

THE WISCONSIN Communicator

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"What works for your child is what makes the choice right"



WI FAMILIES FOR HANDS & VOICES SPONSORED THE SILENT AUCTION AT THE 2016 STATEWIDE FAMILY & PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE

Did you see the Packer Bird Bath? Or the American Girl Doll with Hearing Aids at the Silent Auction at the Statewide Family & Professional Conference? Do you know the Silent Auction helps families attend the annual Family Conference?

WI H&V sponsors a Silent Auction to raise funds for the Family Scholarship Fund. Families can apply for scholarships that cover conference registration or hotel costs. This helps all families have the opportunity to attend this important event.

BOARD MEMBERS

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The recent Statewide Family & Professional Conference was at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel in Appleton, WI on November 11-12, 2016. This year introduced format changes due to the overlapping Conferences and shorter time duration. Instead of two separate auctions, we had one big, quicker auction. Wonderful items were on display for all ages and interests. (At least one family got Christmas shopping done early!)

We raised \$2092 at the auction! Plus, we earned \$250 more in direct cash donations to the Family Scholarship Fund!

Thank you very much to everyone who participated in, and donated to, our very successful Silent Auction Fundraiser 2016! We appreciate every one of your contributions.

Wisconsin Families for Hands & Voices is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families and their children who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind and/or deaf with additional disabilities, and the professionals who serve them. If you know people or businesses interested in donating items or making a cash donation to the 2017 Silent Auction for the Family Scholarship Fund, please contact Karen Manning (krmanning1@gmail.com) for a donation request letter and more information.

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My child has been given a hearing aid, but keeps taking it off. How can I persuade them to wear it?

- A.T. Wausau, WI

This is very common, especially in babies and very young children. When a child first starts wearing hearing aids or cochlear implants processors, it's important they wear them regularly. This allows them to get used to them, and you and the audiologist to see how beneficial they are.

Here are some tips to help your child to keep the hearing aids or cochlear implants processors on:

MAKE SURE THE HEARING AIDS/CI PROCESSORS ARE COMFORTABLE AND SECURE

- Hold the ear mold's in your hand for a couple of minutes before trying to put them in. This makes them warmer, softer, easier to put in and more comfortable.
- If you notice your child removing their hearing aids after loud noises or because their ears hurt, or if your baby blinks often when they are listening to sounds around them, check the settings on the aids and talk to your child's audiologist or Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- Your baby's aids may whistle when you feed them or when they are lying down. This is called feedback, and it happens because the microphone on the aids is close to something solid. Arranging pillows behind your baby, holding them in a different position or temporarily turning their aids down while they are feeding can help.
- If you have a young or very active child, ask the hospital for hearing aid retainers. They secure the hearing aid to the ear and stop them flapping about

SLOWLY BUILD UP THE LENGTH OF TIME YOUR CHILD WEARS THEIR HEARING AIDS/CI PROCESSORS

- If necessary, start with getting your child to wear their hearing aids for a couple of minutes several times a day, building up the time gradually. If your child keeps taking them out, try again later when you are both more relaxed. Remember to try to make it a positive experience.
- You could also encourage your child to wear one aid at first and slowly extending the time they wear it. When they wear it all day introduce the other aid.
- Make wearing hearing aids/CI processors part of a routine
- Try making the hearing aids part of your child's dressing and undressing routine. Put the hearing aids in when they get up and take them out at night.

MAKE THE HEARING AIDS/CI PROCESSORS APPEALING TO YOUR CHILD

- Hearing aids are available in different colors and you can decorate them. Take care to ensure that any parts in the casing that need to remain uncovered, such as additional microphone ports or direct audio input contacts, are not covered.
- The next time your child has impressions taken for new molds ask what colors are available. Ear molds come in solid colors, marble effects, transparent with glitter and with logos or pictures inside, such as a favorite football team or cartoon character.
- Do not glue anything directly onto the casing, or use paints or nail polish.
- It is best to check with your audiologist about decorating your child's technology before you start.

USE DISTRACTION TECHNIQUES WHEN PUTTING THE HEARING AIDS IN/CI PROCESSORS ON

Try distracting your child with their favorite toy when you're putting the aids in, or put them in while your child's concentrating on something, such as the TV

LET YOUR CHILD SEE OTHER HEARING AID/COCHLEAR IMPLANT USERS

- Try to meet other families with a deaf child so that your child sees they're not the only one. It may also be useful to meet adults with hearing aids so that your child can see that people of all ages wear them.
- Books like Freddie and the Fairy and Dachy's Deaf are helpful.

