

Michigan Speaks!

Michigan Chapter

Alexander Graham Bell

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

Winter

2011-2012

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From the President: Looking For a Few Good People

We're looking for a few good people - with enthusiasm who would like to volunteer! Our five new standing committees: Membership, Activities, Fundraising, Summer Camp and Fall Conference are already busily planning our 2012 activities! While the leaders of these committees are board members, we will welcome participation from general members who would like to get involved in some capacity. May 19th is the HLA-MI Walk 4 Hearing at Kensington MetroPark - we hope you will all join the MI AG Bell Team and help to raise money for both us and the HLA! Our 2nd An-

nual Summer Splash Picnic is scheduled for July 15, 2012 at Kensington MetroPark and we'd love help with raising funds and planning games for both children and adults. Summer Camp will be July 15 - 27, 2012 at YMCA Storer Camp near Jackson, MI. There are opportunities for students in the fields of speech & language pathology, audiology and education of the deaf and hard of hearing. This year we will be hosting a Fall Family Conference at Bear Lake Camp on October 27th! We'd love to have a few extra hands to plan this fun-filled event! These ac-

tivities are intended to enable our professional and student members to grow, to enrich the lives of our deaf and hard of hearing members, to support parents and to provide children with hearing loss the tools and opportunities to be all that they can be! Please join with us in our efforts to make this happen! Contact me at ShonHalacka@miagbell.org to sign up! Thank you -

*Shon
Halacka*



Introducing...

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Tips for Parents of Young Children with Hearing Loss

By:

Heather Castle Van De Steene
D/HH Teacher

Please Share! Make sure you hand over any audiological, medical, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy or private speech/AVT therapy reports to your child's teacher. The more information they have about your child, the more holistic the teacher's educational approach will be. The more of the "big picture" your child's teacher, teacher consultant or school therapists can see regarding your child, the better! The teacher will love you for providing this information.

Don't sweat the small stuff - If a glove goes missing, or a t-shirt comes home with paint on it; you know that your child has been well loved, and has learned a lot during their day. You know your child had fun during the day if they have forgotten where a glove has gone because they were so focused on building a snowman outdoors, or socializing with a friend on the playground. Let the child's teacher know to be on the lookout for it, but try to understand how many things happen in the course of a day in a preschool classroom. It's easy for an educator to be so focused on having fun while providing language rehabilitation, working on IEP goals and meeting the emotional, physical and mental needs of each child throughout each busy day that small things may be misplaced.

READ READ READ! A HUGE part of any Early Childhood program is literacy. For children with hearing loss, those literacy stakes are much higher. Because most children

with hearing loss have speech and language delays, you will want to expose your child to print as much as possible. You may realize that children with hearing loss may need to listen to a book repeatedly up to three times before they can truly understand and comprehend what is happening. Parents of children with hearing loss will need to read to their child several times a day to expose them to the kind of language they need to be successful in school. Ask questions about what is happening in the book. Teach children how to look for clues in the pictures. Ask children to talk about what they see or notice. Change your voice to reflect the vocal patterns and inflection of different characters in the book. Make reading a daily part of your routine.

TALK TALK TALK! Talk through your entire day! Every possible moment of each day is a learning opportunity for your child. Long car rides to and from daycare, and trips to the grocery store or to Grandma's house can be great ways to socialize with your child. Talk about the colors of cars passing. Talk about the houses you drive by. Tell children about signs you see, or restaurants that you have been to before.

Set Realistic Goals for Yourself and Your Child - The general rule of thumb is to expect children to make one year of progress in one year. Many parents see test scores that reflect language delays and expect that they can "catch up" with peers without hearing loss in just a few short months. It is a long road that needs to start with a good early intervention program and lots of additional work at

home. Include other family members (siblings, grandparents, babysitters, aunts and uncles) in your child's language rehabilitation program. Let them know what the child is doing during speech, what the child is studying in school and what things they are interested in talking about. It truly takes a village, and the "villagers" are usually more than happy to know how they can help.

