

## Hearing Program Picnic

It's almost time for the Nationwide Children's Hospital Hearing Program Picnic. If you came last year, you know we had a great time with more than 80 attendees, good food, face painting, toys for the kids, and outdoor activities. Come join "Chef" Kang and your Hearing Team as we bring our families together with yours. \*see enclosed invitation for details

## Keep Your Ear Gear Nice and Dry

Summer weather brings fun, however, it also brings humidity and sweat. Moisture can damage your child's hearing aid or cochlear implant equipment. Please check that your child's Dry & Store equipment is in working order. Your audiologist can dispense replacement Dry-Briks, replacement DriAid, or replacement microphone protectors to you. Call your audiologist or the Audiology department if you have further questions at (614) 722-3951.

-Cynthia Warner, Au.D.

## Do You Have the Support You Need?

Dealing with the feelings that go along with having your child be diagnosed with hearing loss can be challenging. You want to put on a happy face for your child, but may not have the feelings to back it up. Many of us tend to forget that support is available in many forms. Here are a few tips and reminders to help you feel supported and on-the-right-track.

- ⌘ Parents' reactions to the diagnosis of sensorineural hearing loss vary. Parents tell me their feelings can range from denial, to sadness, to anger. Almost all parents report feeling overwhelmed. Allow yourself the time to process your feelings with a close friend or family member. Talk to someone who will allow you to talk as much and as often as you want.
- ⌘ Oftentimes parents deal with the emotions of this diagnosis differently, making you feel disconnected from one other. Your spouse can be your best ally. Make an effort to maintain dialogue with your spouse about how you're feeling about your child's hearing loss.
- ⌘ Knowledge is Power! If you are feeling overwhelmed by all of the information you are getting, you're not alone. Set

aside a little bit of time each week to read through some of the materials you've been given or to look at suggested websites. Conferences and seminars are also available to help you understand how to help your child. The more you learn, the more comfortable you will become advocating for your child and understanding what she needs.

- ⌘ Nobody can relate to how you feel like another parent of a child with hearing loss. Many parents tell us that taking the step to talk to or email another parent has been the best self-care choice they have made during the beginning stages of this journey. If you are interested, Nationwide Children's Hospital offers several no-cost ways to connect with other parents:
  - Parent Mentor Program- Our Hearing Program now connects parents of newly diagnosed patients with parents who are experienced in dealing with the unique set of issues a hearing loss diagnosis brings.
  - Hearing Program Picnic- We gather again July 17 (see invitation for details). This is a casual, easy way to meet other families and get kids with hearing loss together.
  - Parents Hearing Parents Support Group- Parents of kids with any degree of hearing loss are welcome to attend our parent group. We meet the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Panera Bread off of Avery Road in Dublin from 10a.m. to noon. We use the community room, and kids are welcome to attend.
  - Hearing Team Education Series- An expert presents information about a hearing-related topic to help parents feel empowered by learning. There are six presentations this year. Parents spend time after the session to meet one another and talk.



- ⚡ The grief that can go along with having a child with a hearing loss can come and go throughout your child's life. Parents say that once they are finally feeling adjusted and that things are going fine, Boom! something changes. The grief will come and go with new hearing-related obstacles your child might face at different stages of development. Simply acknowledging that fact can help you and your child cope with these changes as they come your way.
- ⚡ For additional support, you are welcome to contact your Hearing Team. Your doctor, audiologist, speech-language pathologist, nurses and social worker welcome your calls. To register for any of our support options, give me a call at (614) 722-2441. Laura Brown, M.S.W., L.I.S.W.-S., Hearing Program Coordinator and Clinical Social Worker

## Is Your Cochlear Implant Recipient Adequately Protected from Meningitis?

It is critical that children with cochlear implants are up-to-date on their Prevnar and Pneumovax vaccinations. A person with a cochlear implant is at higher risk for meningitis. The shots are typically given by your child's pediatrician's team at 2-months-old, 4-months-old, and 6-months-old. There is an important booster shot at 2-years-old. Call our Hearing Team nurse, Lura Keating, at (614) 722-6548 for more information.

*-D. Richard Kang, M.D., Medical Director, Hearing & Cochlear Implant Programs*

## Spring is a Great Time for Listening and Language

Spring is here, and with it comes lots of great opportunities for language! Whether your child is learning first words or talking in full sentences, acquiring language is an ongoing adventure. Here are a few tips to help make the most out of every language experience!

