



MINNESOTA  
HANDS &  
VOICES™



# Minnesota Hands & Voices FOCUS

—supporting families with kids who have hearing loss—

JANUARY 2009

## Collaboration yields support group for Spanish-speaking families that have children with hearing loss

By Candace Lindow-Davies,  
Minnesota Hands & Voices Coordinator

For several years now, Minnesota Hands & Voices and other local organizations have recognized the need to reach out to families in the community whose primary language is not English and that have children who are deaf or hard of hearing. These families face many challenges navigating the medical and educational systems as they seek help for their children who have hearing loss.

In response to this growing concern, we called for a “Community Forum” back in February of 2008, choosing to first tackle the needs of Spanish-speaking families, as this is the largest group. We were overwhelmed with interest from the community. Stakeholders from all different perspectives came, and together we discussed the challenges and opportunities, and vowed to create a network of support. Over the course of 2008, this group met four additional times and committed to forming a “support group” for Spanish-speaking families. This has been some of the most rewarding work I have done in my eight years as a Family Support Coordinator. The dedication and passion of the individuals involved are extraordinary.

My commitment to this work was strengthened by an experience I had this past June when I introduced several Spanish-speaking families to each other during a home visit to a new mother. I was joined by three other mothers (two who have hearing loss themselves) and their children. After doing introductions and sharing information for over an hour through our wonderful Spanish interpreter, I realized these four women were truly connecting. Two of them go to the same church and had seen each other. Phone numbers were being exchanged and so on. But the most touching moment was when one mother expressed how pleased she was to have other mothers to talk to. That’s when the conversation turned more personal and some confessed their fears about their children’s future, while others

reassured them they would adapt and succeed. At this point, I slipped into the conversation that I needed to go. They thanked me, and smoothly went back to chatting, obviously planning to stay long after I had gone. Outside, the interpreter stopped me to say how incredible the experience was and how freely the women shared with me and each other. Extremely moved, I got in my car and cried tears of thanks for witnessing something so beautiful.

My experiences have included near misses, too. One family had visited three different professionals, yet the mother still insisted that she was told her child did not have a hearing loss. The family was moving out of state and without a diagnosis, the child could easily be lost. Knowing that lack of access to communication and the resulting language delay could change this child’s future forever, I asked the mom for permission to speak to the diagnosing audiologist. The audiologist

confirmed the hearing loss and, acting quickly, got the family back in for another appointment and even coordinated care in the new state where the family would be moving.

Through my work on this collaborative effort, I have learned there is an entire community of people who care. What a blessing this is.

On Feb. 7, our collaborative group will host its first-ever support group for families at Centro Inc., a Latino organization in Minneapolis. We are thrilled to have Centro’s support to host six monthly family “fiestas,” as well as the support of many other wonderful Latino community members and organizations. We hope to help families decide what they want from the meetings: speakers, activities and topics to discuss. And, we look forward to how much we will learn from the families as they share their journey with us. This is wonderful work. Please let us know if you’d like to share your talents in this effort.

### **Colaboración resulta en un grupo de apoyo para familias de habla hispana que tienen hijos con pérdida auditiva total o parcial**

Durante algunos años, MN Hands & Voices y otras organizaciones en la comunidad han reconocido la necesidad de entrar en contacto con familias cuyo idioma principal no es el inglés y que tienen niños con pérdida auditiva total o parcial. Estas familias enfrentan muchos retos, y añadiendo la pérdida auditiva hace que navegar las citas médicas, reuniones educativas y el sistema en general, sea aun más estresante. Sin embargo, existen muchas oportunidades que hacen la diferencia en las vidas de las familias.

En respuesta a esta creciente preocupación, MN Hands & Voices convocó a un “Foro Comunitario” en el mes de febrero de 2008 para tratar de cubrir las necesidades de las familias de habla hispana, ya que es el grupo más grande. Nos abrumó el interés con que reaccionó la comunidad. Organizaciones de diferentes perspectivas asistieron, y juntos discutimos los retos y oportunidades y nos comprometimos a trabajar juntos para crear una red de apoyo. Durante el año 2008, este grupo se reunió en cuatro ocasiones más y nos comprometimos a crear un “grupo de apoyo” para familias de habla hispana. Ha sido uno de los proyectos más gratificantes que he hecho en mi trabajo como Coordinadora de Apoyo Familiar. La dedicación y la pasión de las personas involucradas son extraordinarias.