The Goal Behind IEP Goals - When you attend your child's IEP, you are given a copy of the IEP including their goals. Some parents post those goals on the refrigerator so they can remember to work on the same goals weekly with their child. Parents are a child's first and most important teacher! As a teacher, I definitely know when a child is working on those goals at home as well as school. The children who are the most successful in school tend to have parents who are greatly invested in their child's education at home.

If you are comfortable, email your child's teacher to ask for activities to do at home, websites to visit or ways to include goal work into your every day activities. Teachers love to share information about what is working for your child. Also, share with the teacher what you are doing at home to help meet these goals. The teacher might learn a thing or two from you!

Most importantly, remember your child's teacher is in this profession because they truly love your child and want what is best for them.

There are many school professionals that play a vital role in helping your child with hearing loss be successful in school. The Teacher Consultant for the Hearing Impaired (TCHI) may be available as part of your child's educational team to ensure that information about the impact of hearing loss is provided to your child's classroom teacher and school staff. After your child has been evaluated by an Audiologist and Ear Nose and Throat Doctor and has been diagnosed as having a hearing loss, your child may be evaluated for special education services within your school district. As part of your child's educational team, the TCHI may be available to evaluate your child's needs and be responsible for providing a wide range of services as it relates to your child's hearing loss. Some of these services might include;

- Providing information and training to your child's classroom teachers and school staff about your child's hearing loss and how this may affect your child's ability to access auditory and verbal information.
- Supporting the use of amplification in the classroom including hearing aids, cochlear implants, and FM amplification systems.
- Evaluating your child's listening skills in the classroom.
- Assisting the education team in the development of your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Observing your child in the classroom setting and recommending appropriate classroom accommodations.
- Providing instructional services to meet your child's listening and learning needs.
- Monitoring your child's progress in the general education curriculum.
- Consulting with an audiologist.

As outlined in *2011 Changes to the Michigan Special Education Rules*, there are now two types of teacher consultants, those that provide evaluation and consultation to teachers of students with disabilities, and those that provide instructional services to students. Please refer to your ISD website for information and program services for children with hearing loss. There you may find access to hearing professionals including Teacher Consultants for the Hearing Impaired, Audiologists, and Educational Audiologists that can help guide you in planning for the education of your child with hearing loss.

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Legal Connection: 2011 Changes to the Michigan Special Education Rules



By: Sid Kraizman,
Attorney at Law

In 2011 the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) proposed changes to the Michigan Special Education Rules. Sidney Kraizman and Shon Hallack represented MI AG Bell and spoke at one of the MDE hearings and provided written comments to the proposed rules. After the hearings there were a number of amendments to the Michigan Special Education Rules that became effective October 18, 2011.

The Michigan Special Education Rules can be located on the website of the Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education. Type in the search box, "Michigan Department of Education Special Education"; then, at the Office of Special Education, on the left side, click on "laws and policies"; then click on "Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (October 2011)". There is also a link to a recorded webinar by the MDE explaining these 2011 amendments to the rules.

In this article, I discuss highlights of these Amendments to the Michigan Special Education Rules, which I think parents of children with hearing loss and professionals would be most interested in.

Following public comment, two proposed rules were

withdrawn by the MDE.

*Cross Categorical Teacher (new proposal - withdrawn)

*Teachers of students with hearing impairment – requirements (proposed revision - withdrawn)

The changes in the rules are of four kinds. First, is a continuing effort to align the Michigan Special Education Rules with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA 2004) regulations and to eliminate language in the Michigan Special Education Rules that duplicates the wording of the IDEA 2004 regulations. Second, is an effort to clarify the rules. Third, is the addition of some rules, most notably the creation of an additional type of Teacher Consultant. Fourth, is the elimination of some rules, including the deletion of 2 rules that would reduce the amount of information that a school district must provide to the parent and eliminate one factor that the Individualized Educational Program Team (IEPT) must consider.

