

2007

# Creating a parent workshop that encompasses and meets the educational desires for parents of children with hearing impairments being taught in an oral deaf education program

Megan Beauduy

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/pacs\\_capstones](http://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/pacs_capstones)



Part of the [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Beauduy, Megan, "Creating a parent workshop that encompasses and meets the educational desires for parents of children with hearing impairments being taught in an oral deaf education program" (2007). *Independent Studies and Capstones*. Paper 168. Program in Audiology and Communication Sciences, Washington University School of Medicine.  
[http://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/pacs\\_capstones/168](http://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/pacs_capstones/168)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Program in Audiology and Communication Sciences at Digital Commons@Becker. It has been accepted for inclusion in Independent Studies and Capstones by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Becker. For more information, please contact [engeszer@wustl.edu](mailto:engeszer@wustl.edu).

**CREATING A PARENT WORKSHOP THAT ENCOMPASSES AND  
MEETS THE EDUCATIONAL DESIRES FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN  
WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS BEING TAUGHT IN AN ORAL DEAF  
EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**By**

**Megan Beauduy**

**An Independent Study  
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of:**

**Master of Science in Deaf Education**

**Washington University School of Medicine  
Program in Audiology and Communication Sciences**

**May 18, 2007**

**Approved by:  
Christine Clark MA Ed., Independent Study Advisor**

*Abstract: The purpose of this study was to create a parent workshop that was developed around the parents' educational needs.*

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank my advisor, Chris Clark, for her unbridled support throughout the entire workshop process. Her guidance was invaluable and appreciated greatly. I would also like to thank the other coordinators Lynda Berkowitz and Barb Lanfer along with the other CID staff members who gave of their time to make the workshop a success.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	ii
List of Tables and Graphs	iv
List of Abbreviations	v
Literature Review of Background Information	1
Methodology	12
Results	15
Discussion	24
Conclusion	29
Works Cited	30
Appendix A- Survey	31
Appendix B- Workshop Evaluation	33
Appendix C- Workshop Schedule	36
Appendix D- Invitation	37

## List of Tables and Graphs

Table 1: Returned Survey Results	16
Table 2: Evaluation Data per Session	17
Table 3: Presentation of New Information	18
Table 4: Parent Responses to Quality of Presentation	18
Table 5: Parent Responses to Question 1	22
Table 6: Parent Responses to Question 2	22
Table 7: Parent Responses to Question 3	23
Table 8: Parent Responses to Question 4	23
Table 9: Parent Responses to Question 5	24
Graph 1: Information was beneficial: Special Education Law	19
Graph 2: Information was beneficial: New Technology	19
Graph 3: Information was beneficial: Mainstreaming	20
Graph 4: Information was beneficial: CID Graduate Panel	20
Graph 5: Information was beneficial: Research Advancements	21
Graph 6: Information was beneficial: Early Language Development or Developing Complex Language at Home	21

## List of Abbreviations

CID- Central Institute for the Deaf

## Literature Review of Background Information

“When schools take steps to motivate parental involvement, they support parents’ effectiveness in helping their children learn (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005).”

Before universal newborn hearing screening programs, parents were the primary foundation in identifying their child with a hearing impairment (Brand & Coetzer, 1994). Now, their role has changed, but it is still just as vital in their child’s future. Parents are educated through early intervention programs, counseling efforts, and other informative instruction geared directly to them. This education parents receive aids in meaningful communication with their children who are hearing impaired. This developed relationship is a fulfilling relationship that is shared by both the parent and the child (Brand & Coetzer, 1994). For children with hearing impairments, the result of universal newborn hearing screening has been earlier identification which has then resulted in more time in early intervention programs. Parents’ reactions, acceptance, and advocacy greatly influence the success rate for a child with a hearing impairment (DesGeorges, 2003).

Parent education is given globally for all parents, not just those who have children with hearing impairments or other disabilities. Norway offers preparation classes to parents in some parts of their county. In Sweden, parent education is a legal requirement that is seen to promote health by enhancing child growth and providing parents support. The people in Sweden feel parents need to be well informed and confident about their role as parents, especially first time parents. They also feel that due to the changes society often makes in the parental role, the parents need to be educated on problems that could arise and how to deal with them if there is a poor support network. The parents in Sweden feel that the support and having the ability to share experiences with other parents who may be experiencing the same thing is important.

