

—Contributed by Paige Stringer, founder and executive director of the Global Foundation For Children With Hearing Loss; [www.childrenwithhearingloss.org](http://www.childrenwithhearingloss.org). Please visit <http://childrenwithhearingloss.blogspot.com/> to follow our work in Vietnam this summer.

## Singapore

In Singapore, the Listen & Talk Programme Centre for Hearing and Ear Implants was established with the help of Judy Simser. The center supports listening and spoken language development through access to audition with hearing aids, cochlear implants and bone conduction aids. At the center, certified LSLS professionals provide training for local participants as well as those from around the region, such as in Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Thailand and China. We have hosted workshops for the participants as well as onsite training at their respective centers. The team also hosted the 7th Asia Pacific Symposium for Cochlear Implants (APSCI) in 2009, which drew more than 1,000 professionals from around the world for discussions and updates on the latest developments in the field.

The center just celebrated its 10th anniversary in April 2011. As we look back on how far we have come, we also look forward to the future where our children who have hearing loss will have every opportunity to learn to listen and talk. To commemorate the event, we published a handbook, "The Hearing-Impaired Person: Tips for Caregivers and School Teachers." It is our hope that the families and those who work with children who are deaf and hard of hearing will have a better understanding of their needs, and provide the support that enables them to lead independent, fulfilling lives in mainstream society.

—Contributed by Many Phua, LSLS Cert. AVT, an auditory-verbal therapist at the Listen & Talk Programme since 2001.

## India

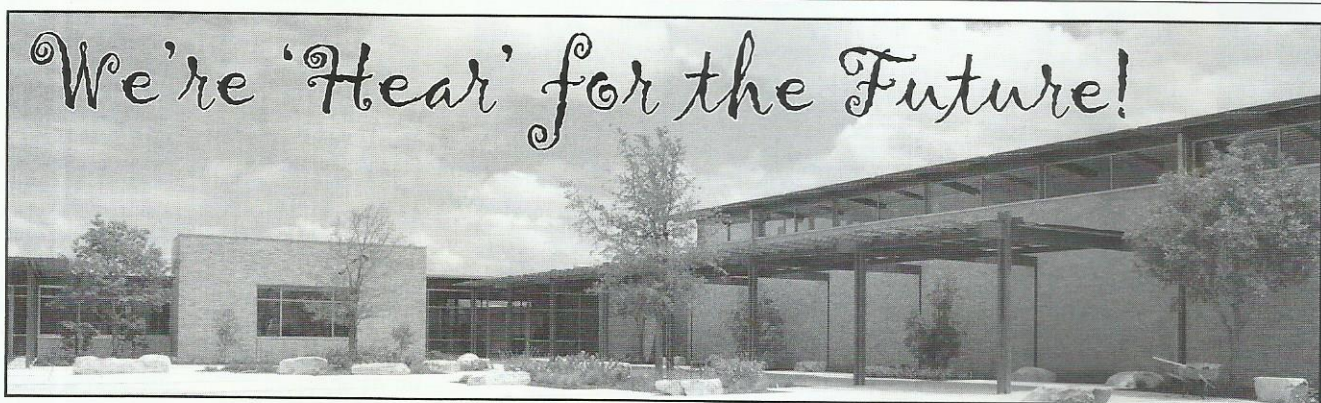
In Mumbai, the Aural Education for Children with Hearing Impairment (AURED) was established 25 years ago to provide a model early intervention program for listening and spoken language, which could be replicated in cities and villages throughout India. AURED has, at present,

a satellite center in Hyderabad and affiliate centers in Delhi and Nairobi.

AURED holds an annual Staff Skills Development Workshop. Professionals from various countries are invited to provide updates on (re)habilitation techniques and new technologies. Cochlear implant companies invite overseas professionals to conduct workshops throughout the year in new mapping, (re)habilitation and surgical techniques. In addition, CIGI-Cochlear Implant Group of India conducts an annual four-day international convention in different cities to update audiologists, (re)habilitationists and surgeons on the latest technology. Professionals in all three fields attend international conferences in different countries for current developments in the field.

All cochlear implant companies have clinical and (re)habilitation managers who conduct workshops throughout the year. And a local ear-nose-and-throat surgeon, Dr. M.V. Kirtane, who has completed more than 1,000 cochlear implant surgeries, holds an annual two-day workshop for professionals from all over India as well as from

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Sunshine Cottage School for Deaf Children is proud to announce the completion of our new 57,000 square foot campus. On a beautiful hilltop, our one-story multi-textured building, has accents of cypress, skylights and expanses of glass to usher in light. Twenty classrooms along three wings are specially insulated from extraneous outside noises and complimented with dramatic views.

**We continue to offer the very best programs and comprehensive educational environment for infants and school-aged children with hearing impairment.**

**We invite you to visit!**

Sunshine Cottage, a listening and spoken language school, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, OPTIONschools International, and is a Texas Education Agency approved non-public school. We accept students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin.

