

June 2024



# South Dakota Services for the Deaf



## Inside this Edition:

Page 2: Virtual Programming Support

Page 2: Teen Book Club

Page 3: SDSD Partners with USD

Page 4: Disability Day at the Capitol

Page 5: Audiology Numbers

Page 5: Outreach Numbers

## SDSD Guest Lecture at DWU

SDSD welcomes opportunities to partner with universities across South Dakota. Mindy Childs, Assistant Professor of Education at Dakota Wesleyan University, asked SDSD Outreach Consultants Laura Scholten and Jodi Schnider to increase the knowledge of future SD educators by sharing her instructional time to address hearing levels, communication options, technology awareness, and instructional strategies. It was a great opportunity them to learn. SDSD and DWU look forward to continuing this annual event.

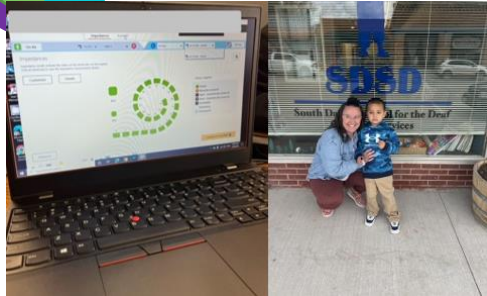
## Collaboration

SDSD Outreach Consultant Kerry Ruth, SDSD Audiologist Dr. Carly Johnson, and Cochlear Americas Audiologist/Representative Dr. Kendell Simms, collaborated with Belle Fourche special education staff over the last several weeks to help troubleshoot remote microphone technology issues for this sweet young man. After lots of investigation, Dr. Simms helped eliminate a rare issue, and then continued the collaboration with Monument Health Audiologist, Dr. Denise Byrd, to help update his BAHA programming quickly. Following the troubleshooting, his wonderful school staff have reported that he is now much more consistent in his responses in his classroom! We may be a rural state but the collaborative partnerships span across a great distance!



4101 W 38<sup>th</sup> St, Suite 101  
Sioux Falls, SD 57106  
Phone: 605-367-5200  
Fax: 605-367-5209

2138 Jackson Blvd  
Rapid City, SD 57702  
Phone: 605-791-7839  
Fax: 605-394-2427



## Virtual Programming Support

SDSD Outreach Consultant Nina Ringstmeyer and Dr. Jessica Messersmith, Audiologist at USD, completed a virtual programming appointment for a family to save them two hours of driving time! The family was able to drive to the Hot Springs SDSL office. With the use of technology, Dr. Messersmith was able to program this little boy's new cochlear implant remotely by taking over the computer from her office in Vermillion. Meeting families where they are and getting them the services they need in the least amount of time is why SDSL's mission, Partners in Educational Success, drives what we do daily.



## Teen Book Club

Outreach Consultants Julie Delfs and Katie Janssen coordinated a book club for SDSL middle school and high school students. They read the book, *Give Me a Sign*, by Anna Sortino. The SDSL Foundation provided a free copy of the book to the participants. The students had a couple of months to complete the book and met at SDSL and on Zoom this spring to discuss. The teens enjoyed the book and felt they could relate to it. By participating in this book club, the students not only improved their reading skills but also found a supportive community where they could share their insights and feelings. It was a rewarding experience for everyone involved, and SDSL is proud to offer these opportunities for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

## SDSD, Deaf-Blind Program & SDSBVI Training

Thank you, Bloom and Grow Academy, for being open to training to benefit the children you care for! SDSL Outreach, Deaf Blind Program, and SD School for the Blind & Visually Impaired welcome co-training opportunities for the children in our programs. Together, we are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all children, ensuring they receive the highest quality of care and education. We look forward to the positive impact this collaboration brings and are grateful for the staff at Bloom and Grow Academy.





## SDSD Partners with USD

SDSD Outreach Consultants Nina Ringstmeyer, Kerry Ruth, and Denika Boomsma assisted in the USD Speech and Hearing Outreach Clinic in Rapid City this spring. SDSD partnered with Rapid City Area Schools (RCAS) and the USD Scottish Rite Speech and Hearing Clinic. Evaluations were performed at the RCAS Jefferson Building. Special thanks to Julie Hintgen, RCAS Educational Audiologist, and Todd Christensen, Special Services Program Director, for providing a location for this clinic.

