

Minutes for the March 10, 2006 LACHL Meeting

Guest Speaker: Dr. Lauri Rush, Director of Gallaudet University's Mental Health Center

Topic: How to Raise a Psychologically Healthy Deaf/Hard of Hearing Child

- I. Business Meeting
- II. Old Business
 - Last meeting – How to advocate for your child
 - Brain storming activity
 - Loudoun County Schools
 - First LACHL Bowling Night
 - Open Positions
 - Secretary
 - Membership Chairperson
 - Activity Chairperson
 - Annual Membership Drive
 - Why become a member
 - Tax Deductible
- III. Updates
 - Seminar – “Wrights Law” website
 - Summarize the information
 - Can purchase IDEA 2004 book on website
 - Next seminar March 15, 2006 in Annapolis, MD
 - Advocacy website: advocacyinstitute.org
 - Upcoming Speakers:
 - April 21, 2006 Gallaudet Panel
 - May 12th, Party for the kids
 - Officers:
 - Lisa Smith: Closed bank account and sent in checks
 - Webmaster: Brian; www.loudounhearing.org had 72 hits last October and now over 400 hits last month; send any changes or suggestions to webmaster
 - Fundraising: Maureen: Herndon Festival: Need volunteers in order to sell cotton candy.
 - Marketing: Newspaper notices went out in local papers.
- IV. Guest Speaker: Dr. Lauri Rush:
 - Greeting

- She asked everyone to introduce themselves
- Introduction and background on Dr. Rush
- Gallaudet Clinic
- Pitfall # 1: Abuse and/or Neglect your child
 - The same parenting guidelines for deaf children as hearing children
 - Deaf children are abused more often than hearing children
 - Relationship between parent and child: Love and take care of your child
- Pitfall # 2: Avoid Communicating with your Child
 - Need to make sure they can communicate with others in your household
 - Do not leave your child out of discussions within your family
 - Consider bilingualism as an option
- Pitfall # 3: Not having good role models
 - Expose your children to the deaf community and other deaf children and adults.
 - Self-esteem and acceptance
 - How to integrate your family into the deaf community?
 - Go to functions
 - Library with sign language story times
- Pitfall # 4: Follow the doctors' orders – No need to do your own research
 - Even though it's a full time job, do your own research
 - Dealing with advice, even if you don't ask for it or like what they are saying.
- Pitfall #5: Wallowing in your Grief
 - Denial
 - Blaming
 - Guilt
 - Fear and Anxiety
 - Anger
 - Ignorance
 - Acceptance

- Pitfall #6: Making your child's hearing and speech the primary focus
 - Identity – Don't make your child's hearing or speech the main focus of your relationship, worry about everyday stuff, ie: sports, school, dance, etc...
 - Separation – Children need attention from their parents, no different from hearing children
 - Debates over language: All parents should come together for the advocating for your children and not fighting with one another.
- Pitfall # 7: Enlighten your child of his or hers limitations and disabilities
 - Don't lower your expectations, education, social activities, etc... of your child.
- Pitfall #8: Over protect your poor deaf child
 - Empower your child
 - Give them their independence
 - Importance of Language (no matter what kind of communication they choose to use)
 - Teach them the importance of self-regulation
- Pitfall # 9: Ignore the Hearing Siblings and Favor the Deaf Child
 - Siblings needs – take the day just to spend with each child individually.
 - Pride
- Pitfall # 10: Become a Martyr
 - No perfect parent or child
 - You don't have to be perfect just "Good enough"
 - Take care of yourself, so you can take better care of your children, deaf or hearing.
 - You can't do it all.
- Celebrate and Smile: Be a family and let your child be a child
- Question – Child's Identity?
- Help them figure out who they want to be and let them define themselves, support their decisions.