

Hearing and Speech Action and Work with the Deaf

Human needs exist from conception to death. However, just as each individual differs from all others, so do one's needs vary from infancy through old age. To the sensitive observer, the presence within the community of many people having different needs is a reality that cannot be ignored.

The Committee for Hearing and Speech Action and Work with the Deaf:

- Studies needs of the community and what is being done to meet those needs.
- Proposes one or more service activities to the club board of directors.
- Assumes responsibility, as directed by the board, for performance of the activities adopted.
- Cooperates with other committees whose work might be closely related to its work.

Organizational Meeting

1. Chairman checks first with the president as to his goals for the year and budget considerations, and with the vice president under whose responsibility the committee operates as to committee duties. An invitation to both officers to attend is extended for all meetings.
2. Chairman sets date, time and place for meeting; notifies committee members at club meeting, by mail or telephone, at least a week in advance.
3. The first meeting is most important. Here achievements or any unfinished plans of the previous year's committee are discussed, ideas and goals for the year are brought to light, and the ways of promoting and ensuring the success of these goals, through work of the committee itself or of the entire club, are discussed.
4. Chairman reads a list of suggested activities from this or any other sources and leads discussion of community needs, emphasizing the club's role.
5. Goes over those activities in which committee members have shown interest.
 - a) Type of activity.
 - b) What will be the reaction of the community to this activity?
 - c) What will be the reaction of club member?
 - d) How greatly will the community or the individual benefit?
 - e) How long will it take to complete this activity?
 - f) How much will it cost, and how will it be financed?
6. After discussion, two or three suitable activities are voted on.
7. With assistance of committee members, chairman prepares a written report for the board of directors. It should include project recommendations and project cost estimates.

Suggested activities :

Hearing Conservation

Examination and Detection

1. Provide hearing examinations individually or through public mass screening.

- This is done for school children, the aging and other adults through public health authorities and local prevention of deafness agencies.
2. Always consult first with local medical-professional societies.
 3. Arrange for Follow-up examinations.
 4. Provide hearing testing equipment for schools, clinics and hospitals.
 5. Consider purchase of, and support for, a mobile unit for testing and/or treatment.
 6. Urge local hospitals to establish a mandatory program of hearing testing for newborn babies.

Medical-Surgical Services

Provide services of qualified professionals to fit and prescribe proper hearing aid devices or perform remedial surgery. Arrange transportation of patient if needed.

Temporary Bone Banks

Much information causes of hearing loss has been gained through the study of middle-ear structures after death. These cannot be examined during life. People with ear disorders are urged to bequeath their inner ear structures to the DRF Temporal Bone Banks Program for Ear Research. For further information consult your ear specialist or write to The Deafness Research Foundation or the National Temporal Bone Bank Center.

Hearing Research

1. Support research on prevention and amelioration of hearing loss.
2. Contact your local university hospital or medical/hearing center and furnish funds for research of specialized equipment.
3. Distribute information on hearing loss to members of your community and urge their support for continued research.

Service to the Hard-of-Hearing

1. Furnish, repair or replace hearing aids and provide loaner hearing aids when necessary for hard-of-hearing children and adults.
2. Provide services of qualified professionals for diagnosis, therapy and hearing aid evaluation.
3. Provide needy individuals with batteries, aids and special devices, such as flashing alarm signals, typewriters and other communication devices for hearing impaired people.
4. Collect used hearing aids to establish a hearing aid "bank." Have the aids evaluated and reconditioned, then distribute them to the needy.
5. Collect used batteries in order to exchange for new batteries at reduced cost.

Public Information

1. Create public awareness of "noise pollution" and its effects on hearing – what can be done to reduce noise levels.

2. Cooperate with local agencies in conducting public information programs on the causes of deafness, on periodical hearing tests and how hearing loss can be prevented or minimized.
3. Sponsor the development of films, media spots and brochures.

Education

1. Contribute to educational centers which train teachers and other professionals to work with the deaf or hard-of-hearing.
2. Provide or contribute to an existing scholarship fund for hearing-impaired students. Assist students with placement and special aids.

Audio-Visual Services

Provide video tapes, captioned films, amplifying equipment and other devices for hard-of-hearing and deaf individuals in educational, recreational and home environment.

Rehabilitation

Investigate and support hearing rehabilitation services for deaf children and adults for legal, social and medical services. Inform them of these services.

Interpreting Services

1. Investigate availability of and provide interpreters for deaf children and adults for legal, social and medical services. Inform them of these services.
2. Encourage club members to learn basic sign language.

Vocational and Employment Services

1. Assist in finding industrial, professional and business employment for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.
2. Arrange for vocational training centers to offer special courses for individuals suffering from hearing loss.
3. Initiate a program to educate business and community leaders to the variety and scope of employment which the deaf and hard-of-hearing can accomplish.

Social Services

1. Encourage the development of counseling services for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.
2. Initiate and support joint social activities for deaf or hard-of-hearing persons and furnish transportation when necessary.
3. Actively support the national association or society of the deaf in your country.