- ⚡ Keep your hearing-impaired child "within earshot"- optimal listening takes place within a distance of two yards
- ⚡ Speak at a normal volume during everyday activities- talking above or below normal conversational level distorts the signal from natural speech patterns
- ⚡ Always use sound as the first attempt to gain your child's attention, rather than tapping or waving. This will assist in improving sound detection skills
- ⚡ Pre-Teach vocabulary- if you are taking a trip to the zoo next week, put together a list of zoo-related words your child isn't familiar with. Begin talking about those words, looking at pictures of the words, etc. ahead of time to help make the experience more meaningful
- ⚡ While we want to provide a language-rich environment, don't forget to balance talking with listening time to reduce "auditory clutter"

- ⚡ Escape the habit of always asking yes/no questions ("Do you want some juice?"). Instead, offer choices ("Would you like juice or water?") or ask open-ended questions ("What would you like to drink?")
- ⚡ Set up situations that will compel your child to talk- try making silly mistakes or breaking routines ("forget" to give your child a spoon when giving him a bowl of ice cream, "forget" to take off her socks before putting her in the bathtub)
- ⚡ When communication breakdowns occur, pause and repeat: this allows your child time to process and respond
- ⚡ Model language that meets and exceeds your child's language level
- ⚡ Take pictures of fun activities (planting flowers, making lemonade), then put the pictures together to make an experience book that you can read together, emphasizing the sequence of events. Your child will love being the star of the story!  
*-Laura Stanley, M.S., CCC-SLP*
- ⚡ **Deaf Initiatives Workshop for Teens: Making a Difference with Your Future** September 24-26, 2010. Since 1998 over 180 families have attended the workshop which receives funding from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission and other private donations. The workshop is informative and designed to help parents and guide students in their journey from high school to work or post-secondary education. This transition workshop is provided for Ohio students who are deaf or hard of hearing who are entering 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grades and their parents.

During the 3-day weekend event, students learn to set career goals based on interests and abilities. Professionals, career counselors, and young adults provide guidance to workshop participants. The event will include optional guided tours of The Ohio State University, Columbus State Community College, and a local trade school. Participants will be provided access to local college admissions and financial aid personnel, views of classrooms, and access to students.

**Hotel, workshop, meals are all FREE to you. A \$50 deposit is required at time of registration, but will be returned to you upon arrival at the workshop.** To register: contact Deaf Initiatives by phone (614) 238-3323 or email [TheDEAFund@aol.com](mailto:TheDEAFund@aol.com). The deadline to register has been extended to July 1.

## FM Systems

Hearing aids and cochlear implants help children hear in most situations. However, it may be hard for children to understand what is being said in the classroom because of background noise. An FM (frequency-modulated) system will keep the teacher's voice at an audible level above the background noise. For an FM system to work, the teacher wears a microphone

that sends his/her voice directly to the student's hearing aids/cochlear implants or to speakers in the classroom. To request an FM system for your child to use at school, talk to the school's Educational Audiologist, Special Education Coordinator, or Principal.

—Kim Harbager, Au.D.

## Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Update

The Ohio Chapter of the AG Bell Association held simultaneous social bowling events on April 24th in both the Cleveland and Columbus areas. The Cleveland event had 10 bowlers and the Columbus event had 17 bowlers. In addition, a number of family members also attended the events. It was a nice way for families with children with hearing loss to meet and talk. The Chapter looks forward to holding more social events in the future and hopes to see familiar and new faces. To find information on upcoming events, please find us on the web: [www.agbell.org/oh](http://www.agbell.org/oh); Facebook: The Ohio Chapter of the AG Bell Association; and on Twitter: @OhioAGBell.

*Jennifer Golowin, mom of Drew and Avery, member Ohio Chapter of A.G. Bell*

## Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (B.C.M.H)

- Didn't complete an application for B.C.M.H. while at your appointment? No problem, just give us a call and we'll be happy to mail you the application to complete and send back.
- Don't forget to watch your mail for the arrival of the financial pack from B.C.M.H. (about 12 weeks after your appointment). Complete and return this as soon as possible. The application will not be complete without this information.
- You must be seen by your managing physician once a year to maintain B.C.M.H. coverage.
- If you are denied full coverage by B.C.M.H. due to income, cost sharing is available. Information regarding the cost share option will be at the bottom of your denial letter.
- We strongly recommend ALL families apply for B.C.M.H. They may cover speech therapy and other hearing-related needs. Call Kristy with questions at (614) 722-3857.

