

# The Importance of Hearing and Seeing

Penny Gosselin, M.Cl.Sc., and Dale Bonnycastle, M.Sc.  
MAB Mackay Rehabilitation Centre

We're all familiar with the expression *seeing is believing*. As CHIP members many of us who have taken speechreading or lipreading classes are also aware that beyond *believing*, in many listening situations *seeing is hearing*. What we see and what we hear make complementary contributions to help us understand the spoken word.

Speaking and listening tend to occur automatically. Seldom do we consider how complex the speech we produce really is. Simply put, speech varies in at least three dimensions:

**#1. Pitch:** Speech varies from low pitch sounds to high pitch sounds. The sound of the letter 'm' in *grandmother* is low in pitch compared to the high pitch 'sh' sound heard in the word *hush*. You can compare where both of these sounds are placed on a typical audiogram shown in the figure at the right.

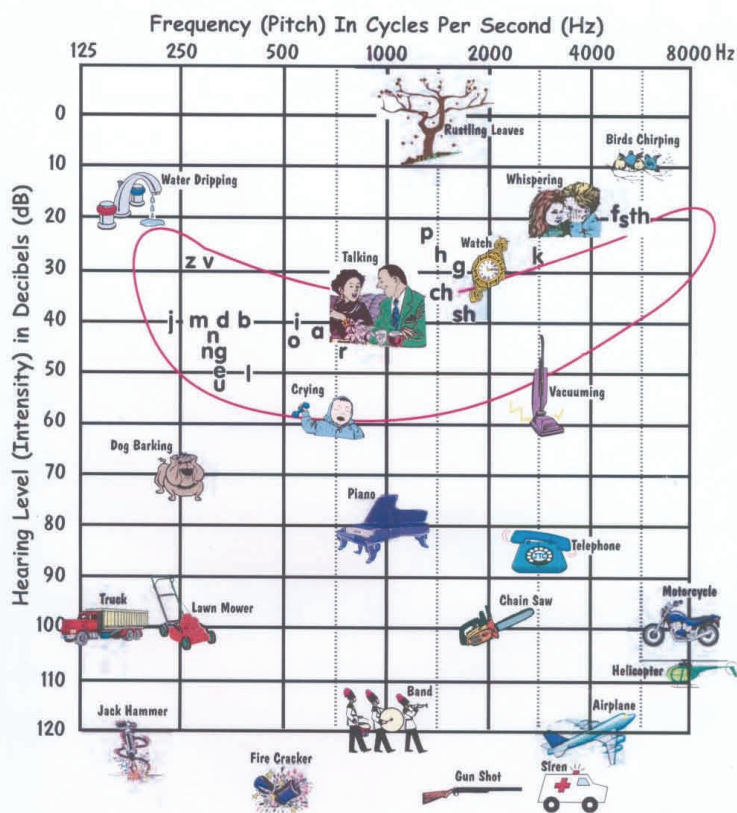
On the audiogram, the pitch or frequency of sounds are represented on the horizontal axis and are measured in cycles per second (Hz). Variations in pitch can also be used to convey meaning by giving speech a certain intonation pattern. A rising pitch pattern is often used when we ask a question – compared to a falling pitch pattern when we make a statement.

**#2. Loudness:** Speech can be heard as a whisper, or at a normal listening level, or (when necessity requires) as a loud yell – especially at a hockey game - Go HABs Go! On the audio-

gram, the loudness or intensity of sounds are represented on the vertical axis which is measured in decibels or dB's.

(Continued on page 10)

## Frequency Spectrum of Familiar Sounds



The speech sounds on this chart are only approximations. Speech sounds become loud or soft (intensity) depending on the distance between the speaker and listener. The low or high sound of a voice (pitch) will change depending on whether a man, woman or child is speaking.

Adapted from: American Academy of Audiology, [www.audiology.org](http://www.audiology.org) and Northern, J. & Downs, M. (2002). Audiogram of familiar sounds; and Ling, D. & Ling, A (1978). Aural Habilitation.



# From the President

Doreen Cons

CHIP is 30 years old this year and as I look back, I am so proud of our progress. We are always finding new ways to serve the hearing impaired community in Montreal.