**Grupo de apoyo...continúa en la página 3**

Here's What's Happening Around Town

Jan. 12-  
March 2

**"Special Topics: Cued Speech"** with instructor Sarah Druley meets Mondays from 5 to 9 p.m. at St. Paul College. Contact Katherine Burns-Christenson at 952-929-3965 or e-mail kbc29@aol.com.

Tuesday,  
Jan. 20

**Practice Cue Clutch** meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Java Jacks, 818 W. 46th St. in Minneapolis. Contact Katherine Burns-Christenson at 952-929-3965 or e-mail kbc29@aol.com.

Saturday,  
Jan. 24

**Take part in the annual bird banding** from 9 a.m. to noon at Eastman Nature Center in the Elm Creek Park Reserve (northwest of Osseo). Free admission. Join biologists studying captured wild birds. Birds are measured and weighed before banding and releasing. An ASL sign language interpreter will be present. For more information, contact Three Rivers Park District at 763-559-6707 (v) or 763-559-6719 (TTY).



Join us for our annual party at the Roller Garden in St. Louis Park Sunday, Jan. 25 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Skating and dinner are on us! (Donations are welcome.) RSVP by Jan. 22 to mnhv@lifetrackresources.org. See flyer for driving directions.

Jan. 30-Feb. 1

**KODA (Hearing Kids of Deaf Adults) Family Retreat** takes place at Confidence Learning Center in East Gull Lake. Activities may include group discussions, snow tubing, snow shoeing, ice fishing, games. For a registration packet, email Emily Smith-Lundberg at emily@dreamsandinspirations.com.

Sunday,  
Feb. 1

**An ASL-interpreted tour of "Love and Scandal"** begins at 1 p.m. in the lobby of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. For more information, call 612-870-3131 (v) or 612-870-3132 (tty) or e-mail dhegstro@artsmia.org.

Monday,  
March 23

The Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program holds its 15th annual educational seminar, **"Creating Positive Environments for Children With Hearing Loss."** To request a brochure, contact brapoza@wihri.org.

Friday,  
May 29

**The annual Spring Workshop** sponsored by Regions Hospital's Health and Wellness Program runs from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at the Continuing Education Center at the University of Minnesota - St. Paul Campus. Neil Glickman Ph.D shares techniques from his new book, "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with Deaf and Hearing Persons with Language and Learning Challenges." To get on the mailing list for the conference brochure, email Kristen.L.Swan@HealthPartners.com or call 651-254-2742.



ASL-Interpreted Performances

Request the VSA discount.

**The Miracle Worker**

Sunday, Jan. 25, 2 p.m.  
History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St., St. Paul;  
651-292-4323; www.historytheatre.com

**Henry V**

Saturday, Jan. 31, 1 p.m.

**The Two Gentlemen of Verona**

Friday, Feb. 27, 7:30 p.m.  
Thursday, March 5, 7:30 p.m.  
Captioning: Friday, March 13, 7:30 p.m.  
Guthrie Theater, 818 2nd St. S., Mpls.;  
612-377-2224; www.guthrietheater.org

**Goodnight Moon**

Sunday, Feb. 1, 2 p.m., and  
Wednesday, Feb. 4, 10 a.m.  
Hopkins Center for the Arts, 1111 Mainstreet;  
952-979-1111 www.stagestheatre.org

**Ruby! The Story of Ruby Bridges**

Friday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m.  
SteppingStone Theatre, 55 Victoria St. N.,  
St. Paul; 651-225-9265;  
www.steppingstonetheatre.org

**The Gruffalo**

Friday, Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.  
Children's Theatre, 2400 3rd Ave. S., Mpls;  
612-874-0400; www.childrenstheatre.org

**Annie**

Saturday, Feb. 14, 2 p.m.  
Historic Orpheum Theatre, 910 Henne-  
pin Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-373-5639;  
www.hennepintheatredistrict.org

**My Fair Lady**

Saturday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m. (if requested  
at least one week before opening night)  
Lyric Arts, 420 E. Main St., Anoka; 763-  
422-1838; www.lyricarts.org

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Our mission is to build better lives for children who are deaf or hard of hearing by providing parent-to-parent support.

