



# North Dakota School for the Deaf/ Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing NDSD CONNECTIONS

Devils Lake

Winter 2015



NDSD/RCDHH is a division of the Department of Public Instruction, Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent

## Text-to-911 Coming to North Dakota!

By Peggy Shireley

From IPAT ND Assistive Technology Blog Fall 2014

*Texting has become second nature to many Americans, and a communication game changer to the 55.5 million Americans who have hearing loss, deafness, or speech disabilities. Due to the changes in technology, texting instead of voicing is the go-to communication choice for 7 out of 10 Americans. Consequently, we now need to support texting as an option in the 911 emergency service arena. Enter text-to-911!*

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**What is text-to-911?** It is a ruling of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that will make the ability to text to their local 9-1-1 center in emergencies across the nation. The FCC, 911 call centers, and providers of text services, are all working together so that when we reach out in crisis, we can reach out via text. This additional means of obtaining 911 service will soon be a feature of the 911 emergency services in North Dakota.

The ability to text will complement current services, and increase options for needed emergency help. Some examples of how text-to-911 have been used are: 1) texting when the wireless carriers signal was not strong enough for voice; 2) texting in an abusive situation where voicing was not possible; and 3) texting after a medical crisis took away an individual's ability to speak.

*"Consumers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired should use relay services, or other existing methods first. Text-to-911 should be used as a last resort."*

Adding texting as a means of requesting help through text-to-911 will benefit many, and for many different reasons. It is critical to note however, that text-to-911 will be offered as a complement to, not a substitute for, existing voice-based 911 service. So, consumers should make a voice call to contact 911 during an emergency when possible; and consumers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired should use relay services, or other existing methods to contact 911 if text-to-911 is unavailable.

Look for an announcement later this year on the availability of text-to-911 in North Dakota. And remember, once it is up and running "call when you can, text when you can't."

# Five Tips for Wearing Your Hearing Aids in Winter

From [www.cliftonhearing.com](http://www.cliftonhearing.com)

January 22, 2014

*Cold temperatures and wind chill are no strangers to North Dakota residents. However, the dropping temperatures can affect hearing aids. Impending cold weather calls for a bit of extra protection for your hearing aids, and also your hearing in general. Here are five simple tips for hearing aid care during the winter:*

## 1. Don't forget! **Use memory settings on your hearing aids for noise reduction.**



Repeated exposure to noise levels over 85 dB, can cause permanent hearing loss. Snow blowers and snow mobiles can produce sounds over 100 dB, which is well over the safe limit. Hearing aids will amplify the sounds in your environment, so it's important to make sure the memory settings are adjusted accordingly. Be sure to consult your audiologist about memory settings on your hearing aids that are meant for noise reduction.

## 2. **Sport some ear muffs.** Noise reduction earmuffs have been proven to reduce noise as much as 30 dB, so they're highly useful if your hearing aids don't have memory settings and you need to do work outside with loud equipment.



## 3. **Don't sweat it.** Invest in a pair of sweat bands. Your behind-the-ear hearing aids can be exposed to moisture resulting from perspiration, which can be damaging. Hearing aid sweatbands can reduce this moisture and most of them are washable and re-usable.

## 4. **Keep batteries dry at all times.** Ensure that the battery compartment is free of moisture. Before you turn off your hearing aids when you go to bed at night, carefully remove the batteries and wipe the compartment thoroughly using a dry, warm cloth before returning them to the case.



## 5. **De-humidify your hearing aids.** Hearing aid dehumidifiers will help extend the life of your device. Moisture can be removed while you sleep overnight, so they'll be ready to go when you wake up!

# New Solutions for Cell Phone Amplification!

By Jeannie Krull

Taken from IPAT July 2014

The world is a changin'! More and more people are using cell phones and eliminating their land lines. Although this transformation is great for so many reasons, there have not been as many options available for cell phone amplification as there have been for land lines. Well things are looking up! Below are two cell phone amplification solutions that we have tried successfully with people who have hearing loss. They have nice, strong amplification and provide other added benefits we didn't even know we wanted!



## HearAll

The HearAll from Serene Innovations (\$99) looks just like a small handset for a traditional land line phone. It connects to a cellphone wirelessly via Bluetooth and provides up to 40 decibels (dB) of amplification via its hearing aid compatible handset. People love it for the fast, easy Bluetooth connection and the clear, loud sound it provides. The added benefit is the larger size, as it is harder to lose, and the feeling of talking on a regular land line telephone.

## CS10

The CS10 volume is very easy to access. By accessing the button on the side of the headset, the volume increases 3 dB with each push. There are also three user profiles built-in with three different frequency settings: High, high-mid, and high-low that you can change with a tap of a button. If you have smartphone, you can customize the CS10 even further with the free Android Customizer App.



The CS10 comes with two battery packs that charge in a handy cradle and fasten magnetically to the earpiece. This battery feature and the fact the CS10 allows one to go almost hands-free is very helpful for those with fine motor issues such as arthritis.

The CS10 from Sound World Solutions (\$249) looks like a traditional Bluetooth headset that one would use with a cell phone. The difference being that in addition to providing hands-free communication, it amplifies the incoming sound up 26 dB while you are on the call. This device also doubles as a personal sound amplifier to amplify sounds in your environment.