TEACHER CONSULTANTS.

There was a major change in the rules as to teacher consultants. There are now 2 types of teacher consultants: those with a student caseload and those without a caseload:

R340.1748 (a) Teacher Consultant without a Student Caseload

Assignment; Evaluation and Consultation Assignment.

This new rule provides for a new type of teacher consultant for students with disabilities who does *not* provide instructional services to students but rather, provides evaluation and consultation to teachers of students with disabilities. A significant factor is that there is no case load maximum for this new type of teacher consultant.

R340.1749 Teacher Consultant with a Student Caseload; this is the original rule for traditional teacher consultants who can evaluate and consult with teachers and provide direct instructional services to a student that support those provided by the general or special education teacher. The case load for this Michigan traditional teacher consultant continues to be limited to not more than 25 students with disabilities.

As to both types of teacher consultants, these amendments to the rules now allow a school district to utilize their teacher consultant as a teacher consultant and additionally "in supervisory or administrative roles" but not "simultaneously". The school district can now utilize a teacher consultant as a teacher consultant on Monday and as a supervisor on Tuesday; it should be clear

which role she is performing when she walks into the classroom.

REDUCTION IN INFORMATION THAT MUST BE PROVIDED TO THE PARENTS AND ELIMINATION OF A FACTOR THAT THE IEP MUST CONSIDER

The new amendments to the Michigan Special Education Rules eliminate the requirement that parents of students suspected of having a disability be provided a written notice containing, "A description of the types of special education programs and services currently available within the intermediate school district." Old Rule 340.1721(1) (b). MI AG Bell argued that this rule provided important information to the parents of children newly identified as having a hearing impairment. But, that one sentence rule requirement has been deleted from the rules. At a webinar provided by the MDE it was stated that the Intermediate School District (ISD) plan would cover this information.

Eliminated from the new rules was old R340.1721 (e) (4) that required that the IEP Team "shall determine whether the student has a need for placement with a special education teacher who is endorsed in a particular disability category." This rule meant that for a student with a hearing impairment, the IEP Team had to consider whether he should be placed in a classroom program

for the hearing impaired or have the services of a teacher consultant for the hearing impaired. This provision was added in the 1980s, and it was then particularly important for students with hearing impairments living in rural areas: these students often were not placed in classroom programs for the hearing impaired that they needed, and were not provided with the services of teacher consultants for the hearing impaired that they should have received. MI AG Bell opposed the elimination of this rule. But, it was deleted from the rules by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

TIMELINES. There is a new Time Lines rule R344.1721b that puts the special education time lines for evaluations, notice of offer of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), and similar time lines, that used to be contained in 3 different special education rules, into this one rule.

To start the clock for the initial evaluation put it in writing!
R340.1721 now states that "within 10 school days of receipt of a written request for an initial evaluation of a student suspected of having a disability" ...the school district "shall provide the parent with written notice consistent with 34 CFR §300.503 and shall request written consent to evaluate."

Birth to Three – R340.1862. Individualized Family Service Plan; Timelines; Eligibility.

This rule requires that eligibility for Michigan special education services for children birth to age three years shall be determined by an *Individualized Family Service Plan*. The change is that IEPs will no longer be utilized for infants and toddlers age birth to 3 years. This squares the Michigan special education rules with the IDEA 2004 Part C regulations for children age birth to age 3 years. This rule also contains the time lines for evaluations for children birth to three. The other Michigan Special Education Rules for children age birth to three were not changed.

My Recommendation

There are significant changes in the Michigan special education rules that: provide for a new category of teacher consultant that doesn't have a caseload maximum; reduce the information provided to parents of newly identified students with hearing loss concerning programs and services in their ISD; and eliminate the requirement that the IEP Team consider whether a student with a hearing impairment needs to be placed in a program for the hearing impaired or receive the services of a teacher consultant for the hearing impaired.

