

HLAA Learning Programs

**AMERICAN ACADEMY
OF
HEARING LOSS SUPPORT SPECIALISTS™**

Building Knowledge to Better Serve People with Hearing Loss

PROGRAM OVERVIEW
2008

Administered by the Hearing Loss Association of America

www.hearingloss.org

The **American Academy of Hearing Loss Support Specialists™** (the Academy) is administered by the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the nation's largest consumer advocacy organization for people with hearing loss. The Academy offers an online, self-paced, distance-learning program for adults, and provides oversight for the Certificate in Hearing Loss Support. The learning program curriculum builds core knowledge and understanding for individuals who work with, or wish to work with, people affected by hearing loss.

The curriculum has been developed by SHHH staff, the Academy Advisory Board and other leaders in the field.

Academy Objective

Through the Academy program, HLAA intends to build accurate, foundational knowledge; increase understanding; improve services; and enhance the professionalism and effectiveness of the many people in diverse professions who provide support services to people with hearing loss and their families.

Please note that the Academy offers a certificate rather than a credential, and is dedicated to *increasing knowledge and understanding* rather than establishing a set of standards.

We intend that graduates of the Academy will be in a position to offer better information and assistance to people affected by hearing loss, and to provide complementary support to that offered by hearing healthcare professionals.

Program Overview

The self-paced, online learning program will consist of four classes:

- ⇒ **Introduction to Hearing Loss**
- ⇒ **Coping with Hearing Loss**
- ⇒ **Hearing Assistive Technology and Services**
- ⇒ **Advocacy, Resources, and the Law**

Each module will consist of 10-15 lessons. The training program will include: non-graded tests, interactive online discussion forums for students, and a graded and timed online final examination. Each module will include a nongraded quiz at the end, and the final exam questions will be drawn from the practice questions in those quizzes. There will be online, electronic and hardcopy study materials. Lessons, assignments and tests can be completed at the student's own pace from a home computer with Internet access. (See www.hearingloss.org/academy/FAQ for details).

Upon successful completion of the certificate program, the graduate will become a member of the **American Academy of Hearing Loss Support Specialists™**.

Program Costs

Tuition for the Academy learning program is \$300. This fee includes: application process, access to the Academy program in Blackboard, all online, electronic and hardcopy study materials, access to tests and the final exam.

Registration

To register, please visit www.hearingloss.org/academy and fill out the registration form online. You will have the opportunity to pay by credit card or check through our secure server.

HLAA—Academy
7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
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Class 1 Lessons: Introduction to Hearing Loss

The Impact of Hearing Loss on Communication

Hearing loss pulls at the very fabric which people base their lives on, communication. This lesson describes the impact of hearing loss on communication and describes how a problem solving mindset can minimize these difficulties.

Describing People with Hearing Loss

The language used to describe disabilities is evolving as societal awareness and sensitivity is increasing. There is currently no universally agreed upon descriptor for people with hearing loss. This lesson addresses the perils of 'labelling' people and provides guidelines on how to use descriptors in a sensitive manner.

Righting Our Misconceptions

The amount of misinformation about hearing loss is staggering. In this lesson, we learn the common misconceptions about hearing loss as well as how we can use these misconceptions as a building block to promote greater general knowledge.

Proactive ways to Support Hearing Aid Usage

Only one out of five people who can benefit from hearing aids get them and even fewer wear them on a consistent basis. This lesson addresses some of the major barriers and provides guidelines on how they may be remediated.

Demographics of Hearing Loss

When the average person thinks of a hard of hearing or deaf person, they may think of a much older adult, a person who communicates with sign language, or a small child. Who makes up the largest number of people with hearing loss? The numbers may surprise you.

Behold the Ear: Basic Anatomy and Function

Virtually encapsulated into two parcels of human organs the size of a pair of dice, the inner workings of the human ear are dazzling. This lesson describes how hearing loss affects this complex miniature system and how hearing aids and cochlear implants help people hear better.

Mysteries of the Hearing Test

This lesson provides a key to the basic road map used to measure hearing loss, the audiogram. The readings explain how to understand the basic information contained in an audiogram, as well as concepts such as symmetry, laterality, and speech discrimination.

Symptoms, Causes, and Treatments

This lesson explains some of the most common causes of hearing loss, and provides the framework for understanding less common causes. Regardless of the cause of hearing loss, the main treatment options are the same for most hearing loss and this lesson covers the basics of all of them.

Hearing Health Practices

Where does a person with hearing loss go first: to a doctor, an audiologist or a hearing aid dispenser? This lesson explains the qualifications and specialization of these and other hearing health practitioners.

How Cultural Influences May Impact Responses to Hearing Loss

Differences in language and culture can cause large differences in how people address and cope with hearing loss. This lesson provides case studies of people with hearing loss from diverse backgrounds (including those who are culturally Deaf) as well as guidelines on how to be sensitive to some cultural needs.

Laws that Support Inclusion and Prevent Discrimination.

This lesson provides an introduction to major laws in the United States which are specific to ensuring accessibility for people with hearing loss.