## CS50

The company has recently produced an upgrade to this device, the CS50; however, for now, they still sell both devices. The CS50 is currently \$100 more than the CS10, and brings with it more battery life, iOS and Android Customizer apps, and the ability to stream audio from music, movies, and books.



*These devices are available through the North Dakota Telecommunications Equipment Distribution program. Please call 1-800-895-4728 for more information.*

# Let's Get Ready For Some Football!

Excerpt from "Oticon Hearing Experts Sound Off About How Cold, Helmets, Stadium Design and More Can Impact Hearing on Game Day" January 24, 2014

[www.pro.oticonusa.com](http://www.pro.oticonusa.com)

*It's not all about the (fan) noise! Hearing care experts from Oticon, Inc., a leading manufacturer of hearing devices, located just miles 40 miles from East Rutherford, New Jersey's MetLife Stadium, report that a number of factors including the weather, the design of the stadium and beverage of choice could influence the way sounds were heard by fans and players on February 2, 2013 at the Super Bowl. Oticon audiologists reviewed research and conducted their own sound testing - in sports bars and in the sound booth - and shared fun facts and hearing health advice that may help sports fans make sound choices on game day.*

## The Cold Facts

Weather can affect how fast sound travels to fans in the stadium. If the weather is colder, there is a slight delay in sound reaching spectators. Average daily low temperature in early February for East Rutherford, the site of MetLife Stadium, is 22 degrees Fahrenheit. In an open stadium, wind can add to the chill factor. The good news is that even at below freezing temperatures, sound delay to fans in the least expensive seats when compared to fans on the sidelines will likely be no more than one-fourth of a second.

## Noisy by Design

"Prolonged exposure to sounds louder than 85 decibels can cause permanent hearing damage," said Dr. Annette Mazevski, Manager of Technology Assessment at Oticon. "Average volume during an NFL game is estimated to be in the mid 90-decibel range, about the intensity of power tools or a lawnmower."



**Seahawk Stadium**

Picture from [www.wallpaperup.com](http://www.wallpaperup.com)

Stadium design contributes to loudness. In December, Seahawks' open-air but heavily canopied CenturyLink Stadium clocked in at an astounded 137.6 decibels. "Think jackhammer or fireworks blast," said Dr. Mazevski. In MetLife's 910 X 740-foot open structure, sound doesn't bounce the way it does in a closed-dome stadium. MetLife's plastic and iron seating doesn't reflect back noise the way CenturyLink's aluminum seating does. However, with 217 glass-fronted luxury suites, four 30 x 188-foot video display boards, a 360-degree ribbon board and massive canopies near both end zones, MetLife Stadium contains plenty of sound-reflective surfaces.

When it comes to factors that increase noise levels, size matters and so does closeness to the field. As the second largest NFL stadium, MetLife has a seating capacity of 82,500 fans. The stadium's closest fan seating, just 46 feet from the 50-yard sidelines, is the shortest distance of any NFL stadium.

*Football continued...*

## Noise On and Off the Field

Football helmets are designed to protect players' heads, not their hearing. Openings on either side of the helmet allow them to hear crowd noise and calls on the field. When Oticon audiologists measured sound levels with a regulation helmet, using KEMAR, an acoustic research mannequin, sound levels were virtually the same with and without the helmet. However, because the helmet covers the pinna, the soft outer portion of the ear that facilitates sound and localization, it may take players a bit longer to identify where sound is coming from.

## Raising the Bar on Noise

Although sports bars can be very loud places to watch the big game, fans may be less likely to find the noise bothersome because they are in a social setting, according to a University of Minnesota study. During NFL playoffs, a group of Oticon audiologists fanned out to popular sports bars in playoff cities to test noise levels. "We found that one average, bar noise was in the 70 decibel range, about the noise level of a vacuum cleaner," said Dr. Mazevski. "During touchdowns, fan noise rose to nearly 110 decibels and ratcheted up even higher to 112.2 decibels (louder than a car horn) during big plays."



Picture from Minnesota.cbslocal.com

Some researchers have shown that ingesting alcohol in moderation is a protective agent against hearing loss. Moderation is key. People who drink four or more alcoholic beverages per day have higher odds of having high frequency hearing loss.



Picture from Sleep.lovetoknow.com

## Sound Advice

Planning to play it safe on game day? Oticon audiologists recommend adding a pair of earplugs or protective earmuffs with a good noise reduction rating to your game day attire. Use both together for increased noise reduction. "A package containing several pairs of earplugs costs just a few dollars at your local drug or home store," said Dr. Mazevski. "When noise gets to be too much, take a break. Head to the snack bar or take a walk around the stadium."

A cap and warm muffler may protect against frostbite but are too porous to offer any protection from stadium noise.

"It's not uncommon for your ears to ring a short period after being in a noisy environment. But if the ringing doesn't go away after three or more days, get checked out by a hearing care professional," says Dr. Mazevski.



Picture from www.earplugstore.typepad.com

# Reading for Real



Patricia (Trish) Ross

Excerpt from *Odyssey: High Expectations for All* 2014

*When my high school students at the Phoenix Day School for the Deaf buddied up with elementary school students to improve their reading skills, amazing things happened. As they read to them, my students, part of our 2012-2013 Integrated Language Arts and Social Studies program, increased their reading scores and forged relationships with younger students that may endure for a lifetime.*

Prior to entering the program, the high school students consistently tested at reading levels between the first and second grade on a variety of tests and “far below the standard” in the testing required by Arizona. These scores, however, did not match the students we saw in the halls every day; the scores were not indicative of their ability.