—Kristy Beyer, RN

## We are Proud to Introduce You to Some of the Hearing Team's Newer Members

- Nikia Bridges, Au.D., CCC-A- Nikia joined the Audiology department and Hearing Team in April 2009. She received her Master's degree in Audiology from the University of Akron and her Doctorate of Audiology degree from the University of Florida. Nikia has been working in the field of Audiology for nine years and enjoys electrophysiology and diagnostic evaluations. She previously worked at Akron Children's Hospital and Carolinas Healthcare System. Nikia sees patients at our Dublin Close to Home location and the main hospital. Nikia also provides testing for Central Auditory Processing Disorders (CAPD) at our Dublin location. Nikia likes spending time with her two daughters.
- Laura Stanley, M.S., CCC-SLP- Laura joined the NCH Speech Department and Hearing Team in July 2009. She works with children with cochlear implants and hearing aids, providing evaluations and Auditory-Verbal Parent Participation Sessions. Laura graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and is currently working towards her certification in auditory-verbal therapy. She enjoys spending time in the great outdoors with her husband, Will, and dog, Sadie.
- Kim Davis, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP)- Kim is a native Ohioan who joined E.N.T. and the Hearing Team last summer after moving back to Ohio after spending 10 years in San Antonio, Texas. She did her undergraduate nursing degree at Miami University and went on to complete her Masters at the University of Texas Health and Science Center at San Antonio. Kim has been a pediatric nurse for 10 years and a P.N.P. for 4 years. Her background includes the Pediatric I.C.U. and Urgent Care. She and her husband, Matthew, have 3 beautiful kids, all under the age of 3!
- Kristy Beyer, R.N.-Kristy joined E.N.T. and the Hearing Team in October of 2009. In addition to her Hearing Clinic time, Kristy has also become the nurse overseeing Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (B.C.M.H.) applications for N.C.H. Hearing Clinic patients. Kristy has been a nurse for 13 years and enjoys spending time with her family. Kristy lives in Worthington with her husband, Joe, and 2 children: Emma (8) and Cameron (10).
- Brittney Sprouse, Au.D- Brittney joined the Audiology department and Hearing Team almost a year ago. She is a graduate of the Northeast Ohio Au.D. Consortium out of the University of Akron. Prior to joining the team here at N.C.H., Brittney was at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Brittney sees patients at the main hospital and at our Westerville Close To Home loca-

tion. Brittney has a special interest in educational and humanitarian audiology, pediatric amplification, and working with high risk populations. Brittney enjoys spending time with her husband of six years and her one-eyed, long haired, black cat, Panther.

- Melissa Kappes, M.A., CCC-A- Melissa joined the Audiology department and Hearing Team in March. She sees patients at our Dublin and Westerville Close to Home locations in addition to the main hospital. A graduate of the Ohio State University, Melissa has been practicing Audiology for 10 years and has a special interest in pediatric amplification. Melissa is married and is the mom of a preschooler and an infant and loves to scrapbook their antics.
- Lindsey Turover, Au.D., CCC-A- Lindsey just returned to her hometown of Westerville (a Columbus suburb) and joined the Audiology department and Hearing Team in February. Lindsey sees patients at our Dublin Close to Home location and the main hospital. She has been a pediatric audiologist for nearly five years and has a special interest in communication strategies for the hearing impaired. Lindsey and her husband have a three-year-old son and are glad to be close to family again.

## Meet Miss Lily

This is Lily Chase, daughter of Megan and Joshua Chase. Lily was born with profound bilateral sensorineural hearing loss. This diagnosis came as quite a shock as we have no history of hearing loss in our families. A few months later we found out that Lily's hearing loss is due to the Connexin 26 gene mutation.

Lily started wearing hearing aids when she was 2 months old. However, they proved to be of little benefit to her so we started down the path to cochlear implants. Lily received simultaneous bilateral cochlear implant surgery when she was 9 months old. Her surgery was performed by Dr. Kang at NCH.

Lily heard the sound of our voices for the first time 3 weeks after her surgery. She began listening/speech therapy right away and her continued progress amazes us. Our deaf baby is listening and speaking! We are so thankful for the miracle of cochlear implants and the members of the NCH hearing team who made this miracle possible for our daughter.

*-Megan Chase, teacher, mother, Hearing Program Parent Advisory Board member*



Lily Chase

## What Can the Hearing Team Occupational Therapist Do For My Child?

Occupational Therapy (O.T.) is a skilled treatment that helps people gain independence in all areas of their lives. For children, the word "occupation" refers to play, self care, school work and anything else that occupies a child's time. The O.T.'s goal is to help a child develop, improve, or maintain the skills needed for everyday activities.

Kids with hearing loss can sometimes have difficulty with their vestibular system (the body's balance and body orientation system) which can contribute to difficulties with motor development, balance/coordination, and visual-motor abilities. Some possible signs of a vestibular problem in children include developmental delays, visual-spatial problems, clumsiness, poor eye hand/eye foot coordination. As the Hearing Team's O.T., I can help determine if your child would benefit from treatment to address these issues and help them function at their highest level.

If your child is a cochlear implant candidate, I will see him as a part of the cochlear implant candidacy process and will be able to give you a baseline of their skills. If an implant is recommended, you can see me after your child's surgery to compare how they are doing post-implantation and post-activation.

*-Marianne Mayhan, OTR/L*

## New Hearing Aid Batteries Last Longer, Provide More Power, and Reduce Waste

Beginning this summer, the Audiology department at Nationwide Children's Hospital will offer mercury-free hearing aid batteries. The new mercury-free, zinc air hearing aid batteries will provide more power and last longer than the current mercury-based batteries. This new battery is designed for use in digital hearing aids. Other benefits include recycled packaging materials, recycled shipping materials, and the batteries are made in the USA. Mercury-free batteries will be available in sizes 675, 312, 13, and 10.

*-Kirstin Chiasson, Ph.D., CCC-A, Director of Audiology*