These rule changes make it even more important for parents to seek information and for the MI A.G. Bell to help them by providing information about appropriate programs and services for children with hearing loss.





A Journey to Hearing With my Cochlear Implant



By: Kelly Gilkey

Note: *MI AG Bell will be running this as a series over the course of our next four newsletters. So, each edition will cover about four to five days in Kelly's journey. Enjoy!*

I have had a profound hearing loss ever since I was a baby and have worn very powerful hearing aids all my life. About 18 months ago, my right ear just stopped giving me the amount of sound and information I was accustomed to receiving: my hearing aid was no longer effective. I made the decision to have a cochlear implant.

For those of you less familiar with cochlear implants, a period of time is allowed for the surgical site to heal before the implant is 'turned on' or activated. I had the surgery on Dec. 16th and was activated on Jan. 5th. I'd like to share my experiences of these first few weeks with my "bionic ear". I believe this will be of interest not only to parents of young children who are implanted, but also to the professionals who work with them. My husband's name is Michael, and I have two young sons; Alex – a pre-schooler and John – a toddler. I'm a biomedical engineer and one of my first assignments for NASA was working on acoustics and vibrations – how ironic!

Activation day - Cochlear implant is ON and working properly! The audiologists and my mom all sounded like Minnie Mouse on helium and the fan noise was a high-pitched whine that was horrible. Michael sounded much better after about an hour of having it on. It has been 4 hours and things already sound so much better but super weird. Tomorrow will be even better!

Day 2: I had two of the 22 electrodes turned off for high frequency sounds while my brain adjusts and some other tweaks made. This made a difference. Everything still sounds weird but voices are less helium cartoon characters and more robotic, so I guess that is an improvement. I heard my mom peeling carrots, John drinking his milk, and water boiling. I heard ice clinking on the glass (very annoying), water being poured into the glass, and I am upstairs typing this and hearing Alex screaming and laughing with delight while playing with Daddy downstairs.

Day 3: Today was not a good day. I'm really struggling with this high-pitched static that seems ever present with the CI. It is everywhere, all the time: in all the rooms of my house, outside, in the car. Apparently this is common with CIs and my brain will learn to ignore it, but right now it is literally just drowning out everything that is meaningful. Baby steps, I remind myself. I started crying and Michael had Alex come over and say "I love you". It helped. I really do need to focus on all the wonderful things I am now hearing and try to force my brain to ignore this static sound that appears to have no source other than the CI. I pray for this process to happen soon so I can focus on hearing meaningful sounds and moving forward

Day 4: Today was better, but still not great. I had to take the CI off several times to give my ear a break. The static continues to plague me. I emailed my audiologist and will try to get in to see her tomorrow to do some tweaking. I don't remember hearing any new sounds today, as the static is liter-

ally drowning everything out. <sigh>

Day 5: I have to wait several days to get in to my audiologist. I don't want to put up with this static for that long so I am bummed. Newest development is the static will randomly get louder then quieter, even if I'm not moving. I think it may be the processor. Hearing Alex say "I love you Mommy" is my favorite thing to hear and is keeping me centered. Thanks to my friend Laura, who has a CI, for suggesting I decrease the sensitivity. The static noise is quieter and much more tolerable, and more importantly, I can hear sounds again instead of screeching static buzzing! Even the clacking keys on the keyboard are a welcome change! Today will be a good day now, I just know it! *Later that day . . .* Now that the static has been lessened, I am once again hearing new sounds. My favorite sounds of the day: Sam snoring (our dog), listening to Alex sing "Baby Johnny", a song he made up for John, and listening to and understanding a recording of "Llama, Llama Red Pajama". I actually started crying because I wasn't expecting to be able to understand speech without lipreading so soon. Of course, it helps that I've read the book a hundred times too! I'll try something a little more challenging soon! Here's hoping for a better day tomorrow. Thanks to family and friends for your support and encouragement.



