

October 2023



South Dakota Services for the Deaf

What's Happening at SDSD?



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Halloween Bowling Parties East & West Side of SD

SDSD Outreach Consultants Kerry Ruth and Nina Ringstmeyer, along with Dr. Carly Johnson and Denika Boomsma, and Julie Delfs, organized Halloween Bowling Parties in Rapid City and Brookings, SD, respectively. The families bowled and enjoyed pizza courtesy of the SDSD Foundation. Many families enjoyed the event. SDSD looks forward to these area bowling fun events! The team is already looking forward to next year.

SDSD Outreach Consultant & Audiologist Partner with Augustana University

SDSD Outreach Consultant, Erica Mortensen, and SDSD Audiologist, Dr. Kristine Miller, presented to Augustana University senior interpreting majors about cochlear implants and the role they may play in their future careers. This collaborative effort between SDSD and Augustana University exemplifies the power of partnerships in education, ensuring that future professionals are equipped with a comprehensive understanding of their potential roles in the world of working with children and individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. It was a great collaboration between AU and SDSD as Partners in Education.



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SDSD Consultant Sarah Lingle Peer Inservice

Written by Dayton's mom: Today was a special day at Panther Cubs Academy for Dayton. SDSD Outreach Consultant went to check on Dayton and give a presentation to the class on Dayton's hearing aid. They learned about the parts of the ear and how the hearing aid works, why she needs it, the dos and don'ts of her hearing aid, and she passed around different examples of hearing aids for the kids to look at. Dayton showed the class her hearing aid Barbie and hearing aid bunny. This is a great service the State of SD and SDSD offers as it takes away the stigma of hearing aids and makes everyone aware of what Dayton has in her ear and why. Sarah has been very helpful since the start of this journey for us and we are thankful to have her available to help us navigate through this with us. She will follow Dayton every year she is in school. Sarah commented today, "Dayton is proud of her hearing aid and has accepted it as part of her and we couldn't ask for anything more... she is doing great!"



Back to School Trainings

SDSD Teams were busy in August and September providing back to school trainings for school staff. Consultants and Audiologists are passionate about educating school teams on how to meet best the needs of their students who are deaf and hard of hearing. These training sessions highlight the importance of fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. We are proud to be partners in educational success!



USD Cochlear Implant Mapping Clinic

SDSD Outreach Consultants Nina Ringstmeyer and Kerry Ruth played a crucial role at the USD Speech and Hearing Outreach Clinic in Rapid City on October 26th and 27th. Families residing in the western region were given the opportunity to access cochlear implant and osseointegrated device services closer to home. Partnerships with Rapid City Area Schools (RCAS) and the USD Scottish Rite Speech and Hearing Clinic enabled evaluations at the RCAS Jefferson Building, and special thanks go to Julie Hintgen and Dr. Lisa Hafer for providing the clinic's location. Dr. Messersmith and Liz DeVelder, along with their students, provided audiology and speech services to 14 children, including cochlear implant programming, osseointegrated device programming, consultations, communication support, and language evaluations. Graduate students from the University of South Dakota and Cochlear Americas' Dr. Stephanie Gutzmer, along with SDSD Outreach Consultants Sarah Lingle and Denika Boomsma, contributed to the success of the clinic, which will return in the Spring of 2024.





Kami Van Sickle, SDSD's New Director

Kami Van Sickle is the new Director of South Dakota Services for the Deaf (SDSD). After 12 years of working within the organization, Van Sickle accepted the head position at SDSD at the end of May. Van Sickle graduated from Augustana College with bachelor's degrees in Deaf Education and Elementary Education and later got her master's degree in Special Education from Western Governors University. Before her time at SDSD, Van Sickle was a teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing in the Sioux Falls and Worthington School Districts. Van Sickle started her career with SDSD in 2011 as an Outreach Consultant before transitioning to Service Coordinator in 2018.



Outside of the office, you can find Van Sickle running her three active and talented daughters to all of their activities or enjoying the great outdoors with her family. When asked what she is looking forward to the most in her new role, Van Sickle stated, "The South Dakota Services for the Deaf team is the most knowledgeable, passionate team I've ever encountered. I am excited to stand next to this amazing group and continue to provide top-notch pediatric audiology and educational outreach services for children who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families in our state. SDSD will continue to collaborate with our valued Deaf community, our appreciated stakeholders, and other professionals to provide quality services for children who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families." Van Sickle looks forward to this next professional step and wants the SDSD community to know that her door is always open.