Our Fall program includes two interesting special events on coping with vision loss and the latest developments for the hearing impaired (see Fall event and calendar) as well as all of our regular programs and services: The HEAR program, which helps people adjust to hearing loss; our speechreading classes, which are now offered at three levels; and the Lily Bernstein Technical Resource Centre, which provides demonstrations of assistive listening devices that can make your life easier, safer, and more enjoyable.

Remember to renew your membership so that you will receive all of our program information, and advise us of any changes in your address, telephone number, or email address.

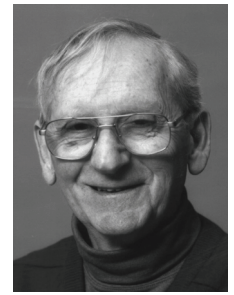
I look forward to seeing you this fall and I want to wish to our Jewish members a very healthy and happy New Year.

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# Executive UpDate

Alvin Goldman, Executive Director



We are pleased to inform you that the CHIP Executive is growing and strengthening to continue to meet the needs of our members.

At the Annual General Meeting in June 2009, Barney Cons, Joyce Kramer, and Ruth Taylor were elected to the Executive. They all stepped forward following our appeal in the Spring issue of the Communicaider for CHIP members to get involved on the Executive – and we thank them all!

In addition, Jack Schiess, a relatively new member of the Executive, has been working closely with our treasurer, Reg Weiswall, and has been taking on more responsibility. We thank Reg for his initiative in grooming a successor so that the transition will be smooth when Reg is ready to step aside.

While CHIP is making progress in planning for future leadership, this is an ongoing need as some of our Executive members of long standing show signs of weariness. We therefore urge those who have the future of our organization at heart to let us know if you are interested in participating on the CHIP Executive. Please contact me (or any other member of the Executive) at [info@hearhear.org](mailto:info@hearhear.org) or at 514- 482-0500 local 215. We will gladly arrange for you to attend Executive meetings as an observer so that you can learn more about what we do and how you might contribute.

In a related development, CHIP received a directive from Santé et Services Sociaux (our Québec government grantor) that community service organizations such as CHIP are obligated to hold an annual open meeting to consult with users (past, present, and potential). Santé feels that a meeting of this kind provides an opportunity for the leaders of an organization to be stimulated by new ideas and to reach people who could eventually help run the organization. CHIP applauds Santé for this progressive new regulation, which is consistent with its concerns for service to the community and democ-

matic procedure.

You will receive an invitation to CHIP's first "Open Meeting" this fall and we hope you will attend so that you can let us know what you think of CHIP and how we can all execute our mandate most effectively. We look forward to seeing you at this landmark event!

## Fall Events

### Coping in a Sighted World: Awareness of other losses

Tuesday, September 22 from 1:15 to 3:15 pm

Loss is often part of aging – and hearing loss is only one type of loss. With special simulator glasses, David Melanson will help us experience the various types of vision loss. Is your vision going? Do you know someone with vision loss? Could you learn something from understanding another type of loss? Join us for an exploration. It's Free!

### What's New in Hearing Loss? Reports from the Conferences

Tuesday, October 6 from 1:15 to 3:15 pm

This is your annual opportunity to learn about the latest developments for the hearing impaired. This summer, CHIP sent delegates to two important conferences on hearing loss: The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) conference and the Hearing Loss Association of America's (HLAA) conference. Don't miss this informative afternoon session at CHIP. It's Free!

## Happy Thanksgiving L'shanah tovah



Fall 2009



Here is the list of institutions, organizations and individuals that YOU have recently commended for good service to the hearing impaired:

Albert Tabet  
ProColor Prestige Décarie  
5453 Royalmount  
TMR, Québec

Make your voice heard by letting us know who has provided good service for the hearing impaired. Feedback forms are available at the CHIP office.

## Hearing Loss Association of America at the White House

On July 24, U.S. President Obama invited disability representatives, including the Executive Director of Hearing Loss Association of America, to celebrate the 19th anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act and to announce that the US would sign the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on July 30, 2009.

The CRPD is a binding human rights treaty, adopted by the United Nations in December 2006. The countries that ratify the convention commit to implementing its provisions. So far, 141 countries have signed the convention. Canada signed in 2007.