Newsletter Editor: Audrey Alwell

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**Grupo de apoyo...continua**

Mi empeño en este trabajo ha sido fortalecido por una experiencia que tuve el pasado junio, cuando hice arreglos para presentar a varias familias. Le pedí a la mamá de un niño pequeño que me acompañara en una visita hogareña a una nueva mamá, y ella muy amablemente trajo a su hermana e hija con ella... todas ellas tienen pérdida auditiva. Pudimos hacer arreglos para que otra familia también llegara con sus niños. Así que después de las presentaciones y de compartir información durante más de una hora y media a través de nuestra maravillosa intérprete de español, me di cuenta que estas cuatro mujeres se estaban realmente conectando. Dos de ellas asisten a la misma iglesia y se habían visto antes. Se intercambiaron números telefónicos, etc. Pero el momento el momento en que me di cuenta que todo el esfuerzo real-

mente valía la pena fue cuando una de las madres confesó que nunca salía con sus niños y expresó qué complacida estaba de tener a otras mamás con quien hablar. Fue entonces cuando la conversación se volvió más personal y algunas confesaron sus temores acerca del futuro de sus hijos, mientras otras les aseguraban que los hijos se adaptarían y tendrían éxito. En este punto suavemente me introduje en su conversación para decirles que me tenía que ir y me dieron las gracias, pero volvieron a su plática, obviamente con la intención de quedarse por más tiempo. Afuera la intérprete me paró para comentarme de lo increíble que había sido la experiencia y con que libertad las mujeres compartieron conmigo y con ellas mismas... Extremadamente conmovida me subí al carro y lloré lágrimas de gratitud por haber sido testigo de algo tan bello.

A veces la he tenido experiencias muy cerca al desastre. Recientemente recibimos una referencia para una familia con un niño recién diagnosticado. Después de tres visitas con diferentes profesionales, la madre aun insistía que le dijeron que su hijo no tenía pérdida auditiva. Con el permiso de ella, yo hablé con el audiólogo que hizo el diagnóstico, sabedora de que se estaba mudando fuera del Estado y el niño fácilmente podría perderse. El audiólogo confirmó la pérdida auditiva y actuando rápidamente, logró que la familia regresara para otra cita y hasta coordinó el cuidado en el nuevo Estado a donde la familia estaría mudándose. La falta de comunicación y el desarrollo del lenguaje podrían cambiar el futuro de este niño para siempre. Cada niño es muy precioso para perderle.

El 7 de febrero, nuestro grupo colaborativo será el anfitrión del primer grupo de apoyo para familias en Centro, Inc., una organización latina en Minneapolis. Estamos muy contentos de que Centro nos apoye siendo el anfitrión de seis "Fiestas" familiares, así como del apoyo de muchos otros miembros de la comunidad hispana/latina y muchas organizaciones. Nuestra esperanza es que podamos ayudar a las familias a decidir qué desean de las reuniones: presentadores, actividades y tópicos a discutir. Y también esperamos aprender mucho de las familias al compartir su jornada con nosotros. Este es un trabajo maravilloso.

# Fiestas Familiares

Una serie de actividades de apoyo para familias de habla hispana que tienen niños con pérdida auditiva total o parcial.

## Fiesta de la amistad

**Sábado 7 de febrero  
De 1:00 a 3:00 p.m.**

### Centro

1915 Chicago Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
VER MAPA AL REVERSO



## Acompáñenos a divertirnos Una celebración del día del amor y la amistad

Programa en español con intérpretes disponibles

## ¡Todas las familias son bienvenidas!

Bocadillos y actividades

Conozca a los representantes de diferentes organizaciones comunitarias

¡Premios y Sorpresas!

## Para mayor información llame a:

Español/Inglés

**Carmen DiPrima**

Early Childhood Information and Referral of Ramsey Co.

