



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CELEBRATE BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH THIS MAY WITH**  
**THE CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION –**  
**NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR (CHHA-NL)**

**(St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador, May 1, 2007)** The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association-Newfoundland & Labrador (CHHA-NL) celebrates Better Hearing and Speech Month! This month of awareness is a good time to analyze your own hearing and determine if you are one of the estimated 28 million Americans who have a hearing loss that can be treated. You may have a hearing loss if you; frequently ask people to repeat themselves, often turn your ear toward a sound to hear it better, understand people better when you wear your glasses or look directly at their faces, lose your place in group conversations, keep the volume on your radio or TV at a level that others say is too loud, have pain or ringing in your ears

"People who see themselves in these statements should see an audiologist for a hearing test," said Leon Mills, Executive Director of CHHA-NL. "Even a very slight hearing loss can have an impact on your daily life," said Leon Mills "Most hearing losses are treatable, and there is no reason for anyone to miss all the important sounds of life."

Hearing Loss is not just a Seniors issue. "More & more young people are damaging their hearing due to exposure to noise & loud music. Unfortunately, hearing loss due to noise is permanent." Says Kim Pratt-Baker, Director of Programs & Services at CHHA-NL, " when conducting grade 4 school presentations, I regularly ask students what level of volume they use to listen to their MP3 players. Over half the class will report a volume well above the danger level. In fact, about the same number of grade four students report having experienced ringing in their ears after listening to music." Ringing in the ears is one symptom that damage is being done.

Hearing loss in the young is not just a noise issue. Many are born with hearing loss or lose their hearing later in their childhood due to illness, genetics, etc.. Noah Walsh was born deaf. "After

hearing the audiologist say that our son Noah was deaf, all other words that she spoke seemed silent” says Olivia Walsh, Noah’s mother. “After being told that he would be a candidate for a Cochlear Implant we were somewhat relieved, knowing that it would help him hear, but we still did not know what would be involved. We spoke to other parents, who gave us more confidence to make our decision. They were a great help, along with the support group.” “On January 3, 2006 his cochlear implant was turned on.” Noah is progressing well. After just 15 months post activation, he has 50+ word and word approximations, which is excellent!” a proud Olivia Walsh reported.



Youth are also affected by hearing loss. ‘One of the major issues for hard of hearing youth is decreased self esteem and in turn, their ability to self advocate, ’ says Myrtle Barrett, President of CHHA-NL, “we organize many activities for youth designed to work on self esteem & advocacy skills. We also have an active youth group that organizes its own events”. “While hearing loss is challenging, it has helped me develop a strong sense of self and gave me a drive to succeed and advocate.” Says Erika Breen, Chair of the CHHA-NL youth group.

Please help us celebrate “Better Hearing & Speech Month” by increasing awareness of Hearing Loss Issues and our planned events for May (attached). If you are interested in doing a feature on hearing loss we can assist in many ways. We have plenty of contacts for personal interviews as well as a wealth of information at our office.