Marcia Dugan, president of International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH), was instrumental in drafting some of the language that addresses communication access issues for hard of hearing, deaf and deaf-blind people. The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) is one of 50 members of IFHOH.

# Hear Here

## joodi MacDonald

Given the dreary, rainy summer we have been having, let's begin with a little (teeny, tiny) ray of sunshine. This past June a symposium was held in the US about **hair cell regeneration!** Yes, there are already experts working on re-growing those broken hair cells and bringing back real hearing to those of us with sensorineural loss (i.e., damaged hair cells).



In 1985, Douglas A. Cotanche, Ph.D. "co-discovered that birds can regenerate their cochlear hair cells after sound damage, thus regaining their hearing. Currently his lab is exploring the therapeutic potential of stem cell transplantation into mammalian cochlea." It has taken 24 years to begin work with mammals (yes, we are mammals, but so are lab rats.) Maybe a breakthrough is just around the corner, but more likely many years away. The best strategy – stay healthy and live long (and for you Trekkies out there, prosper, too) – you may yet get the chance to benefit from this research.

Speaking of staying healthy, last spring CHIP offered a "wellness-focused" workshop with yoga teacher Cathy Cousins. It was well attended and in general, very well-received. For the few who were annoyed that we did not say the workshop was about yoga, I am sorry you were unhappy. We felt that many would be scared off by the word "yoga", imagining themselves stuck with their legs tucked behind their ears. It is sad, but true, that you don't get something for nothing – and that includes wellness. If you won't exercise, then you need to pay physiotherapists and other specialists, buy pills and live with the side-effects of those pills. There is no free ride.

This season's "wellness" workshop will focus on attitude – not exercise! But do not imagine for one second that no effort will be necessary. If you want wellness, you must invest something to get a return. This workshop, *Coping in a Sighted World: An Insight into Other Losses*, offers a triple benefit. Firstly, if you have some vision loss or know some-

You don't get something for nothing – and that includes wellness. There is no free ride.

one who does, you will learn about coping. You will be able to "experience" the different types of loss by trying on simulation glasses. Secondly, an understanding of another type of loss can make us appreciative of the things we can and still do enjoy - things so easily overlooked while "suffering" with hearing loss. Finally, we can learn to be more supportive of those with vision loss. We often complain that people just don't understand our needs. It could be enlightening to find out what needs some other people have that we just do not understand. David Melanson, living with vision loss himself, has given his much-praised workshops for years. Come and meet him for yourself. Grow your appreciation for what you do have. Grow your empathy for others. A healthy attitude to life's problems means a healthier you. CHIP will include a wellness workshop each season. If you have any suggestions or requests, let me (joodi) know.

As for "letting me know", you, our members, are part of the solution. Every time we meet and talk together, someone has some idea about dealing with some aspect of hearing loss. During the last HEAR Program, the ever-present question about telephones reared its ugly head again.

Ruth Taylor offered some info that she found useful and I include it here for those of you who might be interested:

GE model 29582 Telephone – with Digital Answerer,\* Call Waiting,\* Caller ID,\* and speakerphone. (*Note: Asterisks indicate features that you need to pay for from your telephone company.*)

Cost is just under \$40 at Bureau en Gros

"I came upon it when my landline phone gave out and I was fed up being unable to understand messages . . . my previous answering machine was an old fashioned tape model. With this telephone I am able to hear my messages loud and clear and use the speakerphone adjusted to its highest level which is 8 (the range is from 1 to 8). It is hearing-aid compatible and my friends tell me there is minimum echo as is common with most speaker phones. Hope this info is helpful to CHIP members."

Ruth Taylor and Joyce Kramer have become new members of the CHIP Executive. We heartily wel-

come their participation. Thanks ladies.

One more bit of news for this column – CHIP is creating a library of books, tapes, and DVDs on all things related to hearing loss. It began in earnest when Margaret Kamester brought in the book *Deaf Sentence* (see review in the last Communicaider, saying “You must read this book!”) We have three copies of *Deaf Sentence*, some murder mysteries in which the sleuth is hearing impaired, and books on speechreading, etc.

There are two new additions worth noting: *How Hearing Loss Impacts Relationships: Motivating Your Loved One*. It is written for the family member or friend who is trying to deal with a loved one in denial about their hearing loss. It is very direct and full of common sense. A second book about tinnitus was deemed very informative by one of our members with tinnitus.