**651-604-3718**

Llame si necesita transportación

En inglés únicamente

**Candace Lindow-Davies**

Minnesota Hands & Voices

**651-265-2435**

**Este evento es patrocinado por MN Hands & Voices**

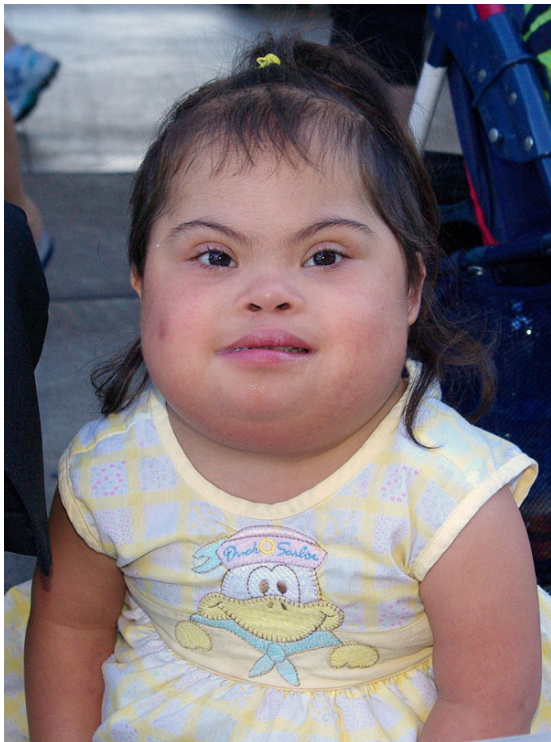
Agencias participantes: PACER Center, Centro, Inc., Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Metro Deaf School, Early Childhood Information and Referral of Ramsey County, MN Department of Education, Intermediate School District 287, Global Deaf Connection, Anne Sullivan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, St. Paul School's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, Northern Voices.





# I am MINNESOTA HANDS & VOICES

## Jaely, daughter, cousin, social butterfly



**Jaely, una dulcira de niña**

*Mi nombre es Jaely y tengo tres años. Me gusta mucho jugar, leer libros y hablar por teléfono. Estoy aprendiendo a caminar con una andadera especial, y me ENCANTA ir a la escuela para ver a mis amigos. En la escuela, estoy en un salón de clases especial con otros niños que tienen pérdida auditiva. Tengo pérdida auditiva unilateral y estoy aprendiendo lenguaje de señas. Puedo decir mucho con señas, como "Mami, mi pañal está sucio" y "cámbiame" Estoy aprendiendo muy bien y mi maestra usa su voz y me hace señas. Yo tengo una primita que es sorda. Se llama Flor y ella tubo un implante coclear el 8 de diciembre. Ella está recibiendo un implante ahora y estamos aprendiendo mucho juntas. Yo soy adorable y sociable y me encanta conocer a gente nueva. Por favor acompañenme en el primer grupo de apoyo para padres de habla hispana el sábado 7 de febrero de 1 a 3 p.m. en Centro en Minneapolis. Me encantará conocerlos y darles la bienvenida a Hands & Voices.*

My name is Jaely and I'm 3. I love to play, read books, and talk on the phone. I am learning to walk with a special walker. I LOVE to go to school to see my friends. In school, I'm in a special classroom with other kids who have hearing loss. I have unilateral hearing loss and am learning sign language. I can say a lot in sign, like, "Mommy, my diaper is dirty" and "change me!" I am learning very well, and my teacher uses her voice and signs to me. I have a little cousin who is deaf. Her name is Flor. She is almost 1. She got a cochlear implant in December. We are learning a lot together. I am very lovable and social and love to meet new people. Please join me at the first-ever support group for families who are Spanish-speaking on Feb. 7 from 1 to 3 p.m. at Centro in Minneapolis. I would love to meet you and welcome you to Hands & Voices!



## The View from Here

### Upper Northwest:

Fargo-Moorhead Community Theatre's February schedule includes plays for families: Sweet Charity, Huck Finn's Story, and the Velveteen Rabbit. ASL interpretation will be provided if requested in advance. Tickets are half-price for ASL patrons. Call 701-235-6778 or 877-687-7469.

### Northeast:

ALS interpreters will be on hand for the 4th annual Mardi Gras Gala fundraiser for Duluth Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired Saturday, Feb. 21, at 5:30 p.m. at Northland Country Club with auctions, dinner and prizes for costumes. Tickets:\$65; 218-624-4828.