These students were exceptionally bright. They were leaders in our school community, active in sports, clubs, and activities. They were competent users of American Sign Language (ASL both socially and academically). They were being held back because of their limited English reading and writing skills.

We believed in the students, and we knew the traditional approach wasn’t working. Something needed to be done. We decided to set up a pilot class. The class was a hands-on, activity-based block that played on the strengths of students. It required a large time commitment. Extending through three 50-minute periods. Students would work on reading, writing, and social studies.

It was an exciting year with lots of learning, but most successful was the Reading Buddies Program. We developed the program in our efforts to find a way to provide students with material to read with teacher assistance that wouldn’t be an insult to their intelligence. It was an issue we struggled with. Our solution? Have the students read to elementary school students.

My morning class was matched up with kindergartners and my afternoon class with third graders. Their assignment: Every few weeks, they would read picture books to their reading buddies. This task required my students to pick a book, learn the vocabulary, interpret the book into ASL, rehearse reading the book interpreted in ASL, and come up with activities and questions related to the book for their young buddies.

The results were incredible! The high school students took their mission seriously, reading actively with a clear sense of purpose. They improved their vocabulary, reading comprehension, and interpreting skills. At the same time, elementary students were read to on a one-to-one basis, were exposed to older peers who modeled accurate and meaningful English and ASL, and interacted with high school students who we watched become their heroes.

As the year progressed, we became increasingly involved with the younger students. My students selected books that matched the interests of their buddies and came up with educational activities to go along with the books. For example, when Zack, a freshman, read a book about otters to his buddy, Joey, he searched for video clips of otters playing to show Joey after he read the book. My students read books, learned new vocabulary, practiced their interpretation skills, wrote letters and notes, and planned parties and trips.

Continued page 7...

*Reading for Real continued...*

The connection the students had with each other extended beyond reading class. They would high five each other in the cafeteria and library, and at athletic competitions, pep rallies, and other school events.

The first reading I required only that my student select a book and read it aloud. For the second reading, they were also required to plan an activity related to the book. In this, my students proved unbelievably creative.

I saw amazing growth in my students. Their reading skills and confidence grew. Johnie, who was stiff and focused on signing English the first time he read aloud, became animated as the year progressed. His buddy, Bruce, responded in kind. Pictures of the first reading show both boys looking bored. By the end of the year pictures show completely different expressions; huge smiles and even giggles are evident as Johnie read to Bruce. Kayla, who said she “hates reading” became an incredibly competent and passionate reader. The students loved her, and her understanding of text and storytelling skills improved every time we did a read aloud. She was thoughtful and created fun activities for the students. Alex, who is a natural-born actor, used his skills to animate his stories. Reading aloud played on his strengths.

In the end, my students had young children who jumped up and down at the sight of them and improved their literacy skills. When they took the state’s standardized test, all except one no longer were scored as “falling far below” the standard in reading; they were now “approaching the standard.” Just as importantly, my students had self-confidence in their ability to be role models in literacy. They had not only captured the attention of their younger classmates through reading but implemented ideas that extended the younger students’ learning.

In the beginning, our expectations for our students were high; by the end of the class, even our high expectations were exceeded.

*\*In some instances, the names of students have been changed to protect their privacy; in other instances, however, the students wanted—and permission was granted for Odyssey to use their real names.*

## Helping your child love books From [www.readingrockets.com](http://www.readingrockets.com)



Picture from [V12parentspackage.org](http://V12parentspackage.org)

You'll find sharing books together is a great way to bond with your son or daughter and help your child's development at the same time. Give your child a great gift that will last for life - the love of books.

Each time you read to your child, you are helping his/her brain to develop. So read to your child every day. Choose books that you think your child will enjoy. Books that rhyme or repeat the same sound are good for helping your child learn the sounds that letters and words make.

Since younger children have short attention spans, try reading for a few minutes at a time at first. Then build up the time you read together. Your child will soon see reading time as fun time!

Here are some things you can try:

- Read the same story again and again. This will help your child catch words s/he may have missed before. Explain the story as needed.
- Make sure your child can see your face and the pictures. This will help your child follow the story, even if s/he doesn't catch all the words.
- Have your child turn pages, touch the pictures, and lift the flaps.

# Purposeful Play

By Linda Ehlers

ND School for the Deaf Outreach Specialist

Today's technology, early identification of hearing loss and early intervention services are better than ever before.

Students with hearing loss have better access to spoken language. Higher expectations should exist for students where they were once very low. Developing a child's language is a priority to help them on their journey to developing relationships with family and friends. We use language for sharing stories, sharing ideas, retelling of events, solving problems and negotiating with others. We use it for conversation, not for just commenting and naming. For children, play is an avenue to practice the language that they are learning. Some of the challenges for children with hearing loss in regards to learning language are

- they have no story plot or play plot,
- they are stuck in a play loop (saying and doing same thing over and over)
- there is more focus on outcome rather than the process of learning language
- the child has not learned language of negotiation.

**Having a story or play plot** means to have the understanding of the basic script or language to engage in an activity. An example is when we go shopping. We have to decide what we are going to eat then make a list of the things we need. We then get in our car and drive to the store then get a cart or basket and pick up our items then finally check out. We then drive home again, perhaps decide to run other errands on the way before getting home and then put the groceries away.

