

Sound News

October 2103

Volume 26 No 10

Overcoming social stigmas of hearing aids

healthy hearing

People with hearing loss have to deal with adapting to life with hearing aids, and it can be even more difficult when negative stereotypes and stigmas get in the way. People wait an average of seven years before getting hearing aids after noticing their hearing loss. Being hard of hearing poses many challenges for those who experience it, and it can greatly affect their everyday lives. Perceptions of hearing loss is also associated with old age, but people of all ages, even children, have to deal with the loss of hearing.

Where did the stigma come from?

Hearing loss has been seen as an ailment, and some even thought it was a disability because children who had hearing loss had trouble learning. The Journal of Medical Professionals with Hearing Losses, states that people viewed the deaf and hard of hearing "with a mixture of fear, scorn, distaste, misunderstanding and pity." Many were under the misconception that those with hearing loss didn't have the capacity to be educated, and it wasn't until the mid-1700s that people began considering that youth with hearing loss could in fact learn. Hearing loss can affect anyone, and the issue can be very detrimental to a person's self esteem. Someone with hearing loss can become distant from family and friends because they have trouble comprehending conversations, and they may even be looked down upon by others.

Addressing the stigma

To

overcome social stigma, you must first be an advocate for yourself. Don't be afraid to let others know about your hearing loss. Hiding the situation can make it worse because others may think you aren't paying attention to conversations. It might take some time before you address your situation as hearing loss, but when you decide to address the situation, don't be afraid to discuss it with others. Follow these tips to talk about your hearing loss with loved ones:

Begin by informing them of the condition. Tell them how you feel, and what the most challenging aspect of hearing loss may be. Ask them to come with you to an audiologist appointment or follow-up visit so that they can learn about hearing loss as well.

Tell them what they can do to help the situation. For example, finding a quiet place in a restaurant will make it easier for you to hear versus a loud table in the middle of the establishment. Similarly, you might ask them to always look at you while speaking and to emphasize hand gestures and facial expressions.

Technological advances

Many people who have negative views of hearing loss may not understand that this doesn't mean you will be wearing bulky devices. Modern day hearing aids make it easier to hear with background noise, to hear in auditorium or

lecture hall settings and to maintain your pre-hearing aids lifestyle to its fullest. Whether you enjoy going out to the theater or love hiking, hearing aids have settings and features that make this possible.

Today, hearing aids can go virtually unnoticed, as some are so small that they fit all the way into the ear canal. This in itself helps to decrease the negative connotation of the issue because people can go about their daily lives without others even noticing that they are wearing hearing aids. Additionally, settings and features like Bluetooth and telecoils help to make hearing aids a simple part of daily life.

Overcoming the stigma

As people are getting educated on the condition, more people are becoming accepting and conscious of hearing loss. There has always been resistance of hearing aids, especially for someone who is getting a hearing aid for the first time.

Thanks to modern technology, people who need hearing devices have more options available to them, which eliminates the stigma for users.

**The Lane County chapter has an active website,
www.hearinglosslane.org, Now you can find answers to all the Chapter**

Leone's Line



One of the happiest moments ever is when you find the courage to let of you can't change.

We can't really change our hearing loss but we can sure change out attitude and appreciate what we do have. Reaching out to others is a great way to help that.

My oath to you

When you're sad ..I'll dry your tears.
When you're scared .. I'll comfort your fears.
When you're worried ..I'll give you hope.
When you're confused ..I'll help you cope.
When you're lost ..And can't see the light .. I'll be your beacon shining ever so bright.
This is my oath ..I pledge till the end. Why you may ask? Because you're my friend.

The Cocktail Party Effect

www.sciencedaily.com, www.abcnews.go.wcom

American scientists have found out how "the cocktail party effect" works. This is the well-known human ability to focus on the speech of one person in a large crowd and with a lot of background noise. It has both psychological and neurological components. All the sounds enter the ears as a cacophonous roar, but the brain processes the information and tunes into one sound, e.g. a person's voice, and filters out the rest. "It's a sound we want or need to hear which is why we can tune into it," says Dr. Edward Chang, asst. professor of neuroscience at the Univ of CA, SF.

To study the cocktail party effect, patients listened to the recorded voices of two people, each speaking conflicting sentences simultaneously and the patients were asked to pick out one of the speakers and identify the words that were being said. As the patients carried out their part of the experiment, succeeding 75% of the time, the electrodes recorded the location in the brain where the sentences they focused on we being processed.