OFFER REWARDS FOR WEARING HEARING AIDS/CI PROCESSORS

You could use a sticker chart to record every time your child wears their hearing aids or CIs, and give them a special treat if they wear them for a week.

WESP-DHH OUTREACH STAFF UPDATES

LAURA PLUMMER, MA, CRC, ATP is the Technology Services Coordinator for the WESP-DHH Outreach. WESP-DHH Outreach, part of Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction, works with students who are deaf or hard of hearing or deaf blind, their families and their school districts. She provides assistive technology information, resources and services for students, educators and families as part of the broader Outreach Consultation Team.

Prior to her role with WESP-DHH Outreach Ms. Plummer worked for the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute at UW-Stout as an assistive technologist and served as the Wistech Director, the federally funded AT Act program for Wisconsin. Her professional experiences have allowed her to work with all age groups and in various settings such as schools, post-secondary institutions and employment sites. Ms. Plummer conducts trainings on assistive technology, ethics, educational access and social media at the local, statewide and national level.

Ms. Plummer has both Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Deafness Rehabilitation Counseling from Northern Illinois University as well as additional education in the area of deaf blindness. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and holds the Assistive Technology Professional Certification. She enjoys seeing how both assistive technology and everyday tools can be used in school, work and life. On a personal level, Ms. Plummer takes an active role in learning/using the latest in electronic gadgetry.



DEB ANKEN-DYER serves as the Literacy Consultant on the WESP-DHH Outreach Team. In this role, she supports literacy development in students who are deaf and hard of hearing in mainstream settings around the State. She works to provide information and strategies that can be implemented by parents and in various classroom settings from Pre-K to Grade 12. She also participates in various DPI Initiatives related to professional development and literacy.

Prior to her role with WESP-DHH Outreach, Ms. Anken-Dyer worked as a classroom and itinerant teacher with children who are deaf/hard of hearing, some with multiple disabilities, for nearly 20 years. She served children and their families in four schools districts in Massachusetts, Illinois and Wisconsin. Prior to accepting her position on the Outreach Team, Ms. Anken-Dyer served on the State Superintendent of Education's Advisory Council on Deaf Education and formerly worked for the Office of Deaf/Hard of Hearing for the Department of Health.

Ms. Anken-Dyer currently holds Wisconsin and New York licenses in Deaf Education, a Wisconsin license in Educational Interpreting and a Wisconsin law license. She received her Bachelor's degree in Biology at Bucknell University; her Master of Arts degree in Education of Children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing at Gallaudet University; as well as a Master of Science degree in Educational Psychology and Juris Doctor degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. On a personal level, Ms. Anken-Dyer has also volunteered as a reading, writing and English tutor in school districts in Madison, WI, Oxford, England and Sesto Fiorentino, Italy, and also enjoys participating in her monthly book club.



NEW BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Becky DeGrave

I have been a teacher since 1997 when I graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee with an undergraduate degree in community education and a post-baccalaureate certificate in the education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. During the past 19 years I have mainly worked as an itinerant teacher with CESA 2 and Walworth County. Working in multiple school districts has provided me with opportunities to work with students with different needs and modes of communication. As of this school year, I have the privilege of working for Lakeland School in Walworth County. Lakeland School is a self-contained day school for children with multiple disabilities. I have also received a post-graduate certificate from Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois in the area of early intervention for children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Professionally, I enjoy being challenged and learning new skills and strategies to use with my students.

I have been married to Dewey for the last 21 years and have two children, Dewey, who is 13 years old and, Emma, who is 12 years old. We have lived most of our married life in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. During the summers I enjoy traveling with my family, crocheting and reading, especially related to education and communication.

I truly believe in providing access to communication for those who are deaf and hard of hearing in a way that fits the child and the family. I believe families deserve to be educated about their child's hearing loss and provided with the resources to achieve their educational goals. I look forward to working with the Hands and Voices Board members and the families that they serve.

FCC ADOPTED PROGRAM DEAFBLIND EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

The Federal Communications Commission adopted a program that provides communications equipment to low-income individuals who are deaf-blind. Initially the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP), also known as "iCanConnect," was a FCC pilot program started in 2012. Since then, the program has provided up to \$10 million annually to support programs that distribute communications equipment, helping people become more independent.