In the coming years, CHIP will be building a library of both fiction and non-fiction materials about hearing loss. Do you have any suggestions of items you would like CHIP to acquire? You can borrow books from the CHIP office for a 3-week period. It’s free to members.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at this Fall’s programs. Meeting members is my favourite part of this job. If you are not able to join us in person, please be in touch . . . about your favourite sound, a helpful suggestion for other members, or ideas about what you would like to see added to CHIP’s new library. CHIP is its members. The more you participate, the better CHIP becomes.

## The Noisy Corner

It’s been said before, but it bears repeating: Ears never sleep. They are working in the womb, even before we are born! They are the most carefully protected parts of our body – more so than eyes, heart, even a fetus in the womb. Nature provides a “crash helmet” - your skull, “styrofoam packing” - the mastoid bones, a “fluid cushioning” similar to the amniotic fluid in the womb **and** the hardest bone in the entire body to which these very special organs are anchored. You would think that would be enough – but nooooooo! As we make

our world ever noisier, our hearing is increasingly threatened. The following citation from the National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders is food for thought:

Sound is measured in units called decibels. Decibel levels begin at zero, which is near total silence and the weakest sound our ears can hear. By comparison, a whisper is 30 decibels and a normal conversation is 60 decibels. An increase of 10 means that a sound is 10 times more intense, or powerful. To your ears, it sounds twice as loud. The sound of an ambulance siren at 120 decibels is about 1 trillion times more intense than the weakest sound our ears can hear. Sounds that reach 120 decibels are painful to our ears at close distances.

This and a vast amount more on noise induced hearing loss can be found in their website:

[www.noisyplanet.nodcd.nih.gov](http://www.noisyplanet.nodcd.nih.gov) or you can just google *noisy planet*

If your hearing is fine now, you should be learning to protect it. Knowledge is power. If you already have a hearing loss, you should be passing this info on to family and friends, especially the youngsters – got grandchildren?

Think BAT:

- Block the noise
- Avoid the noise (Just walk away.)
- Turn down the sound

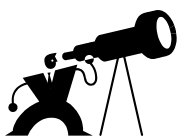
A simple acronym, learned and applied, can keep the magic of sound in your life forever.

Talk back! When I was teaching, I used to ask the children what sound they would miss the most if they lost their hearing. My favourite answer came from a 9-year-old boy: “The sound of my mother saying she loves me.” I dare you – beat that! Even if that is too tall an order, write or e-mail me (joodi) and tell us about your favourite sound – whether or not you can still hear it. Responses will appear in this column in the Spring Communicaider (with your name or anonymously, whichever you wish).

You can contact me at: [info@hearhear.org](mailto:info@hearhear.org) and put **joodi** in the subject line.

# CHIP Programs • Fall 2009

Here's the line-up of CHIP's special programs and ongoing classes



## Coping in a Sighted World: Awareness of other losses

Tuesday, September 22, from 1:15 to 3:15 pm

Loss is often part of aging – and hearing loss is only one type of loss. With special simulator glasses, David Melanson will help us experience the various types of vision loss. Is your vision going? Do you know someone with vision loss? Could you learn something from understanding another type of loss? Join us for an exploration. It's Free!



Don't Miss

## The Latest Information on Hearing Loss

Tuesday, October 6, from 1:15 to 3:15 pm

Learn about the latest developments for the hearing impaired from two major conferences: The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) conference in St. John's, Newfoundland; and the Hearing Loss Association of America's (HLAA) conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Get the latest info and handouts. It's Free!



## HEAR Program (Hearing Education for Aural Rehabilitation)

Mondays from 10:15 am to 12:15 pm, beginning on September 14 (see calendar)

Coping with hearing loss does not come naturally, but fortunately the skills you need are easily learned. This program is a series of six two-hour sessions, one per week, and it is FREE. A family member or friend can participate along with you, learning together to communicate better.



## Captioned Films

Drop by the CHIP office for a list of films with descriptions and reviews.



## Speechreading (Lipreading) with Eva Basch

Classes are free for CHIP members and \$5 per class for non-members

**Beginner and Intermediate classes:** Thursdays from 1:15 to 3:15 pm (see calendar for dates)

If you want to acquire some speechreading skills, or feel that your skills are rusty, these classes are an enjoyable way to learn.