These findings were revealed in a study conducted in 2004 (Pettersson, Pettersson, & Hakansson, 2004).

The study looked at the content and structure of the parent education system along with how satisfied the parents were with these facets. The area of content was subcategorized into: knowledge of child development, interplay within the family, contact with other parents, and knowledge and community support. Through group meetings, the parents noted that the social contact with other parents was especially rewarding. It enabled them to share stories, lend support, and further develop and validate their own role as a parent. This was true in particular for the parents who were not close in proximity to family; the support from the group made up for the lack of adult support they were not receiving. The area of assessing the structure of their parent education was broken down into the subcategories of organization of the group meetings, and the nurse as a group leader. The parents were notified of the meeting topic ahead of time so that they could attend the meeting as prepared as possible. Due to outside circumstances, it was also found that parents who were “socially vulnerable,” which included those who were unemployed or were immigrants, had irregular and infrequent attendance rate (Pettersson, Pettersson, & Hakansson, 2004).

In general, parents’ involvement in their child’s education has been related to that child’s success (Grolnick et al, 1997), academic achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001), and a child’s competence from grades and test scores (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005). These effects have been displayed across many different age levels and populations of children. Parent involvement is measured in a variety of ways with each study defining what they considered parent involvement to be. In many previous studies, the main focal point of the predictors that drive parent involvement, have been through demographics. The demographic results have shown that

parents of lower income, single parents, and those who completed less schooling, are typically less involved than those parents who have completed more school, are married, and have a higher income, but did not go into discussion regarding how these factors affect the involvement (Grolnick et al, 1997).

Grolnick (1997) and her colleagues described three types of involvement. These three types were the parent's behavior, which looked at to what degree did the parent participate in school activities and being inquisitive and helpful at home, how often and to what extent the parent provided the child with intellectual experiences and activities across many different mediums, and how personally involved the parent was about the progress of their child in school. The authors then examined the factors that would predict these three types of involvement. The factors were designed in a hierarchical model that started with the individual level of parent and child influences, then moved to the broader concept of the contextual level of family context, and finally, to the level of institutional effects of attitudes and practices of teachers. Due to the fact that each factor would have different values for the families depending on the family structure and possible child gender dissimilarities that would arise, the authors considered moderating the effects (Grolnick et al, 1997).

Their results showed that parent involvement was predicted from factors on all levels they examined. They noted that socioeconomic status did play a role in predicting involvement on the levels of school and cognition, but not within personal involvement. The authors also pointed out that the time of school activities, especially those that directly need parent participation, should be considered for parents who are working during the day and would not be able to attend. Their research found that parents who feel their child is demanding to work with, often shy away from those interactions. To prevent this, the authors suggest providing the

parents with strategies for working with their child and being more involved at home. Parents who view their role as someone to help educate their child become more involved in providing cognitively stimulating activities. A huge factor in the ideas that parents perceive as their role in education comes from cultural reasons and needs to be considered when evaluating the parent's involvement. This is especially true since the study documented it is not just one factor that determines or predicts parents' involvement, but a combination of several factors on several different levels (Grolnick et al, 1997).

Fan and Chen (2001) agree with this thought. They believe that parent involvement can be hard to conceptualize as the result of only one factor. Since parent involvement has many different ways and settings where it can be measured, multiple factors influenced it, not just one. The authors remarked on how studies in the past have had different definitions of parental involvement and the behaviors and practices that comprise each definition. All of these differentiations have caused inconsistent results in the authors' viewpoints. The authors also noted that there has been an overwhelming lack of empirical data collected with theoretical frameworks until recently. They feel the lack of this data limits the past studies inconsistent findings and the generalizing those authors did (Fan & Chen, 2001).

While the authors present data that claims the relationship between parental involvement and child achievement could be considered weak for a variety of reasons, they do supply some of the recent advancements other researchers are making by incorporating better practices into their studies. Levels of parent opportunities for involvement in school have been expanded to include these six factors: helping parents with disciplinary skills, school to parent communications, getting the parents involved in activities the school is doing in conjunction with the community, having parents involved with decisions about school, allowing parents the chance to volunteer in

the school, and involving the parents in the learning process at home. Researchers have also started to include theoretical frameworks that the authors value. An example of this is a study that involved looking at three factors. These three factors were: why parents became involved with their child's education, how the parents chose the activities and the ways they were going to be involved, and why their involvement has a positive impact on the child's school life (Fan & Chen, 2001).