Each step has its own language and dialogue that may happen. For example, the grocery list contains names of foods; going to the car you will need to get the keys, tell everyone to get in the car and buckle up; You have to decide if you have a lot to pick up or a little to decide whether you want a cart or basket, you may have dialogue with someone you know that you see at the store, then the conversation with the checker and bag person. Did you find everything? You want plastic or paper? You want pick up or carry out and so forth. Once in the car, you remember some things you need to do or get so decide to go to other places. You get home and you have to decide where the items you picked up goes, does it go in the cupboard, in the refrigerator, on the counter because you are going to use it right away, take to the bathroom, etc. As you can see there can be a lot of language when it comes to the activity of just going shopping.

Play is an excellent way to let a child practice the dialogues such as the ones mentioned above. One of the best ways to help a child learn to create a play plot is to present a problem. Problems gives us a reason and need to use words. The problem, of course, should match the child's age and development and the child has to be the problem solver not the adult. It can be highlighted with such words as Uh-oh, or what happened? If you are doing shopping play, then the problem could be, what are we going to eat tonight?



Taken from  
<http://www.examiner.com/article/how-pretend-play-builds-5-basic-skills-preschool-children>

*Purposeful Play continued...*

**Being stuck in a play loop** means that the child is only able to do and say the same thing over and over. Going astray in the dialogue upsets them and they do not know what to do. To help children who are stuck in a play loop, again giving your child a problem will help. This can be as simple as having dried out glue or pens that don't work. When doing a project that requires those items, ask the child what's wrong or what are you going to do? Give them time to think and look around to see if they can solve the problem themselves.

When you finally do assist them, you can say, "That glue stick is dried out, we need to throw it away and get a new stick or that silly pen doesn't work anymore. Let's throw it away. Where do we have more pens? (look around to see if you child knows) then show him or her where to go.

**Play is a process rather than an outcome.** It is in the planning that language is accelerated or new vocabulary learned, in an incidental, but practical and realistic way. The adult-child conversation that happens before, during and after the activity is more important than having a pretty picture at the end of an arts and craft project. Have the conversation prior to making the flag such as what do we need; what colors, what do we need to paint with, how will we protect the table, and so on. When painting a flag red, white and blue but the red and white are mixing to make pink, the conversation about how red and white makes pink is more important than having perfect red and white stripes. Afterwards, the conversation of telling another person what you did, what happened when white and red mixed together or how you cleaned up when you were done is also just as important. It does not matter what activity you do with your child, the importance is the conversations that take place before, during and after the fun.

**Often children do not learn the art of negotiation.** They assume they run the show at all times and do not realize that other people have different opinions or thoughts. This can be facilitated by informing the child that you do not want to do what s/he says. For example, "I want to be the mommy, not the daddy." You further say that you will only play if you can be the mommy. After some thought about it from the child, you can share ideas such as, "I will be the mommy for five minutes then you can be the mommy." Again, problem solving is the way that you teach the art of negotiation.



Vygotsky (1978) maintained the child follows the adult's example and gradually develops the ability to do certain tasks without help or assistance. He called the difference between what a child can do with help and what he or she can do without guidance the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD).

As children play and interact with others at home and at school, they develop specific models of communication, expression and explanation. It is believed this social use of language forms the basis for literacy.

Overall, we can help children reach their play ZPD by creating new problems for them to solve. Use lots of energy and acoustic highlighting, showing them how to play with roles, showing them the process, making a joint plan and encouraging them to verbalize it to their friends and giving them the words to negotiate.

# Big Goals for Big Kids

By Elizabeth Rozensweig MS CCC-SLP LSLC Cert. AVT  
From [www.auditoryverbaltherapy.net](http://www.auditoryverbaltherapy.net)  
November 14, 2014



Taken from  
[www.nutleypediatricdentistry.com](http://www.nutleypediatricdentistry.com)

*A lot of attention in the auditory verbal therapy (AVT) world is focused on infants and toddlers - detecting hearing loss at birth, fitting them with hearing technology ASAP, and getting their families off to a running start with listening and spoken language early intervention. When all goes well, many of these children can be fully mainstreamed from preschool and have no need for further therapy. That's the ideal. It happens for many children, but not all. What about children who are identified as toddlers, or implanted late, or have other complicating factors that lead to slower than expected speech and language progress? What happens when little kids become big kids who still need intervention?*

Here are some more specific activities that parents and professionals can use once children have outgrown the infant/toddler/preschooler stage but still need listening and spoken language support.