"We found that the entire auditory cortex of the brain was involved in processing the words. It has an extremely robust ability to handle conflicting sounds. It is a very smart organ. The combination of high-resolution brain recordings and powerful decoding algorithms opens a window into the subjective experience of the mind that we've never seen before." Researchers applied decoding methods to reconstruct what the subjects heard from analyzing their brain activity patterns and found that the neural responses in the auditory cortex only reflected those of the targeted speaker. The decoding algorithm could predict which speaker and even what specific words the subject was listening to. "The algorithm worked so well, we could predict not only the correct responses, but also even when they paid attention to the wrong word," Chang said.

Members: if you have changed your e-mail address please notify Karin Smith of the change karinsm@efn.org

Hearing Loss Assoc.-Lane County, Oregon Information calls are taken by Linda Diaz 790-1290

HLA A is published monthly for members of Hearing Loss Association of Lane County.

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National website: www.hearingloss.org

Oregon website: www.hearinglossOR.org



Out & About

Andrea worked at the State Fair with the State Grange during the Labor Day Weekend.

One test can screen for several causes of inherited hearing loss in children *Action on Hearing Loss Magazine, Feb/March 2013*

A rapid screening of all known genes associated with hearing loss can more accurately identify the causes of a genetic hearing loss in children.

By screening 34 genes related to hearing loss, an accurate diagnosis of the causes of an inherited hearing loss can be given in half of the cases. Also, parents of a child suffering from hearing loss can find out the chances of future siblings being born with a hearing impairment.

All deafness genes get tested at once

Diagnosing the genetic causes of a hearing loss has until now been difficult, because only one or two genes linked to hearing loss could be tested regularly.

However, a new genetic test looks for changes in all 34 known genes connected to hearing loss, for the same cost.

Using today's technology, only a few of the many deafness genes can be routinely tested. The new

test uses advanced DNA sequencing technology that can in principle screen all known deafness genes at the same time.

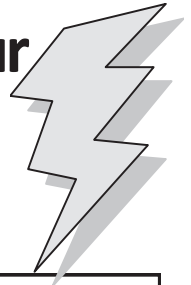
Valuable news for parents

The majority of childhood deafness is inherited and knowing the gene responsible can be incredibly important for parents who want to know the likelihood of subsequent children inheriting it.

This genetic test also has a major influence on what predictions specialists can make about the future involvement of a hearing loss. This could help families in preparing themselves for the future circumstances of their child's hearing condition.

Knowing the cause of a child's deafness can also make it easier to predict how their hearing loss may change over time and help families choose the most appropriate treatment or method of communication.

Keeping Your Batteries Charged



Information You Can Use

In May, 2013, the **Seattle Seahawks** announced they will caption their home games this Fall. They are placing captions in two corners of each end zone for all fans to see. The PA system announcements will be displayed as text in these corner scoreboards. The Seahawks are testing the new caption technology at Seattle Sounder MLS (soccer) home games and both Seahawk pre-season games.

Captioning: There is a plan to make glasses with lenses and a custom filter that would capture ultraviolet light. A movie projector would send out the UV light, but only those with the glasses would see the captions. The glasses would be a cheaper and more efficient alternative to options currently used in movie theaters, including large, unflattering, battery-operated heavy glasses that constantly need adjustment, they said.

This could be revolutionary, It's a whole new way deaf and hard-of-hearing people can access information."

Use of hearing aids might help

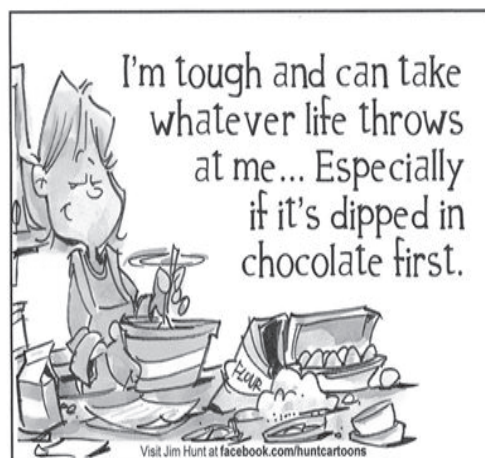
Researchers at Johns Hopkins are examining whether treating hearing loss through hearing aids or other types of assistive devices may actually reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

New Survivor's Manuals —FREE to Anyone.

