LISTENING MATTERS

Hearing Loss

FACTS

- Hearing loss affects 48 million people in the U.S.
- Approximately 3 million children in the U.S. have a hearing loss and 1.3 million of them are under the age of three
- Hearing loss occurs in 5 out of every 1,000 newborns
- With early identification and appropriate services deaf children can develop communication skills at the same rate as their hearing peers
- Babies are never too young to have their hearing tested
- Only 16% of physicians routinely screen for hearing loss
- 15% of children between the ages of 6-19 have a measurable hearing loss in at least one ear
- A mild hearing loss can cause a child to miss as much as 50% of classroom discussion

http://chchearing.org/facts-about-hearing-loss/
http://www.agbell.org/Academy.aspx?id=5555

Hearing loss types:

Conductive

Sound waves are not able to pass through the outer and/or middle ear to the inner ear for processing.

Sensorineural

Caused by damage to the tiny hairs within the cochlea in the inner ear; sound is unable to be converted into electrical signals for the auditory nerve.

Mixed

A combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss.

Over 90% of deaf and hard of hearing children are born to hearing parents

Hearing loss can occur at birth or can develop at any age. There have been many advances in all aspects of hearing health care so that from the youngest infant to the eldest senior citizen, there are new and exciting options available to help. If you suspect that you or a family member has a hearing loss, the best place to start is with a hearing evaluation by a licensed audiologist.

Listening and Spoken Language (LSL)

Main principles promote:

- Early detection and diagnosis of hearing loss
- Use of hearing technology to help children access sounds and spoken language
- Early intervention services guide and coach parents/caregivers on how to teach a child with hearing loss to listen and talk

Amplification

Hearing Aids

For people with mild to moderate hearing loss, a hearing aid can significantly help communication by amplifying sound. Hearing aids are small electronic, battery-operated devices that collect sounds with a microphone and direct the louder signal into the user's ear through a tiny speaker.

Cochlear Implants

A cochlear implant does more than amplify sound (like traditional hearing aids), it's a complex system of electronics that bypasses damaged areas of the inner ear and sends electronic signals to the brain that can be interpreted as sound.

Bone Anchored Hearing Aids

Commonly known as a BAHA, and middle ear implants (MEIs). A BAHA is useful for people with atresia of the ear canal or chronic middle ear dysfunction, which prevents the optimal use of conventional hearing aids. They gently vibrate the skull and reproduce sound waves that activate the users' hearing mechanisms. It can be worn with a soft band before age 5 and later be implanted.

FM Systems

A wireless listening device that transmits the speaker's voice to an electronic receiver in which the sound is amplified and transmitted to the deaf or hard-of-hearing person's ears via small earphones on their hearing aids or connected to his or her cochlear implant. The device reduces the problem of background noise interference and the problem of distance from the speaker.