Through iCanConnect, consumers who are deaf-blind and who meet income guidelines can receive free equipment designed to make telecommunications, Internet access, and advanced communications services accessible. Installation, training, and other technical support are also available. Individuals with combined hearing and vision loss now have a better means to socially interact, acquire information, and the skills and training to become employed.

Full article can be found at www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-makes-national-deaf-blind-equipment-program-permanent

DEAF ~~101~~ 2-5-8

Advantages to Being Deaf

Some of the positive aspects of deafness: *(not an exhaustive listing...)*

- You can communicate easily with people in the **car** next to you or behind you.
- You can effortlessly communicate with people through **windows**.
- The neighbor's dog barking, the all-night party next door, and your spouse's snoring won't interrupt your **sleep**.
- You can go communicate easily while **scuba** diving or snorkeling.
- You can communicate without difficulty in **loud** environments such as bars, concerts, athletic events, etc.
- You can watch **television** or read a book without worrying about others being noisy.
- You don't have to be **quiet** when getting up early in the mornings.
- You can talk about **private** topics when in the middle of a crowd. (most of the time).
- You have access to wonderful video phone **equipment**.
- You get the best **seat** in the house at shows, plays, concerts, etc.
- It's easier to **focus** on your job when others are distracted by sound/noise.
- **Salesman** and other solicitors will often give up quickly once they realize they can't communicate with you.
- Don't have to make **polite** conversation in the line at the grocery store or on an airplane flight.
- If you want to end an **argument**, all you have to do is close your eyes.
- You are part of a larger community that considers you **family**.



Deaf Culture our Way: Anecdotes from the Deaf Community. Roy Holcomb, Samuel Holcomb and Thomas Holcomb.
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Insider tip: "258" means "very interesting."

If a Deaf person ever jokingly signs to you the numbers "2, 5, 8" what they mean is "very interesting." The two comes from the initialized English sign for VERY. (The English sign VERY uses a "V" as the handshape and uses a position, palm orientation, and movement similar to the sign "BIG." Which is to say, the Signed English sign "VERY" is an initialized version of the ASL sign "BIG.") ASL doesn't use the sign "VERY," rather ASL uses exaggerated movement, body language, and facial expression to indicate the idea of "very."

WISCONSIN FAMILIES FOR HANDS & VOICES

Hands & Voices is looking for families/professionals/consumers from all over the state to serve on our board. Your application will be considered and voted upon by acting Board members. This is typically a two-year term. We are asking for a commitment from those wishing to serve as Board members to minimally include:

1. An understanding of and adherence to our mission statement. It states as follows:
"Wisconsin Families for Hands & Voices is dedicated to supporting families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology. We are parent-driven, non-profit organization providing families with the resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access and educational outcomes for their children. Our outreach activities, parent/professional collaboration, and advocacy efforts are focused on enabling Deaf and Hard of Hearing children to reach their highest potential."
2. Attendance at regularly meetings (three quarterly board meetings per year), which may be held at different locations in the state. Must notify president if unable to attend. A participation of at least 2 board meetings a year is required.
3. Participation on subcommittees, at least one per year as needed.

If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Kristy at kristy200224@yahoo.com to get an application. Thank you from your Hands & Voices Board.

Renew Your
Membership or
become a
member today!

2017 Hands & Voices WI Membership

Please circle one of the following

Parent of a deaf/HH child	\$25.00
Deaf /HH Adult	\$25.00
Student	\$25.00
Professional	\$40.00
Organization/agency	\$75.00
Additional Donation	\$_____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Method of Payment

Check ____ Scholarship ____

**Become a Member/Renew
Online!**

Credit Card Payment NOW
Accepted!

Please Visit:
<http://www.handsandvoiceswi.org/>

Or clip and mail to:

WI Families for Hands & Voices
PO Box 9644
Green Bay, WI 54308

HELP OTHERS BY DONATING USED HEARING AIDS!

WI Families for Hands & Voices is now accepting hearing aids donations as part of a partnership with Starkey. If you have hearing aids that are not being used and would like to make a charitable donation to help WI Families for Hands & Voices....

Recycle now! Contact Hands & Voices at handsandvoiceswi@yahoo.com for a self-addressed, stamped envelope



"I CAN DO
THINGS YOU
CANNOT,
YOU CAN DO
THINGS I
CANNOT;
TOGETHER
WE CAN DO
GREAT THINGS."
-MOTHER TERESA