I'm a Volunteer: Michael Gilkey, Website Designer

By: Michael Gilkey

I have been asked to write a bit about myself and how I became involved with MIAGBELL. I taught myself HTML for website design and how to work on websites through trial and error. After years of updating websites, I began re-designing them and then creating new ones from scratch. Recently I volunteered to create new websites for the Ohio and Michigan AG Bell chapters. Each website is unique and is an excellent reference to the public and the deaf and hard of hearing community. I earned my B.S. in Biological Engineering at Louisiana State University and both my M.S. in Biomedical Engineering and M.B.A. from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH. The combination of business and engineering has been useful in my career by enabling me to understand complex details of both worlds, and allowing me to translate this information to each group so accurate decisions can be made. I am the Acting Executive Director for the National Center for Regenerative Medicine (NCRM) – which builds upon leading research and clinical programs at its founding institutions—Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Clinic, and University Hospitals Case Medical Center. More info about NCRM is available at <http://www.ncrm.us/ncrm/>.

My wife is profoundly hearing impaired so I have a special interest in regenerating auditory neurons and restoring hearing to people

with hearing loss. (*Read more about Michael's wife Kelly and her "Journey to Hearing" on the previous page*). Though far in the future, a potential treatment could be the use of stem cells to replace damaged or poorly functioning auditory neurons and cochlear hair cells and, if integrated properly into the auditory nerve, could restore one's hearing. Scientists have performed these studies in animals with limited success but the fact that they can grow these types of cells and implant them into the cochlear space is a crucial start.

The major challenge of stem cell therapy in the cochlea is to replace damaged or lost cells, without disturbing the delicate cochlear architecture or damaging any residual hearing function. There are many other challenges before a successful treatment could be tried in patients; first, how do you change the stem cells into each of the necessary cells for hearing and have them function normally; second, how do you get the cells into the cochlear space safely; third, how do you make sure the cells survive; fourth, how do you integrate these cells into the auditory nerve to restore hearing and fifth, how do you ensure these cells don't cause rejection or tumor formation.

A new stem cell generation technology was discovered in 2009 - induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS cells) - which is ideally suited for this application and over-

comes many of the challenges mentioned above. To create iPS cells scientists take a skin biopsy from the patient, isolate skin cells called fibroblasts and increase four genetic signals in these cells. Normally these cells are exclusively skin cells, but by genetically manipulating them, these roadblocks are removed. Now they can turn into virtually any cell type in the body, similar to embryonic stem cells. Additionally, these cells are perfectly matched to the patient so rejection does not occur. Within a few weeks, what started as a few thousand cells can be a few billion. Last, with new gating technologies, cells that are undesirable and potentially tumor-causing can be removed before implantation. It will easily take 10+ years before this can be used on patients and it is primarily dependent on funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and donations. (*For more in depth information on this field of research please read "The Convergence of Cochlear Implantation with Induced Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapy," by Gunewardene N, Dottori M, Nayagam BA. in Stem Cell Rev. 2011 Sep 29.*)



Michigan Speaks!

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In Appreciation

We would like to thank the following for their donations:

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Lila Hodgins
Andrews, Hooper, Pavlik, PLC CPA's

Donations

Your donation will help support all of the programs and activities available through the Michigan Chapter of AG Bell. If you would like to make a donation, please send a check or money order payable to Michigan Chapter of AG Bell to the address at the left. Be sure to include your contact information, so that we can acknowledge your gift.

Advertising Opportunity:

MI AG Bell is now offering the opportunity to advertise in our newsletter which is published in print form twice a year in the spring and fall. It is mailed to all Michigan members of the AG Bell Association, as well as to the Intermediate School Districts, and Oral Programs for the Deaf.

The following options are available:

Business card ad - \$20 per print edition
One quarter page ad - \$35 per print edition
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We also send out E- Newsletters 3-4 times per year with the following advertising opportunity:

Paragraph length including a link - \$20 per e-news edition

If interested, please contact Shon Halacka at: ShonHalacka@miagbell.org



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