The authors from the study sought to perform a meta-analysis of the empirical studies that have been done. Their own analysis revealed that there was a positive relationship shown between child success and parental involvement when looking at measures that were broader, rather than extremely specific. They found that a parent's supervision of the child had little correlation to success. The relationship that they found to be the strongest associated with children's achievement academically, was their parents' expectations and hopes for the child's educational achievement. These authors documented that there is empirical evidence as well that supports that socioeconomic status has a positive relationship with parent involvement although it could not be addressed in the study due to the fact that the studies they analyzed did not commonly have this information available in their studies (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Hoover-Dempsey (2005) and her colleagues have been doing research in the field of parental involvement for over twelve years. While they note there have been limitations in studies done, they still provide evidence supporting a positive correlation between parental involvement and a wide variety of ways it enhances a child's academic life. From their own previous research, the authors are able to give three reasons parents are motivated to be involved. These three reasons include the fact that some parents simply believe that it is their job to be involved and that it is useful to help their child learn. Others take their lead from what they

perceive the school, teacher, and child want them to be involved in, and finally what the parents' life has taught them or allowed them to believe and then carry out in regards to being involved (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005).

These authors include some interesting basic realities that affect parental involvement. Some parents are naturally going to be involved. They need no special encouragement to do so. A portion of these parents can then in turn create issues for administration due to the fact that they often believe the school should focus on the achievements of their child. This can limit the time and resources the administration is able to give the other families and children in the school. It can also cause the child to miss out on some important skills that need to be learned for independence and responsibility. Another reality that frequently takes place is the decline of parental involvement as the child reaches the secondary education stages of middle and high school. Research then often focuses on the elementary and early middle school years of children (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005).

The study delves deep into explaining the three motivational factors and the details that comprise each one. It then offers copious suggestions for schools and teachers to improve their approach to parents when dealing with involvement. The most important finding of the research, according to the authors, is the fact that schools influence parents' decisions concerning involvement. The research suggests that the schools implement measures to create a conducive environment for parents. Schools need to be more aware of and then advance what the parents' feel their role is in how valuable it is to help their child learn. Schools need to be flexible to adapt to the many schedules and life situations that their parents are experiencing, so they may still participate in the activities. The schools also need to improve their practice of inviting the

parents to a way that helps the parents feel like they need to be involved (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005).

A school's inability to do these things may adversely affect the parents by diminishing motivation to participate in their child's academic life. Parents need to be empowered by the school. When a school looks at the motivational factors of parents and supports them, the result will end up being parents who are more motivated which therefore has a positive influence on the child. Parents need to learn that their behaviors affect their child's success and that their involvement with the school creates positive achievements for their child in school as well. Schools can teach parents that their effectiveness grows with the additional relationships they can make with other parents by influencing them to become involved (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005).

The authors note their limitations were focusing on the parents who are involved, and taking a psychological perspective to their research. Even though this then limits the generalizability, their goal was to be able to take their research and enhance all parents' involvement through better school practices based on the knowledge learned from the research (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005). The article is a vital tool to any school or administration who wants to improve their relationships with parents and encourage more involvement. "When school systems attempt to promote teacher and principal contributions to effective parental involvement, they support schools' effectiveness in educating children (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005)."

For parents of children with hearing impairments or who are deaf, the general idea of parental involvement is important, especially due to the successes that have been associated with it. There are other reasons for why parent education is so vital. In a study that looked at the

responses of parents to their child with a hearing impairment, the results showed higher stress levels for mothers and also in parents who completed less grades of schooling, and less stress in their more educated counterparts. The study documented that when a parent and child relationship is being established, effective communication is an imperative aspect. This factors into the child's social and cognitive development as well. Dealing with the stress levels and how they effect communication can be discussed properly through programs that provide training to parents who have children with hearing impairments (Brand & Coetzer, 1994).

In conjunction with these findings, a study was completed that evaluated the psychic stress and quality of life for parents with children who have hearing impairments. The results showed no connection between the degree of the hearing loss and the amount of parental stress. It did however note that the quality of life for the parent improved as the child aged; and that parents felt more stressed when their child had higher than average speech development before cochlear implantation than those who had children who had lower than average speech development. The researchers in the study verified that the results highlighted the need for parents to have education, counseling, and support through the phases of decision making in their child's life (Burger et al, 2006).