Matching Appropriate Services to Specific Needs

Two people with identical hearing losses may communicate in very different ways. This lesson provides some case studies of how hearing loss affects different people and provides guidelines on how to help people determine which technology and services may best match their needs.

Class 2 Lessons: Coping with Hearing Loss

How Social Stereotypes, Self-Perception, and Personal Knowledge Impact Individual Responses to Hearing Loss

Internalized social stereotypes, negative self-perception, and a lack of knowledge about their own condition can be as devastating to a person with hearing loss as the actual condition itself. This lesson introduces hearing loss support specialists to the array of coping tools available to people with hearing loss.

Elements of Crisis and the Grieving Process Applied to Hearing Loss

Loss of hearing at any time in life can trigger a crisis for both the person with the hearing loss and his or her family. This lesson identifies key points in the grieving process and describes how people learn to cope with the everyday challenges of hearing loss.

Class 2 Lessons continued: Coping with Hearing Loss

Emotional Responses to Difficulties in Communicating

Personal responses to communication breakdowns may have a significant impact on a person's ability to cope with hearing loss. In this lesson we learn how people can modify responses to allow for the best possible outcome.

Effects of a Hearing Loss on Communication Behavior

Everyone responds to hearing loss differently. Some may become very assertive and even try to control conversations, others may try to avoid spoken communication at all costs. This lesson provides insight to different reactions and addresses ways to find strategies that work for a particular person.

Adaptation to Hearing Loss: Spirituality and Hearing Loss

People have been coping with difficult circumstances by looking for spiritual guidance since the beginning of time. This lesson explores how this coping strategy applies to hearing loss.

Hearing Loss and Mental Health

Hearing loss may be associated with depression, anxiety, and fatigue. This lesson explains the possible connection between mental health and hearing loss.

Reactions of Family and Friends to a Person's Hearing Loss

Responses to hearing loss, whether accepting, angry, or indifferent can greatly impact a person with hearing loss and his or her relationships. This lesson focuses on both the person with hearing loss and the people closest to them.

Reactions of Groups to a Person's Hearing Loss

A lack of role models, feelings of isolation and difficulty in getting others to understand the less obvious but painful ramifications of living with hearing loss can cause a person to have more problems than solutions. Access to supportive groups of other people who have gone through similar experiences may be one of the best tools to help empower a person with hearing loss to live with hearing loss successfully.

Special Challenges Relevant to a Person Growing Up with a Hearing Loss

Fitting in with peers, dating, and developing an identity as a person with hearing loss are all special challenges relevant to growing up with hearing loss. This lesson includes personal accounts of growing up with hearing loss.

Special Challenges Relevant to a Person Coping with Sudden Onset of Hearing Loss

Imagine going to bed with normal hearing and waking up with a significant hearing loss. This lesson investigates the process of waiting for a diagnosis, learning new skills, and the meaning that some people draw from their experiences.

Special Challenges Relevant to a Person who Acquired a Hearing Loss Gradually

A gradual hearing loss is not noticeable; at least that is what many people with gradual hearing loss may believe. Accepting a gradual hearing loss may take a lot of time. This lesson has readings and personal accounts about people who have experienced this situation.

Special Challenges Relevant to a Hard of Hearing or Deaf Person with Additional Disabilities

To compensate for difficulties with spoken communication, people with hearing loss often draw on other sensory and mental abilities. This lesson looks at strategies people use to cope when an additional disability—such as vision loss or cerebral palsy—is present.

Class 3 Lessons: Hearing Assistive Technology and Services

Aural Rehabilitation Services

Where do people go to learn how to speechread, interpret an audiogram, and develop new communication strategies? The answer is Aural Rehabilitation. This lesson gives an overview of Aural Rehabilitation services, explains who may benefit and where to look to find these services.

Hearing Aids- Types, Functions, and Limitations

Despite the large range of hearing aids available on the market today, all hearing aids have some basic functions in common. This lesson helps to distinguish between the major types of hearing aids and identifies common features of hearing aids.

Cochlear Implants: Types, Functions, and Limitations

More and more people in the United States are getting cochlear implants. This lesson explains how a cochlear implant works, who is a candidate, and offers some basic information about 'learning to hear' with a cochlear implant.

Class 3 Lessons continued: Hearing Assistive Technology and Services

Introduction to Hearing Assistive Technology

Amplified phones, assistive listening devices, and captioning are all types of hearing assistive technology. This lesson introduces hearing assistive technology, explains why it is needed and gives a general overview of the categories of technology.

FM, Induction, and Infrared Systems

This lesson gives an overview of three most commonly used types of assistive listening devices and an explanation of the pros and cons of each.

Telephone Technology

There are telephones available to meet a wide range of needs for people with hearing loss. This lesson explores different options and how they may meet the needs of people with differing levels of hearing loss.

Captioning and Note-taking for Group Situations

When the auditory component of communication is weak, it can help to emphasize the visual component. This lesson provides information on captioning and different note-taking systems.

