome visitors and parents to our board meetings - contact us for details.** Thank you!

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