Bernstein and Barta (1988) feel it goes without saying that parents of children who are hearing impaired need to be educated about their child and the many factors involving hearing impairment. There are books for parents, strategies for educators, and programs that offer intervention for young children. All of these parts become involved in the counseling and education of the parents, and occasionally seem to have a misalignment in when information is being presented and what is being discussed. Programs need to take into consideration the

parents' views of what to discuss, how it should be done, and when it should occur. That is the focus of the study (Bernstein & Barta, 1988).

Prior to the procedures of their study, the authors gave insight into important issues. While not all parents are involved in intervention and educational programs, these parents often become lost and unaware of many critical steps. Parents who are involved in programs though, may not see the information they are receiving as relevant or timely in their own perception of what is most critical for them to learn. This occurs most often when the program is designed around a professional's opinion of what is best for the parent. Instead, the program should question the parent to determine both the short and long term goals. Parents are not all the same and in group settings, the administrator or counselor has to assess the needs of each individual parent, which often does not take place. Another aspect mentioned is the fact that socioeconomic status, parent experience, parent education level, and family background all have an impact on how successful the intervention program will be for any particular parent (Bernstein & Barta, 1998).

The authors developed a survey that was given to both parents and professionals who were engaged in educating the parents through intervention programs and other medical professionals who would deal with parents that have children who have hearing impairments. The parents and professionals exhibited some differences in their survey results. The two groups were asked to rank the order of importance of topics of information which yielded differences in rankings, but nothing overall significant. The parents indicated they wanted each topic to be presented specifically and in a broad general way. The parents then had to indicate the frequency they thought these topics should be presented. Most topics were desired to be presented and repeated over a period of months. Information about the child's future was

information the parents wanted presented over many years and the parents indicated some information needed only to be presented once. This information was regarding deafness, hearing aids, and the hearing science components (Bernstein & Barta, 1998).

The general conclusion of the study was that there were not major differences between parents and professionals. The parents seemed willing and eager to voice their opinions to any professional that wanted to know so that they may incorporate the parents' suggestions into their program. The parents showed a great deal of interest in the topics that directly related to their child and that was practical to them. Broader more technical information was desired but at a lower importance level. Professionals were encouraged to structure their program around the needs of the specific population of parents the program was serving. The authors decided the next step needed to be finding the level of satisfaction the parents had regarding the different programs offered to determine if a particular method of education is more effective (Bernstein & Barta).

Professionals who work in early intervention programs need to hear about both positive and negative experiences from parents who have been through the program so that they can continue to enhance their program for future families. The Joint Committee on Infant Hearing also feels that by doing this, it allows for parents to input information that is at the heart of developing the optimal early intervention program. This ideal program development is done by supporting the families and getting them involved in all processes (DesGeorges, 2003).

“Understanding the experiences of families can help to build a system that not only offers services based on professional training and expertise, but also offers a family-oriented experience that works for real families, in real-life settings (DesGeorges, 2003). Parents of children with hearing impairments need an incredible amount of information to make effective

decisions for their child. It is important that the information comes from a variety of sources with different perspectives and information because this allows the parents diverse and balanced supports in their decision making (DesGeorges, 2003).

In this field, there are often debates over the best way to educate a child who is deaf or hard of hearing. If professionals expect parents to make well-informed decisions regarding a choice in communication methods for their child, they need to be sure the families are given the information, resources, and supports that are required. There are many components in successful parent and professional partnerships that have already been established in early intervention programs nation-wide. Samplings of these building blocks are clear and honest communication, shared decision making and goals, understanding, joint evaluation of progress, mutual respect and accessibility. The next step that programs must undertake is involving parents directly in the program at a stage where decisions are being made for the services given to the children. At the time of publication, there were only fifteen percent of early intervention programs serving children with hearing impairments who had parents giving this type of contribution to the programs' supervisory staff (DesGeorges, 2003).

The article gives examples of ways parents can be directly involved and participate in an early intervention program. These ideas help make the programs even more successful and include activities of being representatives at statewide functions, pre-service for teachers, parent-to-parent activities, and quality improvement initiatives. Overall, the more we encourage parent perspectives and experiences, we will, and have already, begun to change the method of information delivery and services to better fit what parents see as the most real and critical way. This encourages meaningful parent participation and involvement that we know will create a

better life for their child and for other children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DesGeorges, 2003).