Alerting Devices

How technology is used to alert people with hearing loss to ringing phones, crying babies, smoke alarms, and even Caller ID. In this lesson we learn where to find appropriate technology as well as some fundamentals of one of the most important types of alerting technology—fire alarms.

Innovative Technology of the Future

Visual FM systems, new developments in speech recognition software, and Bluetooth for hearing assistive technology are just a few types of technology in existence today—or right around the corner—for people with hearing loss. This lesson addresses current limitations of technology, innovative ideas for improvements, plus a glimpse of what the future may hold.

Working Effectively with Interpreters and Transliterators

This lesson includes basic information about American Sign Language and other manual communication systems used in the United States. Information on how to work with interpreters and transliterators is included.

Hearing Dogs

Specially trained dogs for people with hearing loss, have been providing added safety and a feeling of security for some people with hearing loss for years. This lesson includes information on how to find hearing dog agencies, who is a candidate, laws related to hearing dogs, and what it is like to live with a hearing dog.

Funding for Hearing Assistive Technology and Services

Hearing assistive technology is getting more and more expensive and few insurance companies provide any coverage. This lesson includes information on where to look for resources to help defray these expenses.

Class 4 Lessons: Advocacy, Resources, and the Law

Seeking and Maintaining Employment: The Rights and Responsibilities of People with Hearing Loss

Students will learn about the Americans with Disabilities Act and the role that self-advocacy plays in an employee's success on the job, along with practical information on how to make the workplace accessible for people with hearing loss.

Laws that Enhance Access to Telecommunications

The technological progress made in telecommunications in the past few decades has been remarkable. Due to diligent advocacy on the part of people with hearing loss, these technologies are becoming more accessible than ever before. Students will learn which laws cover which communication devices, as well as which agencies enforce these laws and regulations.

Advocacy and Legal Rights for Access to Education

Access to an equal education for people with hearing loss is a complex and fascinating issue. In this lesson, students will learn what rights people with hearing loss have under relevant laws as well as the roles of parental advocacy (mostly in K-12 education) and self-advocacy (mostly in post-secondary education).

Enforcing Laws: The Need for Grassroots Involvement

Even at the highest levels of government, it can often be very hard to change a regulation or policy without support from the "grassroots" -- the consumer, the voter, the everyday person writing in and explaining what impact a rule has on their life, and why that rule should be changed. In this lesson students will learn how laws and bills are influenced or decided by advocacy from constituents and customers.

Class 4 Lessons continued: Advocacy, Resources, and the Law

Accessibility Requirements Mandated by Law for Public Places

The Americans with Disabilities Act mandates accessibility for many public places. That may seem simple at first glance, but deciding on what constitutes access (and what constitutes a public place) under the law can be a challenge for both businesses and consumers. This lesson provides a compass to navigating this murky terrain and toward solutions that work for both parties.

Federal Agencies Responsible for Enforcing Disability Laws

An essential component of benefiting from disability access laws is understanding what to do when something goes wrong. This lesson provides a foundation for understanding the major federal players in disability law enforcement.

State and Local Resources that Provide Services for People with Hearing Loss

Few people with hearing loss know about state and local resources that may help them obtain funding for college, afford assistive technology, and provide support for disability related concerns. This lesson explains the basic services these agencies may provide as well as tips on locating them.

Coalitions: Promoting Accessibility for People with Hearing Loss

This lesson identifies the coalitions for people with hearing loss, and explains how these coalitions work together to achieve a higher level of access for people with hearing loss.

The Process of Filing a Complaint for Inaccessible Products and Services

Learn the rights of consumers with hearing loss! This lesson guides consumers and hearing loss support specialists alike through the process of filing complaints and gives tips on how to obtain good results.

Insurance Coverage and Laws Governing the Sale of Hearing Assistive Technology

Both the price of sophisticated new hearing instruments and the population of people who need them are increasing exponentially. Learn what is being done to enhance insurance coverage and protect consumers from fraudulent sales practices.

Newborn and Infant Hearing Screening and Early Intervention

Early identification and treatment for babies with hearing loss is helping to minimize the impact of hearing loss on the development of spoken language. This lesson tells about the amazing progress that has been made with these laws, and the loopholes that are faced today.

Closing Lesson: Ethics, Hearing Loss Support, Final Exam, the Academy Certificate, and Evaluation.

The Academy Advisory Board

For more details on the members of the Academy Advisory Board, please visit us at www.hearingloss.org/academy. Additional members will be added in the future.

Scott J. Bally, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Claire Marcus Bernstein, Ph. D
Teresa Blankmeyer Burke
Paul E. Hammerschlag, M.D., FACS

Michael Harvey, Ph.D.
Patricia Kricos, Ph.D.
Rose Aird Minette, MA
Sam Trychin, Ph.D.

For more information about the Academy, please visit www.hearingloss.org/academy and read the materials posted online, including a detailed “FAQ” (Frequently Asked Questions) page, and registration information. If you still have questions, please contact academy@hearingloss.org.