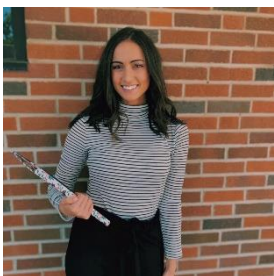
Julie Luke, SDSD's Service Coordinator

Julie Luke is excited to start her new role as a service coordinator at SDSD, driven by a deep passion for supporting students who are deaf and hard of hearing, as well as their families. She is dedicated and committed to coordinating programs SDSD offers such as evaluations, Shared Reading Project, direct services, and Hands in Motion summer program to name a few. In her role, Julie is not only devoted to supporting students and their families but is equally dedicated to supporting the SDSD staff.



Welcome, Dr. Miller to SDSD!

SDSD is excited to welcome our new Pediatric Audiologist, Dr. Kristine Miller, at our Sioux Falls Audiology Clinic! Dr. Miller received her doctorate from the University of South Dakota in 2023. She recently completed her externship at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist (AHWFB), providing diverse pediatric audiology services in North Carolina. Outside the office, you can find Dr. Miller reading a good book and traveling when time allows. In 2022, Dr. Miller completed an internship at the South Dakota Services for the Deaf and she is very excited to be back as an audiologist providing hearing healthcare to the pediatric population in South Dakota.





Erica Mortensen, SDSD's newest Outreach Consultant

SDSD is excited to welcome our newest consultant to the Sioux Falls office! Erica Mortensen received her BA and MA in Deaf Education from Augustana University and the University of Northern Colorado, respectively. She has been a teacher for the deaf/hard of hearing for the last 12 years. Witnessing language development is her favorite aspect in this field, "Seeing those wheels turn and recognizing when the little light bulb goes off after a connection is made that turns language into meaningful communication is so rewarding."

October – National Audiology Awareness Month

October is National Audiology Awareness Month and SDSD and the American Academy of Audiology are reminding the public to be aware of the importance of healthy hearing habits. One of the factors in maintaining healthy hearing is being conscious of loud noise exposure. The degree or decibel (dB) level of the noise and the length of time exposed to the noise are key factors in protecting yourself from possible permanent damage.

The American Academy of Audiology states that lengthy or repeated exposure to noise above 85 decibels, can damage hearing. To put that into perspective, noise from fireworks can reach up to 155 decibels. A jet plane taking off is estimated to be 150 decibels. Shooting a gun is around 140-175 decibels (depending on the gun). An amplified music concert and personal music devices with the volume turned all the way up can be as high (or higher) as 120 decibels. Movie action scenes in the theater have been known to reach 100 decibels. Outdoor sounds can pose a risk too. Lawn mowers are around 85 decibels and chain saws can be 115-120 decibels. Compare these with normal conversation that is around 60-65 decibels.

"Healthy hearing habits are important. So much of our day-to-day communication is auditory based, particularly in the educational environment," says SDSD Audiologist, Carly Johnson. Hearing damage due to noise is largely preventable." Part of an audiologist's job is to educate about safe versus unsafe levels for listening. We want to empower you to protect your hearing now, as damage is not reversible.

"Anyone suspecting that his or her hearing has diminished or is unsure, should see an audiologist to discuss their concerns and obtain a baseline assessment," Johnson says. "This is particularly true as children are developing speech/language and are constantly learning. If you have concerns about your child's hearing status, or if there are concerns about speech/language development, contact SDSD to schedule your child's comprehensive hearing evaluation, at no cost. Reduced auditory/language access can have long-term implications, both for children and adults," says Johnson. Reach out to schedule your child's hearing evaluation at SDSD (Sioux Falls, Rapid City) today, or contact your local audiologist.

SDSD Sioux Falls: 605-367-5200

SDSD Rapid City: 605-791-7839



SDSD Numbers

Audiology Numbers

of children screened by SDSD's Mobile Lab = 3227

of sites visited by SDSD's Mobile Lab and audiology outreach services = 42

of hearing evaluations completed by SDSD's Rapid City Clinic and Sioux Falls Clinic = 250

The table to the right details audiology services provided to South Dakota children from July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023, at SDSD's Sioux Falls Clinic, Rapid City Clinic, and via the mobile lab.

OUTREACH NUMBERS

of Children Currently Being Served by SDSD Outreach Consultants:

640

In-services and guest lectures are provided by members of the SDSD Outreach and Audiology teams as an extension of support for children with varied hearing levels. These in-services relate to varied hearing status and its educational impact, technical assistance and orientation with hearing aids, cochlear implants, FM/DM systems, sound field systems, and/or interpreters, or educational strategies and materials that may benefit SDSD clients. The information to the right details trainings provided by SDSD staff August 2023 through October 2023.

OF INSERVICES AND TRAININGS:

101

OF SOUTH DAKOTANS EDUCATED:

949