## **Methodology**

### *Participants*

The participants in this study were parents of students enrolled in both the early intervention and school programs at the Central Institute for the Deaf. All of the parents or guardians of the children were contacted. There are children enrolled in the pre-kindergarten department who are hearing whose parents were not contacted. The participants were contacted twice during the school year, once in November and once in February. In November, a survey was sent to the 78 family residences and in February 68 invitations were also sent to the homes. The discrepancy in these numbers occurs because of families that were no longer enrolled in the programs.

### *Procedures*

This study began by contacting a parent representative from the school's parent organization. This particular individual spear-headed the parents desire for a workshop. The goal of the contact was to gain more information about what the parents' ideas were and any other thoughts they had regarding the workshop. The parent organization had a very practical request: a day long workshop, held on a weekend, that offered incentives of free childcare and food for the parents.

The next step was to determine what topics the parents felt they wanted more information about. The parent representative suggested using a list that was derived during a parent support group meeting the previous year as a starting point. The list incorporated both topics the parents had enjoyed throughout the year and felt would be beneficial to hear again, along with topics that had not been presented but were of interest. Information that explained to the parents the

purpose of the workshop and the time of year it would be occurring was sent out along with a survey asking for their opinions on topics for the sessions. The topics that were generated from the parent organization meeting were listed on the survey and parents were to circle any that they would like to see as a session. There was also a space included so parents could write in a topic that was not listed. These surveys were mailed to each household of a student enrolled at the school. Enclosed with this mailing was a stamped, self-addressed envelope that the parents were to use to send the survey back to the school. The survey did not have any indicators on it or did not ask for any personal information, which made anyone who returned it anonymous. The survey is included in the appendix.

Once the surveys were returned, the data collected was analyzed. This was done to see which topics the parents felt were the most significant. After seeing which topics had more appeal to the parents, the selection of the high-interest topics were chosen as the workshop session topics. The topics that were of low interest were not completely disregarded, but included into the workshop in a different way.

After establishing what the workshop sessions would be, deciding upon who would be the presenter took place. Through meetings with school personnel and fellow classmates, presenters' names were brainstormed and selected. These presenters were then contacted by a face to face invitation, email, or telephone call. The presenters were told the workshop's date, purpose, and a brief outline of the content in their session. At the same time the presenters were being contacted, two other details were also being developed. One of these details was the workshop schedule. An original schedule was planned and later modified with the help of the school coordinators. The schedule included coordinating session lengths, breaks, lunch, and making the day reasonable in duration. The other detail was contacting organizations to take part

in the day by setting up informational tables. This was done to include some of the topics that only generated low-interest from the survey. A variety of organizations, companies and other services were contacted via email and encouraged to participate. There was no cost to any organization. When they were contacted, they were told about the workshop, what the time requirements were, and that they would be provided with lunch. The tables needed to be on display by the time the parents had their first break and would remain until the parent's lunch break had finished.

Soon after all the presenters and organizations were contacted, an invitation was made. The invitation gave parents the time and date, the schedule, overviews of the sessions, and a cut off slip that needed to be returned if they planned on attending. This slip also asked the parents to write in how many children would be attending and their ages. The invitations were sent to each household of a student that was enrolled in the school. The parents were encouraged to return the slips to their child's teacher or mail it back to the school. The slips were then collected from the teachers to keep a count of both the parent attendees and children needing childcare. The invitation can be viewed in the appendix.

Another critical part of the preparations was to think about the logistics of the workshop. The school library was chosen for the setting of the workshop. The last session gave parents a choice between two presenters, so in that case an extra classroom was reserved. The exhibitor tables were to be placed in the atrium lobby of the school, and the food was to be set up in the hallway. A rental company was contacted to rent tables for the library. Other supplies such as snack food for the children and notepads with pens for the parents were purchased.

Volunteers were recruited from school staff and graduate students as the childcare providers for the day. Once the volunteers were found, a schedule was developed. The schedule

had to take into account the three different age groups of children and the requests of the volunteer's availability. After the volunteers' schedule was established, it was sent to them through email. A schedule also needed to be developed for each of the three age groups to be used as a guide for the volunteers. The next preparation was coordinating with the parent organization representative regarding the food. This representative needed to know how many attendees, children, volunteers, presenters, and exhibitors that would be present during the breakfast and lunch hours. A volunteer was asked to pick up the food so the parent did not have to leave during the workshop.