Donations appreciated. Cost to mail copies is \$4 each or 20 for \$35

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Sound News is a publication of HLA Lane Co and is published monthly. P.O. Box 22501 Eugene OR 97402



Oregon Lions

Most of Oregon's Lions Clubs provide hearing exams and rebuilt used hearing aids with a six month warranty for those who don't otherwise have the ability to purchase them. This program is made available primarily to those individuals who do not have insurance that covers vision and hearing and whose income falls at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level Guidelines. Some clubs also have length of residency requirements and other policies as determined by the individual Lions Club.

Lion's Club involvement in providing hearing aids (new, lower technology from specific vendors, where the Lion's Club pays for the aids, they are current working with a Starkey affiliated dispenser. It appears the Grange is doing deaf awareness and health.

The World Health Organization has acknowledged and praised the efforts that China has made to control hearing loss. The Chinese government has launched a number of initiatives and programs during the last years, helping both young children and elderly people with their hearing loss. China offers free newborn screening, hearing aids and cochlea implants to children younger than six years old from low-income families.

400,000 children have benefited from such programs so far. For adults, especially people older than 60, free hearing aids are also available, although the number is limited to about 10,000 a year.

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GOV TODAY

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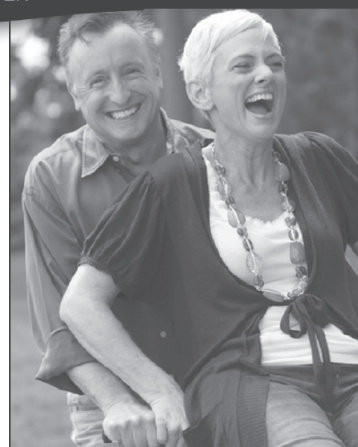
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- 4** The relay operator relays the other caller's spoken words by typing them to the relay user.

For more information
www.oregonrelay.com

A common misconception about hearing loss is that it only impacts older individuals or infants born with the disorder.

Unfortunately, there are numerous factors and conditions that can contribute or cause hearing loss, including: Waardenburg syndrome, Sticklers syndrome, Usher syndrome, Alport syndrome.

In addition, certain medications, tumors and traumatic head injuries can all be a catalyst to hearing loss or deafness.

While many people are familiar with presbycusis, or age-related hearing loss, most people don't know about the other sides of hearing loss.

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Hearing Loss Assoc. of Lane County Chapter Fee and National Membership Form

Please fill out this form /survey & mail to HLA - Lane Co., PO Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402.

I have enclosed: Chapter fees _____ \$10.00 Chapter Donation of \$ _____
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Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Why are you joining us?

What most interests/puzzles you about hearing or hearing devices?

Are you interested in volunteering? What would you like to do?

How did you learn about us _____?

Would you like to be on our email news list: _____ Yes _____ No

*Donations to either the national organization or our local chapter are always welcome and are tax deductible."

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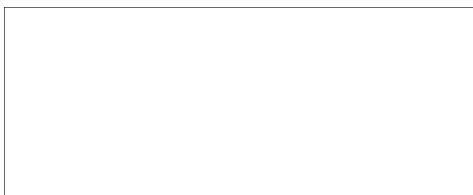
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Inside this issue:

Overcoming Social Stigmas	1
The Cocktail Party Effect	2
Leone's Lines	2
Keeping Your Batteries Charged	3
One test for causes of inherited hearing	3
Lions Club World Health Organization	4
Meeting Information	8

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October 10, 2013 at 7:00 pm

The Hilyard Community Center
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It's Getting Better All the Time:

Cochlear Implants and Hearing Aid Rehabilitation

Mary Beth O'Sullivan

Mary Beth O'Sullivan received her degree in Audiology from Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts. Her work with cochlear implants started in 1997 at Boston Children's Hospital, where her passion for combining technology and rehabilitation was ignited! She eventually moved back home to work at the University of Michigan Cochlear Implant Program, one of the oldest and largest CI programs in the country, where she was a clinician, researcher, and educator. Mary Beth has been working with MED-EL for over two years, and thoroughly loves providing educational and technical support for families, graduate schools, and experienced clinicians.

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Calendar

Board Meeting Oct. 2
Hilyard Community Ctr.
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Thursday of the month. They are accessible
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- Amplification — Loop assistive listening system
- Real-time captioning by Debby Bonds