### East/West Central:

Parent Guide Brenda Hommerding presents to the Parent Empowerment & Networking Support (PENS) group Feb. 9 at Hutchinson Middle School. The meeting includes supper at 5:30 p.m., kids' activities and Brenda's presentation. RSVP by Feb. 2 to Jill Rohman at 320-796-0270 or [jill.rohman@swsc.org](mailto:jill.rohman@swsc.org).

Psychologist Dr. Ron Lybarger will be presenting in St. Cloud April 16 on raising a child with hearing loss. More details in the next FOCUS.

St. John's University in Collegeville offers ASL interpretation of "If You Give a Pig a Pancake & Other Story Books" performed by Theatreworks USA Friday, Feb. 13 at 7 p.m. Call 320-363-5777.

### Southwest:

Parent Guide Kris Hemstock presents to the Parent Empowerment & Networking Support (PENS) group Feb. 12 at Slayton Elementary School. The meeting includes supper at 5:30 p.m., kids' activities and Kris' presentation from 6:20 to 7:30 p.m. RSVP by Feb. 2 to Jill Rohman at 320-796-0270 or [jill.rohman@swsc.org](mailto:jill.rohman@swsc.org).

Storytelling is interpreted in ASL Saturday, Feb. 7 from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Service Coop center, 2075 Lookout Drive, North Mankato.

### Become a Parent Guide!

**We have an immediate opening for a Parent Guide in SE MN (which includes the counties east of St. Peter and south to Iowa). The primary responsibility is contacting families with children who have been newly diagnosed as deaf or hard of hearing to offer support, information and referral. The hours are part-time, roughly 20 hours a month. Candidates who are parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing are strongly encouraged to apply. Direct resumes/questions to [Candaced@lifetrackresources.org](mailto:Candaced@lifetrackresources.org).**

## Book features poems by local poet with national acclaim

Minnesotan John Lee Clark has a new book out that showcases 16 poems by the award-winning poet who is deafblind.

"Suddenly Slow: Poems" sells for \$8 at [www.handtype.com](http://www.handtype.com) or [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). A sample poem is online at the Handtype website.

John was born deaf and became progressively blind in early adolescence. He was the first member of the signing community to be published in the magazine "Poetry." One of his poems was selected for "Poem of the Day" radio program on Martha Stewart. He also has won a Best Sports Poem prize from Kent State University. He recently edited the collection "Deaf American Poetry," which comes out in March from Gallaudet University Press.

## MSAD volleyball team earns national title

The National Deaf Interscholastic Athletic Council has named the girls' volleyball team from Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD) as the Division Two Team of the Year.

The MSAD volleyball team had a 7-0 season. The Trojan girls also won an unprecedented seventh straight Great Plains Schools for the Deaf Volleyball Tournament in October.

In addition, the council named these players to the All American teams: Kirsten Pudas, 1st Team; Meghan Laughlin, 2nd Team; and, Jenny Smith, 3rd Team. Players named All American Honorable Mention: Cindy Siebert, Rachel Novella, and Molly Perkins.

## Camp offers winter programs

Aspen Camp of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing near Aspen, Colorado, has a couple of winter camp opportunities.

The 29th Annual Aspen Deaf EXTREME Winter Ski/Snowboard Camp is Feb. 25-March 1. Professional instructors volunteer their time to teach all levels of skiing and snowboarding. For registration information, see [www.aspencamp.org/WinterExtreme.htm](http://www.aspencamp.org/WinterExtreme.htm).

New this year is the Winter Family Retreat March 22-28. For details, contact [Programdirector@aspencamp.org](mailto:Programdirector@aspencamp.org).

## Save the date:

**We host our annual Family Picnic at Como Park Aug. 6 from 5 to 8:30 p.m.**



### Off the Shelf

Our lending library has quite a few resources for Spanish-speaking families:

"Signing Fiesta" is a series of seven videos families can use to learn basic signs. One tape shows what to expect on a visit to an audiologist. Several others show how to sign Spanish children's stories.

"Manual de ejercicios practicos" is an activity book designed to help Spanish speakers learn American Sign Language.