**Advanced classes:** Thursdays from 10:15 to 12:15 (see calendar for dates)

If you have taken Beginner and Intermediate classes, this is your opportunity to become a pro!

### Please Register

We want to make sure we have all the necessary equipment and seating to make each event a success. Use the enclosed program registration form, call us at the CHIP office at (514) 482-0500 Local 215, or email us at [info@hearhear.org](mailto:info@hearhear.org).

Please Register! By mail, fax, phone, email, or in person at the CHIP office.

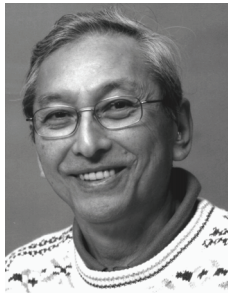
# CHIP Calendar • Fall 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri
<b>O SEPT 7</b> Labour Day	8	9	10 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Beginners 1:15 to 3:15 pm	11
14 HEAR 1 10:15 to 12:15	15	16	17 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Beginners 1:15 to 3:15 pm	18
21 HEAR 2 10:15 to 12:15	22 Coping in a Sighted World 1:15 to 3:15 pm	23	24 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Beginners 1:15 to 3:15 pm	25
28 Yom Kippur	29	30	<b>Y OCT 1</b> Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15	2
5 HEAR 3 10:15 to 12:15	6 Conference Reports 1:15 to 3:15 pm	7	8 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Beginners 1:15 to 3:15 pm	9
12 Thanksgiving	13	14	15 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Intermediate 1:15 to 3:15 pm	16
19 HEAR 4 10:15 to 12:15	20	21	22 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Intermediate 1:15 to 3:15 pm	23
26 HEAR 5 10:15 to 12:15	27	28	29 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Intermediate 1:15 to 3:15 pm	30
<b>S NOV 2</b> HEAR 6 10:15 to 12:15	3	4	5 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Intermediate 1:15 to 3:15 pm	6
9	10	11	12 Speechreading Advanced 10:15 to 12:15 Intermediate 1:15 to 3:15 pm	13

Please Register! By mail, fax, phone, email, or in person at the CHIP office.

# Conference Highlights

Ken Tatebe, Director of the Lily Bernstein Technical Resource Centre



## Conference Highlights

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) convention in Nashville consisted of numerous workshops that were divided into segments called “blocks”: Living and Working with Hearing Loss, Relationships & Communications, Cochlear Implants, Hearing Technology, and Advocacy & Access. My main area of interest was Hearing Technology that included Assistive Devices, Standards, Hearing Aids, Cell Phone and related accessories, and Wireless Technology.

### ALDs (Assistive Listening Devices)

A new twist to the Environmental Alerting System is a wrist watch to replace the standard bulky wireless receivers. The watch will detect signals from a doorbell, telephone, smoke detector, and sound monitors; even a carbon monoxide detector. A different icon is displayed for each alerting type coupled with a distinct vibrator pulse for each device. The battery powered watch can be charged overnight.

A combination Bedside Fire Alarm and Clock will warn the hearing impaired when the smoke detector is activated. This device works on a different frequency than the standard alarm and will even warn and wake the occupant if there is a fire in the next apartment or a neighbour’s house. A strong bed vibrator is included with the unit.

### Standards

The logo for the TIA-1083 standard reported in the fall 2008 issue of “The Communicaider” is still not available in Canada. I was informed it was due to the bilingual requirements of this country. The logo is affixed to the packaging of cordless phones that



reduce or eliminate interference from the hearing aid telecoil.

### Hearing Aids

Most manufacturers this year are concentrating on the “open ear/open fit” concept. Instead of the hearing aid body containing all components including the speaker circuits, it is separated into two units: BTE (Behind The Ear) and speaker unit. The two are connected by a thin solid wire. The main body is still a BTE but much smaller in size and is hardly noticeable behind the ear. The speaker part is inserted deep in the ear canal and cannot be seen from the outside. This concept allows more room in the main body for sophisticated features on directional microphones, feedback management, automatic functions, background noise, etc. It eliminates the bulky custom earmold that sits in the outer ear canal together with the thick hollow tubing.