- **Don't stop reading out loud.** I think we tend to assume that once a child becomes a fluent reader, there's no further need to spend time together reading aloud. This couldn't be further from the truth for all children, but especially for those with hearing loss. Reading aloud together has many, many benefits:
  1. **It builds the Auditory Feedback Loop (AFL).** The auditory feedback loop is what we all use to listen to ourselves as we speak and then hear, monitor, and change our own productions as needed (Ever caught yourself saying the wrong word and then backing up and changing your sentence? You just used the AFL). AFL weaknesses can occur in children with hearing loss, especially those who do not have access to sound from infancy or who have other language-learning issues. As the child reads aloud with an adult, they can work together to make sure the child's speech matches the text on the page, providing an "external AFL" (the parent and the text) as a triple-check.
  2. **It allows parents and professionals to monitor the child's articulation in connected speech.** The child may be producing /s/ well at the word level, but does it fall apart when reading longer sentences or paragraphs?
  3. **Taking turns reading aloud with an adult can help expose the child to age-appropriate material that s/he may not be able to handle independently yet.** If the class is reading Christopher Paul Curtis's *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*, but your child's skills fall 1-2 years below grade level, tackling this book alone could mean disaster. Co-reading it together can help you wade through new vocabulary, concepts, and reading comprehension strategies together.
  4. **Reading aloud with an adult for some scaffolding and support gives the child access to the same books her peers are reading.** This is important not only for academics, but for socialization!
  5. **Reading alone silently gives a struggling reader lots of leeway to skip over unfamiliar words, confusing grammatical constructions, or difficult paragraphs without any kind of external checks.** S/He may be able to get the main idea from a sentence by piecing together key words, but would s/he be able to use that same syntactical structure in his or her own spoken language? The child might have turned every page in the book, but did he or she really read and understand it?
  6. **Reading aloud is great for expanding vocabulary.** It's tempting to think that once a child has all of the vocabulary s/he needs to get through a regular day, our job is done. (After all, you probably worked so, so hard for those words!) However, vocabulary is a historically weak area for children with hearing loss, most likely due to their limited ability to overhear and learn words incidentally compared to their hearing peers. Books can expose your child to words s/he would never come across in the course of a normal day, and reading aloud gives you a chance to catch and capitalize on these word-learning opportunities.

*Continued on page 11...*

*Activities continued...*

7. **It's a great bonding experience.** It gives you and your tween/teen a chance to share your thoughts and discuss your opinions together.
- **Make it functional... give tweens and teens a "why?"** Tweens and teens who still need therapy have probably been "in treatment" for years by this point. Can you blame them for thinking it's boring or being resistant? It's actually a pretty natural (and healthy) developmental response. That doesn't mean, however, that we just quit working toward age-appropriate speech, language, and listening goals. Instead, we have to get creative (even more so than usual). We have to give tweens and teens a "why?", a reason for participating in therapy. Why am I doing this? How is it helping me? How does it relate to my life in the "real world"? We need to embed targets in activities that are both functional and fun.
- **Make your teen the designated caller.** If a phone call needs to be made in the house, have him or her do it! It's a great way to work on auditory skills as well as conversational pragmatics (social language).
- **Recipes, building projects, and do-it-yourself kits** are a fantastic way to stretch vocabulary and build teens' ability to follow complex, multi-step directions. They also build important life skills for independent living, and you get a great product at the end. It's a win all around.
- **Get out of the therapy room.** Go to the mall, plan a budget, and ask salespeople for advice. Go to a restaurant, order something new, and have a conversation in a crowded room. Go apply for a part time job, fill out the application, and have an interview with a potential employer.
- **Let tweens and teens take charge of their own goals.** At this point, they're not babies anymore, and it's a lot harder to "trick" a teen into working with a fun activity than it is with a preschooler. Don't fight this drive for independence — capitalize on it!
- **Let teens in on the "behind the scenes" of their own assessments and scores.** Let them know which strengths and weaknesses have been identified. Some may think they are "doing just fine." Gently help point out to them where they're missing the mark.
- **Ask the tween/teen to self-assess.** What areas of communication are hardest for you? In which areas do you excel? This can serve two purposes: First, it gives adults an idea of how realistic the child is about his own abilities. Second, it can help you work collaboratively with the child to work on mutually-identified areas of need.
- **Have the big kid pick their own goals.** Your assessments may have identified ten different areas for remediation, but an older child is highly unlikely to commit to the practice and follow-through needed to make progress if s/he's not also motivated to improve in that area. I would much rather work on the three goals the teen feels would have the greatest immediate impact on his or her communication if it means I'm working with, not against, him or her.
- **Don't shield teens from the consequences of their own decisions.** If a teen decides not continue improving his or her speech, language, and listening skills, the social and academic ramifications will soon be enough to convince him that it's time for a change in direction.
- **Tweens and teens are old enough to take their own data on their performance.** Ask questions like, "Which sentence did you think was written the best?" or, "How well do you think that cashier was able to understand you? Why do you think that?" or, "On a scale of one to ten, how well do you think you did in therapy today?" This build self-monitoring skills, the auditory feedback loop, and internal motivation.
- **Board games.** Language-based board games are an excellent way to work on both social language and more complex syntactical (sentence structure) skills. A few of my favorites include: Catchphrase, Taboo, Scattergories, Apples to Apples, Balderdash, and Last Word, but really, any game your tween or teen enjoys will do. Use these interactions to build social skills as well as higher-level language goals.

*Big Goals* continued...

- **Low level goals + big kids = now what?** What if you have a child who is older (let's say nine years and up), but is still really, really struggling with some more basic speech, language, and listening skills. What then? You can't just pull out your baby games and Learning to Listen toys and expect things to go well. For these children, I like to use developmentally complex activities (like those mentioned above), with language goals cut down to their level. It's important to keep this balance in mind. No one likes being patronized, especially not tweens and teens!
- **Prioritize your goals.** For a child who got a very late start, or who has many other complicating conditions, it might not be realistic to expect age-level skills and that "I can't believe s/he's deaf" outcome. And that's okay. We have to work smart and decide which interventions and goals are going to lead to the biggest change in this child's life. Which skills will help him or her the most in the long run for academic and vocational success? If I have to make these kinds of difficult decisions, my rough hierarchy is this:

***auditory comprehension + language content > language form + overall intelligibility***  
***language form + overall intelligibility > specific phoneme articulation***

What does that mean?