To request one of these, email us at [mnhv@lifetrackresources.org](mailto:mnhv@lifetrackresources.org). To search for other titles, go to [www.mnhandsandvoices.org](http://www.mnhandsandvoices.org) and click on "Lending Library."

## Free program teaches computer science to teens

The 2009 Summer Academy for Advancing Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Computing provides free college credit through a challenging program at the University of Washington in Seattle for deaf or hard of hearing students age 18+ who excel in math, science and/or computing.

The Summer Academy runs from June 18 to Aug. 22. It is designed to introduce computing to students who are deaf or hard of hearing who are interested in computer science, computer engineering, information science, information systems or information technology as a career. The program is fully funded by the National Science Foundation and includes tuition, room and board, and transportation.

Admission is limited to the top 10 applicants. Students 16 and 17 years of age who have exhibited exceptional scholastic achievement in math, science and/or computing may be considered. Applications and additional information are online at [www.washington.edu/accesscomputing/dhh/academy](http://www.washington.edu/accesscomputing/dhh/academy). Deadline for applying is Jan. 30.

## Cochlear implant skills part of online research discussion

The research topic on the Hands & Voices online forum Jan. 12 through Feb. 1 is "Evaluating Phonological Processing Skills in Children with Prelingual Deafness who use Cochlear Implants" with Dr. Linda Spencer.

National Hands & Voices and a coalition of research universities plus the Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education maintain the online forum at [www.wiki.educ.msu.edu](http://www.wiki.educ.msu.edu). Parents and professionals can register at the site to review the current topic and post comments. Researchers use these comments to guide current projects.

## Theater has interpreted plays

Stages Theatre in the Hopkins Center for the Arts offers ASL-interpreted performances of its family friendly plays. Here's a list of these performances through July so you can plan ahead:

*Goodnight Moon* - Sunday, Feb. 1, 2 p.m.; Wednesday, Feb. 4, 10 a.m.

*The Shadow Thieves* - Sunday, March 1, 2 p.m.; Wednesday, March 4, 10 a.m.

*How Can You Run With a Shell On Your Back?* - Sunday, March 15, 2 p.m.; Wednesday, March 18, 10 a.m.

*Baseball Saved Us* (held at the Mixed Blood Theatre in Minneapolis) - Sunday, March 22, 2 p.m.; Wednesday, March 25, 10 a.m.

*The Paper Bag Princess* - Sunday, May 3, 2 p.m.; Wednesday, May 6, 10 a.m.

*The Wizard of Oz* - Sunday, July 12, 2 p.m.; Wednesday, July 22, 10 a.m.

The theater is at 1111 Mainstreet in Hopkins. Because specific seats are held for customers who use interpreting services, the theater recommends contacting the box office directly for tickets in that section. The box office hours are Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 6 p.m. The voice phone line is 952-979-1111 or order by email at [tickets@stagetheatre.org](mailto:tickets@stagetheatre.org).

## Counseling available

Volunteers of America Mental Health Clinics can provide counseling for children or adults who are deaf or hard of hearing. The group has seven therapists on staff who are fluent in sign language and knowledgeable about Deaf culture. For more information, see [www.voamn.org](http://www.voamn.org), email [kotis@voamn.org](mailto:kotis@voamn.org) or call 763-225-4064.



## Dad's Viewpoint

By Curt Leitz, NE Parent Guide

One of the times I found my parenting style questioned came when our elder daughter was about eighteen months old. She and I had spent all day together in our small apartment due to wind chills of about a zillion below.

Among other things, we developed a fun way to practice counting—which we attempted to demonstrate for Mom when she came home from work.

“Anja,” I said enthusiastically. “Show Mom what you can do!” Anja clambered up onto the sofa, then stood on its arm. “One!” she yelled, as Mom looked on with disapproval. “Two!” she yelled, teetering a bit, as Mom looked on with genuine concern. “Three!” she yelled, leaping straight up—but not out, onto the sofa, as she had all afternoon. Instead she slid into the space between the sofa and the wall with a dull thud and erupted into tears. I got the stern look.

Anja lived to count another day, though, and ultimately my wife accepted that I go about things a bit differently than she would.