Other campus highlights are:

- Early Childhood and Elementary Programs
- Parent-Infant Cottage
- Speech Pathology
- Audiology Center with five testing booths
- Outdoor and Discovery classrooms
- Music and Art classrooms

## Sunshine Cottage

SCHOOL FOR DEAF CHILDREN  
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neighboring countries. He demonstrates surgical techniques and mentors surgeons in different cities.

—Contributed by Aziza Tyabji, founder of AURED and coauthor of "Need to Know," a series of instructional videos for professional on spoken language development; "Need to Know" is available through the AG Bell Bookstore.

## Australia

Currently there are 12 universities throughout Australia that train speech-language pathologists and five universities that train audiologists. Both professions are in demand, especially audiologists. Among the various academic programs for teachers of the deaf, Melbourne University focuses on listening and spoken language education ([www.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.unimelb.edu.au)). However, many teacher courses now include information about hearing loss as part of a general disability focus. Many Australian university programs are expanding their philosophies to include a focus on preparing professionals to teach listening and spoken language to children with hearing loss.

In-service opportunities for training is limited to the current clinics/institutions, most of which are hindered by a lack of funding and resources for children. There are 42 certified LSLs professionals, with 10 in New Zealand and 11 throughout Asia. And there are a limited number of trained professionals available to educate and mentor professionals to serve the many children with hearing loss throughout Australia and the Pacific Rim. Many auditory-verbal centers have started in-house professional development training programs. There are currently nine centers across Australia providing auditory-verbal intervention.

In Australia, the Hear and Say Centre was developed as a charitable auditory-verbal therapy center. Through Hear and Say WorldWide, a global professional training program, four different professional development/education courses are available face-to-face as well as synchronous or asynchronous distance e-learning. Descriptions of these preliminary, intermediate, advanced and extended courses in auditory-verbal therapy and auditory-verbal education are available at [www.hearandsaycentre.com.au](http://www.hearandsaycentre.com.au). Professional accreditation is provided from

the University of Southern Queensland as part of an education qualification (post-graduate diploma or master's degree in education). Individual clinical mentoring is also available to a limited number of trainees. Teaching faculty are the senior members of the Hear and Say clinical team of ENT surgeons, audiologists, LSLs certified professionals, speech-language pathologists, teachers of the deaf, social workers and other specialists.

The listening and spoken language opportunities for children with hearing loss in Australia are expanding, but are still somewhat limited. Challenges include insufficient funding, as much of this work is carried out by not-for-profit agencies; slow uptake of listening and spoken language education approaches by some professionals; and a lack of knowledge of neuroscience foundations of listening and spoken language among professionals and the community. Nonetheless, Australia does provide hearing devices for all children under 18 years of age at no cost, has a very high percentage of newborns who receive newborn hearing screening, has an increasing uptake in auditory-verbal therapy and education, is very involved in hearing research and development, and has strong interest in continuing to lead in this field.

—Contributed by Dimity Dornan, AM, Ph.D., BSpThy, FSPAA, CpSp, LSLs Cert. AVT, founder and managing director of the Hear and Say Centre, Brisbane, Australia.

## Central and South America

In a short article like this, it is very difficult to mention how each of the Latin American countries addresses professional development issues. However, most programs are located at institutions of higher education where it is possible to obtain university degrees in this field. Almost all the university curricula are centered not only in hearing and speech-language or voice disorders, but also in learning disabilities. So, the professional profile allows graduates to work in each one of these fields with children and adults. Unfortunately, only a few specialists are specifically interested in working with individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. As a consequence, there is a shortage in many cities, provinces or states all over Latin

America of well-trained professionals in the field of (re)habilitation of hearing loss.

I have had the privilege to participate in many training courses for professionals and parents in 15 different countries with the institutional support of the John Tracy Clinic, Los Angeles, Calif. In 2009 we began a special postgraduate course on auditory-verbal therapy in Panama. The acquisition of new skills and the application of the techniques and strategies learned in a direct manner with the families of children with hearing loss have greatly enhanced these professionals' skills. The same course is being planned in the State of Tabasco, Mexico. We are following the practice of these participants through videos and direct observations. In spite of the limited resources of the attendants, the improvement in their skills is constant and their work capacity with the families has systematically improved.

In April 2009 I collaborated with Cochlear Americas to offer the HOPE series of online courses in Spanish. Each of the courses had more than 1,000 participants. Moreover, some centers and clinics facilitate one or more computers to be connected. The number of participants is the best indication of the enormous need and desire to receive information in Spanish.

One of my personal goals has been to motivate the professionals in Latin America and Spain to consider the auditory-verbal approach in spite of the workplace environment. I have also encouraged them to complete the professional development and clinical practice to be considered as candidates to the LSLs certification exam offered by the AG Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language.

—Contributed by Lilian Flores-Beltran, Ph.D., LSLs Cert. AVT, an AG Bell global ambassador and former member of the board of directors. ☺

*Editor's Note: An expanded version of this article, offering additional information about these countries' professional development initiatives, is available at [www.agbell.org/VoltaVoices](http://www.agbell.org/VoltaVoices). This is not a comprehensive list of professional development initiatives around the world. We invite you to visit [www.agbell.org/VoltaVoices](http://www.agbell.org/VoltaVoices) and share information about professional development programs in which you may be involved.*