**Goal #1:** *the child will understand what others say and have the vocabulary to communicate back his or her own message, even if it is not grammatically perfect*

**Goal #2** *polish up that grammar and make the child's spoken language intelligible (not perfect, but understandable)*

**Goal #3** *the icing on the cake: polishing up that speech.*

## HLAA Signs Historic Agreement on Movie Captioning

From [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org) November 21, 2014

In a historical first, Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) along with the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), the Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA), the Alexander Graham Bell Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell) sat down with representatives from the National Association of Theater Owners (NATO) to hammer out an agreement on movie captioning. HLAA is pleased to announce that our meetings resulted in two documents which have been filed with the US Department of Justice (DOJ) in its rulemaking on movie access: the Joint Recommendations to the US Department of Justice and the Joint Voluntary Commitments on Closed Captioning and Video Description.

After several weeks of discussions, the five organizations agreed on a set of recommendations to the DOJ to improve access to movies for deaf and hard of hearing patrons.

- Closed captioning (CC) and audio description (AD) technologies are to be installed in all digital movie theater auditoriums nationwide.
- The joint plan establishes certain minimum closed captioning device requirements with a monitoring requirement. This flexible, market-responsive device scoping method will ensure access for all deaf and hard of hearing patrons and respond to actual consumer demand.
- The compliance period has been restructured to reflect reasonable timelines in delivery and installation of CC and AD systems.

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**Movie Captioning** continued...

In addition to these and other requirements regarding marketing, staff training, and equipment maintenance, the movie theater industry and the advocacy groups have committed to voluntary actions to expand access to the movies. These include:

- Encouraging movie distributors to provide CC and AD data files on all movies and trailers
- Encouraging movie distributors to provide theaters with information on the availability of CC and AD technologies in advance of the film's release so this information can be included in show time listings.
- Sharing information on areas with large deaf and hard of hearing populations, including schools, and conducting specific outreach to community groups.
- Encouraging theater operators to accommodate large group requests for either opened captioned shows or large group requests for closed captioning devices, as long as they have advanced notice to accommodate a group.
- Promoting the availability of closed captioning systems among the members of HLAA and other consumer groups.

HLAA applauds the initiative that made these recommendations and the voluntary agreement happen. It represents a huge step forward for people who depend on text-captioning to have full access to movies. This agreement is a "welcome back" banner of people who had given up going to the movies simply because they could no longer hear.

## **North Dakota School for the Deaf 125th Anniversary All-School Reunion**

The North Dakota School for the Deaf alumni, staff (current and retired), and parents are invited to celebrate the 125th Anniversary All-School Reunion of the North Dakota School for the Deaf June 25-28, 2015. Guests will tour the NDSD Museum, compete in a golf tournament, and participate in other activities. Registration includes banquet on Friday and farewell breakfast on Sunday. The first 100 registrants will receive a special token of appreciation and great door prizes will be given away at the banquet.

**Please register by May 31, 2015.** Cost is \$25.00 for adults; \$15.00 for children age 8 to 15; and children under age 7 are free.

**LODGING:** Mention "School for the Deaf Reunion" to receive a discount at Fireside Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Days Inn and Spirit Lake Casino. A block of rooms are reserved at Fireside Inn. (701) 662-6760

For questions or for more information, please contact Robert Balzer at [robert.balzer@gmail.com](mailto:robert.balzer@gmail.com)

**Mail the registration form with a check payable to Robert Balzer, 9829 Whetstone Drive, Montgomery Village, MD 20886-3125**



# H.R. 4040, the Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act

From [www.ceasd.org](http://www.ceasd.org)

On February 12, 2014, a comprehensive bill that will reform education for deaf and hard of hearing and blind and visually impaired students was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Congressmen Matt Cartwright (D-PA), Mark Takano (D-CA), and Steve Stockman (R-TX). Named for the first deaf student to be formally educated in the U.S. and the beloved teacher of Helen Keller, respectively, the Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act will ensure that: every child who is deaf and every child who is blind, regardless of whether they have additional disabilities, will be properly counted and served; each of a child's unique learning needs will be properly evaluated; states will engage in strategic planning to be sure that they can in fact meet each child's specialized needs: the U.S. Department of Education will do its part to hold states and schools accountable: students who are deaf will be served by qualified personnel, students who are blind will receive state-of-the-art services and skills supported through a new major national collaborative initiative addressing their unique learning needs. Thanks to all who have supported this effort through calls, e-mails, letters, meetings, and in other ways!

## ***You can help move this bill forward!***

- 1. Sign the support petition as an individual at**  
[http://www.ceasd.org/child-first/alice-cogswell/sign-cogswell-2013-individual?view=message&layout=message&pf=1&redirect\\_on\\_success=](http://www.ceasd.org/child-first/alice-cogswell/sign-cogswell-2013-individual?view=message&layout=message&pf=1&redirect_on_success=)
- 2. If you represent a local state, or national advocacy organization, sign the petition as an organization.**  
[http://www.ceasd.org/component/aicontactsafe/?view=message&layout=message&pf=2&redirect\\_on\\_success=&Itemid=785](http://www.ceasd.org/component/aicontactsafe/?view=message&layout=message&pf=2&redirect_on_success=&Itemid=785)
- 3. If your House member has sponsored or co-sponsored the bill, thank him or her.**
- 4. Ask your House of Representatives member to sign on as a cosponsor.**
- 5. Ask your Senators to sponsor a bill in the Senate.**

## **“Looking Back with Pride, Looking Forward with Confidence”**

Discover the rich history of North Dakota School for the Deaf/Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as they celebrate 125 years. Go to [nddsociety.org](http://nddsociety.org) and see photographs and information related to the school's history.