The circuitry for Bluetooth, the short range wireless technology, is still too large to fit in any hearing aid. To bypass this problem, two manufacturers have introduced a Bluetooth adaptor that sends the audio from a TV or landline/cell phone directly to the hearing aid in a wireless, hands free manner. A special lightweight receiver, much like a necklace, must be used.

### Cell Phones & Accessories

Today, almost all cell phones are Bluetooth compatible for hands free operation. However, the standard receiver that inserts in the ear is not practical, if not impossible, for a person wearing hearing aids. Therefore, there are small Bluetooth receivers that are used in conjunction with the telecoil of the hearing aid. The device consists of a thin silhouette (ear hook) that is placed behind the ear right next to the BTE hearing aid, with the telecoil activated. The sound quality is very good and the volume can be adjusted for the most comfortable level. The disadvantage is the possible electrical interference in the form of humming or buzzing noise when using a telecoil.

More and more cell phone manufacturers are producing phones that meet the standard for interference using the “M” (microphone), or “T” (telecoil) position of the hearing aid. The phones are rated with a number next to the “M” or “T”. A higher

number indicates less interference. Thus, a phone rated M4/T4 will have less interference than a M3/T3 phone.

## Wireless Technology

Digital speech-based radio broadcasting will soon have real time closed captioning. It will allow the hearing impaired to receive emergency alerts, evacuation notices, and disaster relief information in real time as well as their favourite programs. The audio and the text will be synchronized.

## Conference Report

On Tuesday, 6 October 2009, CHIP will present the annual Conference Report in the Programs Room. I will have a more detailed report of the above with a PowerPoint presentation with a display and demonstration of some devices. So please mark your calendar for that date.

# CHHA Conference

## Lou Brock

This summer, I attended the conference of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) in St. John's Newfoundland, from May 21 - 24, 2009.

The conference featured many speakers, a trade show, and numerous workshops. My full conference report is available at the CHIP office, but here I would like to share some highlights from the workshops I attended, most notably: *Hearing Loss Stigma and Approaches to Overcome It* presented by Ken Southall and Mary Beth Jennings, and *The Masks Of Hearing Loss (Bluffing 101)* presented by Gael Hannan and Anne Griffin.

One of the things I appreciated was this great description of "listening":

Listening with good hearing is like seeing what is being said through a spotlessly clean glass window.

Listening with hearing loss is like looking at what is being said through a very smudged window. Some areas may be clear, but others may be so dirty that you can't see through them.

Most people do not understand how stressful it is to be hard of hearing (being self conscious about your hearing loss, continually reminding people to face you when talking to you, not being able to join in at social gatherings with many conversations going on at one time). Many people with hearing loss consider it a stigma and try to hide it or bluff their way through conversations.

To make the most of stressful situations:

- Have as much knowledge as possible about your hearing loss, and apply it in different situations.
- Be confident and assertive. Talk about your hearing loss and explain your needs.
- Use your hearing aids and assistive devices.

## Bluffing – how to break the habit

There are many reasons why we bluff: We don't want to interrupt ; we are tired of asking people to repeat; it is exhausting to keep up; we pretend our hearing loss is temporary; we pretend that we aren't missing anything . But we often miss important information and make embarrassing mistakes. When we bluff, we are not communicating.

Bluffing is a habit. We can kick the habit by being aware of our bluff patterns, admitting our hearing loss, and expressing our needs. Here are some tips:

- Don't deny you didn't understand. Find the courage to say, "I am not following our conversation."
- Repeat what you heard or think you heard to encourage people to repeat what they said.
- Create the best possible environment. Tell people you have a hearing loss. Ask them to speak up and speak slowly.

There are many strategies we can use to help ourselves. The best first step is to join some type of aural rehabilitation group (such as the HEAR program at CHIP!).

### Take the "No Bluff Pledge"

In my life I will not bluff. I will not pretend to understand when I do not. Instead I will do all that it takes to engage, interact and communicate.



(Continued from page 1)

**#3. Time:** Speech is typically spoken quickly. On average, conversational speech occurs at a rate of 2-5 syllables per second (Pickett, 1980).

With this background in place, we'll relate speech to hearing and seeing by way of two examples.