Actually, studies show that children benefit from the different ways that moms and dads tend to interact with them. At the risk of engaging in gross generalizations, studies show that dads are more likely to engage in rough-and-tumble play, moms more likely to cuddle. Dads are more likely to communicate with higher-level vocabulary, moms to use simpler statements. Dads are more likely to engage in turn-taking and require responses of their kids, moms more likely to engage in rich narratives and descriptions.

Both styles are beneficial. Research suggests that children’s social and linguistic development is best fostered by a complement of parenting styles. (Most of the research in this field compares and contrasts mothers and fathers, but kids benefit from the different communication styles and play styles of all the loving caregivers in their lives.)

Since linguistic development is of special concern for our children who have hearing loss, it becomes particularly relevant that mothers and fathers tend toward different communication styles with young children. Turn-taking develops expressive language skills. Using “adult” language helps develop vocabulary—which is the linguistic skill at which kids with hearing loss are most likely to be behind their peers. Thus, our children with hearing loss are even more in need of the complementary gifts that each parent has to offer.

So dads, don’t feel like you need to parent the same way your spouse does. Moms, give your spouse some latitude. I’ve known too many families where the primary caregiver (usually a mom) has trouble giving up control to the non-primary caregiver (usually a dad). Inevitably the non-primary caregiver contributes less and less to childrearing, often avoiding tasks such as diaper changes, bath time, and bedtime rituals. Everybody suffers.

And dads, if you expect not to be micromanaged while catapulting the kids onto the sofa, then you’d better accept that there’s more than one way to pack the car, mow the lawn, or clear snow from the drive! Happy parenting!

## Researchers use lasers to stimulate hearing

National Public Radio (NPR) is leading the way to create captioned radio programs. The hope is to have NPR’s main programs captioned by the end of the year.

NPR first demonstrated captioned radio to the public during its recent Election Night coverage. The captioned broadcast was carried at five “live” sites around the country where about 100 deaf or hard-of-hearing participants had been invited to watch.

This month, NPR representatives are meeting with electronics companies to encourage them to produce HD Radios that can receive and decode the captioning. They’re pushing manufacturers to build in accessible features from a product’s inception, rather than trying to revamp HD radios in the future to accommodate captioning technology when retrofitting will make the task more expensive.

In order to receive captioned radio, users would need an HD Radio receiver capable of displaying the real-time captions on a screen. At least four receiver manufacturers have expressed interest in making HD Radios capable of decoding and displaying the captions, but none has made a formal commitment.

The captioned radio project is a joint effort of NPR, Harris Broadcast and Towson University. The group also is trying to cut the expense of live captioning, which typically can cost around \$120 per hour. One option is to use IBM’s speech-to-text software, but that needs some tweaking to manage issues with garbled text from misunderstood speech.

## Brain-damaged rats retrained to process sound

An article published last month in *Nature Neuroscience* describes how scientists in California and China trained rats with sound-processing problems to pick out sounds amid background noise, gaining more understanding of how a damaged brain can be retrained to process sound.

Many natural sounds and most animal communications have complex temporal (time-related) features. In humans, problems with temporal processing due to hearing loss or brain injury can lead to problems with language development.

In this study, researchers first damaged the temporal processing ability of infant rats by raising them in the presence of low frequency noise pulses. Then they overcame these deficits by intensive training. Using food rewards, the rats were taught to identify a specific target sound amid a variety of background noises.

This research is significant because it shows that the brain can be retrained to process temporal information even at an older age (the researchers worked with “teen-aged” rats). The rats in the study showed changes in their brains that lasted long after the training had stopped.

The complete article is at [www.nature.com/neuro/journal/v12/n1/full/nn.2239.html](http://www.nature.com/neuro/journal/v12/n1/full/nn.2239.html).

## Book explores life of child of deaf parents

A new book with deaf ties comes out next month: “Hands of My Father: A Hearing Boy, His Deaf Parents, and the Language of Love” by Myron Uhlberg.

The book is Uhlberg’s memoir of his childhood in 1940s Brooklyn with his parents who are deaf. This is his first book for adults. Uhlberg has written several children’s books, including “Dad, Jackie, and Me,” a story about baseball legend Jackie Robinson, which won a 2006 Patterson Prize.