# Foreign Language Classes: Creating Access for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Put together by Linda Ehlers, Outreach Specialist from articles from PepNet and Western Oregon's University's powerpoint presentation at [http://www.wou.edu/education/sped/wrocc/forlang\\_files/v3\\_document.htm](http://www.wou.edu/education/sped/wrocc/forlang_files/v3_document.htm)

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing are continuing to explore academic opportunities along side their peers rather than alternatives to foreign language requirements. Frequently, both student and staff are unsure how to achieve successful access and accommodations for these courses. Effective approaches are determined on a case by case basis taking into consideration a variety of factors, including the student's accommodation needs, available resources, and the purpose of the course in the overall academic program for the student.

An open and honest discussion among all parties involved is a sound first step. Oftentimes being able to talk over the concerns at hand and brainstorm ways to alleviate potential barriers goes a long way toward arriving at an effective solution.

Foreign language instructors typically rely heavily on oral/aural methods of teaching. Not only is the instruction delivered orally, it is also often delivered in the foreign language. Similarly, students are evaluated in part by how they listen and respond orally in the foreign language during class. Evaluation of the deaf or hard-of-hearing student may seem impossible: How do you know that the student is learning the language if s/he cannot speak it to you clearly or respond orally to your questions? The teacher must first come to terms with and find some acceptance of expectations for deaf and hard-of-hearing students that are different from those for hearing students. The goal is for all students to demonstrate knowledge about the culture and a level of expressive and receptive proficiency in the language. All students should be able to do this. For deaf and hard-of-hearing students, though, evaluation of receptive and expressive skills may have to focus on reading and writing, not listening and speaking.

**Is the student an auditory or visual learner?** Does the student prefer to use his or her residual hearing through use of hearing aids or cochlear implant? Or does the student prefer to use speech-to-text or interpreter services in the classroom setting? These questions will guide discussions about accommodations such as assistive listening devices, closed-captioning, seating, speech-to-text or use of an interpreter.

Here are a few of many tips to make the foreign language presentation more visual so that it may help in presenting the materials for all children with a hearing loss.

1. **Different colors can be used to identify different parts of speech**, such as verb conjugations, noun and article agreement, etc. For handouts, try using different fonts, bold and italics so that the difference will be visible in black and white. For overheads or writing on board, use different colored pens or chalk. Students can even copy in color, using pens with three or four colors in one.  
EXAMPLES: Noun-Article Agreement: **The** teacher: *La profesora* or *Los profesores* or *Las profesoras*  
Comparing English: A **new** book vs. *Un libro nuevo*  
Gender: Una **ca**sa **nuev**a vs. Un lib**ro** Nuevo
2. **Alternative to listening:** the internet provides many alternatives that can be used with students as replacement materials for audio exercises. The internet has opened up several exciting possibilities. Not only are there foreign language chat rooms and bilingual websites, but students can correspond with instructors (or individuals in their home countries) via e-mail. In addition, there are a multitude of foreign language websites. Alphabets are also downloadable.
3. **Use natural word associations** such as opposites (cold/hot, brother/sister, big/small) is another effective option. Finally, you may present vocabulary in classes of words such as colors, days of the week, numbers, and fruits and vegetables
4. **Use grammatical groupings:** Avoid presenting the student with a list of words in an ungrouped presentation, such as libro (book), leer (to read), librería (bookstore), biblioteca (library), vender (to sell), fácil (easy). Using word groupings such nouns, verbs, and adjectives, in addition to the color techniques described previously, will greatly enhance the students ability to learn and remember the vocabulary.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:****February 5-7, 2015*****For Teachers and Speech Language Pathologists  
Providing Early Intervention Services To  
Children With Hearing Loss***

Moog Center for Deaf Education, St. Louis, MO

**March 8-10, 2015*****Early Hearing Detection & Intervention  
Meeting***

Louisville, KY

**June 10-11, 2015*****Midwest Conference for Deaf Education***co-sponsored by South Dakota School for the Deaf, North Dakota School for the Deaf, and Gallaudet University Midwest Regional Center  
South Dakota School for the Deaf, Sioux Fall, SD**June 15-18, 2015*****North Dakota School for the Deaf's Summer  
Camp*** for age 7 to graduation.**June 25-28, 2015*****North Dakota School for the Deaf's 125th  
All-School Reunion*** in Devils Lake, ND**June 25-28, 2015*****American Society for Deaf Children  
Conference***

Indiana School for the Deaf, Indianapolis, IN

**July 9-11, 2015*****2015 AG Bell Listening and Spoken Language  
Symposium***Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, Baltimore, MD  
"The Brain Science of Hearing"**To be Announced:*****Family Learning Vacation***North Dakota School for the Deaf/Resource  
Center, Devils Lake, NDRegional ***Mom's Night Out****Sponsored by North Dakota School for the  
Deaf/Resource Center***BOOKS:****The Gallaudet Children's Dictionary of  
American Sign Language**