### **Example 1: Mid to high pitch speech sounds**

Mid to high pitch consonant sounds (e.g., the 's' sound of snake) are difficult to hear if there is too much background noise, you're talking in a reverberant room (a room with a lot of echoes) or if you have a hearing loss. Even though these sounds may be difficult to hear, the place where these sounds are produced can usually be seen by the configuration of the lips, teeth and tongue when lip reading or speech reading. In other words, if these sounds can't be *heard* it's possible that they can be *seen*.

### **Example 2: Low pitch speech sounds (voicing and intonation)**

Low pitch speech sounds used in nasal sounds (e.g., the 'ng' sound in the word *sing*), the voicing of speech (whether the sound is produced with or without vibration when you touch your voicebox) as well as the intonation of speech can be heard but are often difficult to lip read or speech read. This is the reverse of example 1. These sounds can typically be *heard* easily but they are difficult to *see*.

With hearing loss we often rely on our ability to see to help compensate for what we cannot hear. However, what we are discovering at the MAB Mackay is that for many of our clients that possibility does not exist. Increasingly, we are seeing more and more people who have both hearing loss and vision loss. As many as 21% of adults older than 70 years have a visual impairment in addition to a hearing impairment (Saunders & Echt, 2007). When someone has a hearing loss and a vision loss, it's called a dual sensory impairment. At the MAB Mackay, we have recently created a "Dual Program" to address the special needs of this ever-increasing population. People who experience a dual sensory impairment cannot use vision to compensate for their hearing loss, nor are they able to use hearing to compensate for their vision loss. A dual sensory impairment can have severe consequences for communication and other activities of daily living. Speaking louder to a person with a dual sensory impairment doesn't help

them at all – instead speak clearly. Clear speech is slightly louder and slower paced. The slower pacing provides the addition of pauses to help separate words for easier identification.

To learn if you are eligible for the support and services that our Dual Program provides at the MAB Mackay, contact our admissions department at 514-482-0500, extension 284. Minimally, you will need to provide results from a recent hearing test and eye report. If you know someone who may have a visual impairment and is too embarrassed to register, suggest that they check out the Boutique at the MAB site.

Here are some tips about eye care – courtesy of Terri Kugelmass, a specialist in vision rehabilitation:

- Regular checkups with your eye care specialist are a must on a yearly basis.
- Sunglasses can help protect your eyesight – look for a pair with 100% UV protection
- Make sure you use a good reading lamp when reading, especially on cloudy days. You'll be amazed at how much better you see.
- If you have a magnifier that helps you read small print, bring it along when you shop – you can use it to read the prices and check expiry dates.
- If you find yourself always cleaning glasses because your vision is blurry, make an appointment with your doctor.
- If you have been prescribed drops for your eyes due to glaucoma, listen to your doctor and take them as prescribed.
- Macular degeneration is a common eye condition and rarely leads to blindness.
- If you experience a sudden loss of vision or see flashing lights, call your doctor or go to the emergency department immediately.

### **References:**

Pickett, J. (1980). *The Sounds of Speech Communication*. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Saunders, G. H., & Echt, K. V. (2007). An overview of dual sensory impairment in older adults: Perspectives for rehabilitation. *Trends in Amplification*, 11, 243-258.

# How One Church Made a Difference

Gerard Gouw

## Coordinator, Deaf Ministry Program

In the 1970s and early 1980s Ian Smith worked as a counsellor at the Mackay Centre Camp and as a houseparent in the Mackay Centre School's residence. Because many of his clients were deaf, he obtained training in American Sign Language (ASL) at Gallaudet College, the first college for the deaf in the world, in Washington, DC.

In 1975, Ian entered McGill University to prepare for an ordained ministry in the United Church of Canada. In 1987, he became the minister at Ste-Geneviève United Church, affectionately called Ste-Genny's. At the time, he didn't know that his sign language training would come in handy later.

In the mid-1990's, several families with deaf children started to worship at Ste-Genny's. Whenever a deaf child was present, Reverend Smith signed the children's story. A number of members of the congregation, including several Sunday School teachers, took some basic sign language training offered by Reverend Smith.