Dr. Jessica Messersmith, with three audiology students, and Dr. Mandy Williams, with three speech-language pathology (SLP) students, saw 15 kids for audiology and speech appointments. Various services were provided: cochlear implant programming appointments, osseointegrated device programming appointments, consultation/evaluation appointments, communication support, and language evaluations. Representatives from Advanced Bionics and Cochlear Americas partnered with us to provide support during this clinic. Dr. Aggie Kennedy, Clinical Specialist, and Dr. Eva Lopez, Bilingual Cochlear Implant Consumer Specialist, represented Advanced Bionics. Representing Cochlear Americas was Cochlear Provider Network Territory Manager Dr. Stephanie Gutzmer.

The next cochlear implant outreach clinic is scheduled for the Fall of 2024.



## Augustana University Presentation

Ashley Cain, Assistant Professor of Sign Language Interpreting at Augustana University, invited Outreach Consultant Laura Scholten to share information with her students. The presentation focused on how language is "brain food." The importance of feeding the brain as much language as possible via an accessible modality to maximize brain development was emphasized. SDSD is thankful for its partnership with Augustana University!



## SDSD Guest Lecture at USD

Dr. Kyle Brouwer of the Communication Sciences & Disorders Department at the University of South Dakota invited Dr. Carly Johnson (audiologist) and Laura Scholten (speech-language pathologist) to talk to AuD students enrolled in his Counseling in Audiologic Settings course. During the two-hour class, Carly and Laura discussed the hearing loss journey, stages of grief, videos of parents and individuals describing their journey, and considerations after initial identification of a varying hearing level- such a beneficial collaboration.





## Disability Day at the Capitol

Feb 28th was Disability Day at the Capitol and SDSD was thrilled to be a part of it! Outreach Consultant, Sarah Lingle represented SDSD in the Capitol Rotunda along with 14 other resource organizations from across the state. It was a full day of sharing information and catching up with colleagues, lawmakers, and students! Sarah was also able to catch up with a student who was once a preschooler she worked with when he lived in Pierre and is now a high school senior while he was with his school group on tour. South Dakota's future looks bright! This event is hosted to recognize the progress South Dakota has made in supporting its citizens with disabilities, as they seek to equally experience and fully participate in the daily life of our great state. It provides an opportunity for us to explore what steps we need to take to ensure progress continues. It is also a time for us to say, "Thank You" for your work on behalf of South Dakotans with disabilities and their families.



## Coffee/Sign Chat

Outreach Consultant Katie Janssen and Interpreter Chloe Mayo hosted a parent Coffee/Sign Chat. This wonderful gathering took place at a local school, providing a warm and welcoming environment for families to connect and learn. During the event, Katie and Chloe introduced several new signs, enhancing the families' communication skills and fostering a deeper understanding of American Sign Language. This hands-on learning experience was not only educational but also a lot of fun for everyone involved. At SDSD, we are committed to providing meaningful community opportunities like these, so that parents can connect with each other.



## Optimist Club Contest for D/HH Students

Nine students from South Dakota and Minnesota participated in the Optimist Club's Communication Contest for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. The topic was "How to Change the World with Optimism." SD's Joel Dahlhoff won third place, a Metro Deaf School, MN student won second place, and SD's Liberty Herweh won first place. Liberty won a \$2500 scholarship for post secondary school. The nine participants shared how they can change the world with optimism. SDSD was proud to host this event, and we extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the participants and winners for their exceptional achievements. Their optimism and dedication to making a positive impact serve as an inspiration to us all.





# SDSD Numbers

## Audiology Numbers

# of children screened by SDSD's Mobile Lab = 26,919

# of sites visited by SDSD's Mobile Lab and audiology outreach services = 229

# of SDSD appointments in Sioux Falls and Rapid City Clinics = 1,151

*The table to the right details audiology services provided to South Dakota children from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, 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:**

**656**

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 July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

**# OF INSERVICES AND TRAININGS:**

**145**

**# OF SOUTH DAKOTANS EDUCATED:**

**2433**