By the Editors of Gallaudet University Press

This book can be ordered through the  
Gallaudet University Press website.**Coming to My Senses: One Woman's  
Cochlear Implant Journey**

By Claire H. Blatchford

Synopsis: Deafened at the age of six, Claire  
Blatchford was educated orally with speech  
lessons, speechreading, and hearing aids.Though successful both professionally and  
domestically, at the age of 67 Blatchford  
decided to undergo a cochlear implantation.In this memoir, she describes in prose and  
verse living with a cochlear implant for the  
past three years. \*\*\*Synopsis taken from

Gallaudet University Press Fall 2014 Catalog

This book can be ordered through the Gal-  
laudet University Press website.**Let's Hear It For Almigal**

By Wendy Kupfer

Synopsis: Meet Almigal, a young spirited girl  
with a hearing loss. This story won the  
Mom's Choice Award Gold.The book can be ordered on Amazon or  
purchased at Barnes & Noble.**101 Frequently Asked Questions About  
Auditory-Verbal Practice**

Warren Estabrooks

This book can be purchased through  
<http://listeningandspokenlanguage.org>**Hear and Listen, Talk and Sing!**

Lois Birkenshaw and Warren Estabrooks

Synopsis: This music book/CD set teaches  
kids with hearing loss through song activities  
and speech sounds. This book can be

purchased through

<http://listeningandspokenlanguage.org>.

## WEBSITES and WEBINARS

### <http://hope.cochlearamericas.com/online-courses>

The HOPE Cochlear Americas archives provide a variety of webinars for different audiences such as speech language pathologists, teachers of the deaf, and parents.

### <http://ndipat.org>

At IPAT, they have assistive technology (AT) devices to help lessen the impact of a hearing loss. Whether you need a device that makes sounds louder or something that converts sound to a visual or tactile message They will work to find the equipment that does what is needed. They also have several interesting articles related to hearing loss. They also address assistive technology needs for other disabilities.

### [www.aslnook.com](http://www.aslnook.com)

You can subscribe free to receive various video clips of American Sign Language topics such as Christmas, letters and vacation. Visit there website and pick from an ever growing list of vocabulary.



## MAGAZINES

### American Annals of the Deaf

The *American Annals of the Deaf* is a professional journal dedicated to quality in education and related services for deaf or hard of hearing children and adults. First published in 1847, the *Annals* is the oldest and most widely read journal dealing with deafness and the education of deaf persons. The *Annals* is the official organ of the Council of American Instructors of the Deaf (CAID) and of the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD). Subscribe at Gallaudet University Press.

### Volta Review

Get the latest research on hot topics in hearing loss – speech and language development and processing, literacy skill developments, hearing technology, early intervention, auditory (re)habilitation and more. For over 113 years, it has been the preeminent scholarly research and scientific journal in the field of listening and spoken language communication. Join AG Bell as a professional member and receive the journal.

## **North Dakota School for the Deaf/ Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Parent-Infant-Program and Outreach Department**

Contact your regional office if you have any questions related to hearing loss related to children from birth to graduation from high school including resources and services available.

### **Carol Lybeck**

Program Coordinator  
(701) 665-4412  
Carol.lybeck@k12.nd.us  
Devils Lake, ND

### **Linda Ehlers**

*Southeast Region*  
PIP/Outreach Specialist  
(701) 239-7374  
Linda.Ehlers@k12.nd.us  
Fargo, ND

### **Denise Marback**

*Northeast Region*  
PIP/Outreach Specialist  
(701) 665-4420  
Denise.Marback@k12.nd.us

### **Nicole Swartwout**

*Northwest Region*  
PIP/Outreach Specialist  
(701) 858-3357  
Nicole.Swartwout@k12.nd.us

### **Lindsay McCloud**

*Statewide*  
SLP/Outreach Specialist  
(701) 477-5062  
Lindsay.McCloud@k12.nd.us

### **Ashley Martin**

*Statewide*  
Sign/Outreach Specialist  
(701) 239-7375  
Ashley.Martin@k12.nd.us

**“Serving all of North Dakota”**

## Come Join Us! For The 2015 Midwest Conference for Deaf Education!

The North Dakota School for the Deaf/Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is proud to co-sponsor the sixth Midwest Conference for Deaf Education which will be held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. They join South Dakota School for the Deaf and Gallaudet Midwest Outreach in planning the biannual event which will be held **June 11 and 12, 2015**. The guest speakers will be Beth Benedict, Matt Rider, Amy Hile, and Maribel Garate. Looking forward to this event and hope to see you there!



North Dakota  
School for the  
Deaf



South Dakota  
School for the  
Deaf



Gallaudet  
Midwest  
Outreach



Keep checking  
**MWDeafConference.org**  
for more details.

### Early Registration Deadline:

**April 15, 2015**

New participants: \$110  
Returning from 2013: \$100  
Students & Parents:  
\$50 each

### Regular Registration Deadline:

**May 15, 2015**

New participants: \$120  
Returning from 2013: \$110  
Students & Parents:  
\$50 each

### Late Registration Deadline:

**May 16, 2015**

New participants: \$130  
Returning from 2013: \$120  
Students & Parents: \$60  
Students: \$50

**North Dakota School for the Deaf/  
Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**  
1401 College Drive North  
Devils Lake, North Dakota 58301

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