In the fall of 2007, when our deaf children were in their mid-teens, Ste-Genny's started to investigate the possibility of offering sign language translation of our services – and since Christmas 2007 we have been providing sign language translation of our services about twice a month.

After a number of our congregants mentioned that they had difficulty hearing what was being said during our worship services, and adjustments to our sound system did not alleviate this problem, we investigated other hearing assistance systems. In January 2008 we installed an FM Assistive Listening System (Telex SoundMate SM-2) in our sanctuary. The sound is transmitted from our sound system to personal receivers that have their own volume control and lightweight headphones. To quote one user: "This was the first time in a long time that I was able to hear everything."

To find out more about our activities, or to contact us, please visit our website at <http://stegennys.org>.

# Late-deafened support group

Marc Gervais and Dale Bonnycastle, both professionals in the field of deafness, offer a support group for late-deafened and hard-of-hearing people. There is no cost and real-time captioning is provided to assist in communication.

**When:** Wednesdays from 10:00 to 11:50 am from October 21 to December 9, 2009.

**Where:** MAB-Mackay Rehabilitation Center, Mackay site, 3500 Decarie

**For whom:** Participants must have a significant hearing loss. Hearing spouses and family members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

**Learn more about** coping and communication strategies, resources and technology available.

## Contact:

### Audiologist Dale Bonnycastle

Tel: (514) 482-0500 ext. 253

Email: [dbonnycastle.mackay@ssss.gouv.ca](mailto:dbonnycastle.mackay@ssss.gouv.ca)

### Counselor Marc Gervais

Tel: (514) 482-0487, ext 318 (TTY only)

Email: [mgervais.mackay@ssss.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:mgervais.mackay@ssss.gouv.qc.ca)



Centre de réadaptation **MAB-MACKAY** Rehabilitation Centre

## Adult Services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

Daily from 8:30 am to 4 pm

Evening hours on Thursdays, 4:30 to 8:00 pm

Call for an appointment (514) 482-0500

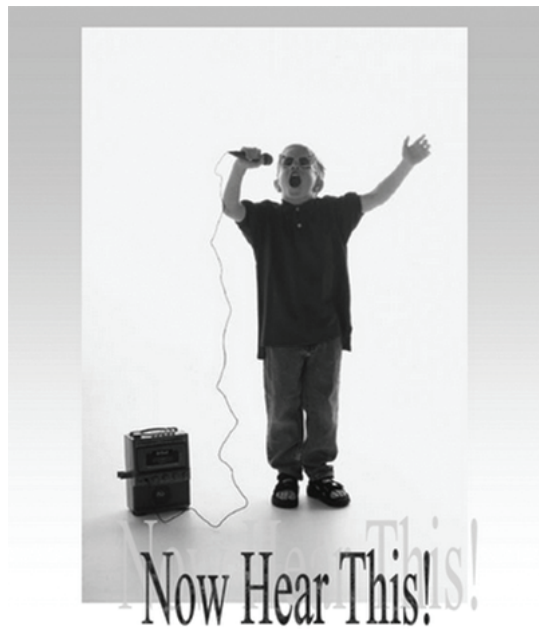
Audiology (local 229)

Assistive Devices (local 237)

Counselling (local 318, TTY)

Social Service (local 251)

Programme Coordinator (local 419)



Do not waste another minute worrying about your hearing loss!

### Come to CHIP, and:

- Meet other people with hearing loss who understand the challenges you are facing
- Learn how to cope with hearing loss – sign up for the HEAR program
- Learn how to read lips – at CHIP's speech reading classes
- Try out the latest technology that can help you hear better – at the CHIP Resource Centre

**CHIP membership is only \$10 a year.  
Donations to CHIP are tax deductible  
and receipts will be issued.**

## CHIP

3500 Boulevard Decarie  
Montreal, Quebec H4A 3J5

Phone: (514) 482-0500, ext 215  
Fax: (514) 482-4536 [attention: CHIP]

Email: [info@hearhear.org](mailto:info@hearhear.org)  
Website: [www.hearhear.org](http://www.hearhear.org)

## Publications Mail Permit 40593073

The Communicaider is published twice yearly, in the spring and fall. Your contributions and suggestions are welcome and may be submitted in writing, by mail, email, or fax. The opinions expressed in articles appearing in The Communicaider are those of the authors.

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