The final preparation was to take into consideration how the parents' needs were met by this workshop. A survey was derived to evaluate this. The survey was enclosed in the each parent's folder that was given to them upon check-in. On the survey, the first part had the parents rate three aspects of each presentation. These aspects were: the presentation was clear and understandable, the information was beneficial to me, and I learned new material in this session. These measures were done by a 4 point Likert scale. The second part of the survey included open ended questions to assess the parents' motivation for attending, what their thoughts on parent education were, and what they did and did not like regarding the workshop. The parents were also asked if they felt this should be an annual event.

## **Results**

The original survey was sent home to 78 families and twelve surveys returned, which was a return rate of fifteen percent. Of the twelve that were returned, data was collected on which topics the parents were most interested in. This occurred by using a table and tallying how many parents indicated they were interested in a particular topic. The following information is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1- Returned Survey Results**

<b>Topic</b>	<b># of votes</b>
New Technology	7
Advancements in Research	6
Mainstreaming issues	7
Deaf culture	2
How language develops	4
How to structure complicated language	3
CID recent graduate panel	6
Young adult CID graduates	3
Special Education Law	8
Activities at deaf clubs in St. Louis	3
Other ideas parents wrote in:	
Bilateral implants	
Sibling session	
Education for older siblings in regard to young deaf siblings	

The top three topics were special education law, new technology, and mainstreaming issues. Since these were the dominate issues parents were interested in, these three topics were chosen as the first three sessions of the workshop. They would each be given equal time, but their time would be greater than the sessions in the afternoon. The other topics of advancements in research, graduates of the school, and both facets of language development were incorporated into the schedule in the afternoon. The last period of the day was a concurrent session. For parents of very young children, the option of how language develops was offered; and for parents of children who were already using simple language, the option of how to develop complicated language at home was offered.

The other topics were represented by exhibitors. To include Deaf culture and activities at Deaf clubs in the local area, local organizations of this nature were invited to attend and set up tables to promote their organization. The write-in suggestion for bilateral implants was integrated into the new technology presentation. The last two write-in suggestions were similar, and were pursued. A local agency, the Belle Center, provides Sib Shops on a monthly basis at

their own facility for siblings of children who have a wide range of disabilities. They were contacted, but due to their staff member's schedules, were unable to provide this service.

### *The Workshop*

The workshop took place on a Saturday in March. While we expected 29 adults and 31 children, the number of those who returned invitation slips, we had 22 adults and 17 children attend. We had eight exhibitor tables present. These tables were sponsored by Med-El, Advanced Bionics, Sprint, Paraquad, the Deaf Teen Club, the Greater St. Louis Association for the Deaf, IMPACT, and a registration table for school for the upcoming year. The schedule of the day can be viewed in the appendix.

### *Workshop Evaluation*

The workshop evaluation survey was given to each of the 22 attendees. Out of those in attendance, 18 evaluations were returned. Due to parents' schedules the sessions were not all fully attended. Table 2 shows the attendance of parents who completed the workshop evaluation for each session. The workshop evaluation survey can be seen in the appendix.

**Table 2- Evaluation Data per Session**

<b>Session Attendance</b>	
<i>Session Name</i>	Number of parents who provided evaluation data
Special Education Law	17
New Technology	18
Mainstreaming	18
CID Graduate Panel	16
Research Advancements	15
Early Language Development or Developing Complex Language at Home	12

The first part of the evaluation looked at three features of each session: did the parents feel they learned new information, was the information beneficial to them, and was it presented

in a clear and understandable way. The latter two features were assessed based on a 4 point Likert scale and the first feature was a simple yes or no question. The data from the evaluation survey was compiled into tables and graphs. Table 3 looks at whether or not the parents felt they learned new information in each session.

**Table 3- Presentation of New Information**

<b>Did you learn new information during this session?</b>			
<i>Session Name</i>	Yes	No	Did not attend
Special Education Law	17	0	1
New Technology	17	1	0
Mainstreaming	16	2	0
CID Graduate Panel	16	0	2
Research Advancements	15	0	3
Early Language Development or Developing Complex Language at Home	12	0	6

Table 4 illustrates whether the parents felt the presentation was done in a manner that was clear and understandable to them. This is one of the features that used the 4 point Likert scale. The parents had to judge whether they were in strong disagreement, disagreement, agreement, or strong agreement with this statement. This statement and judgment was considered for each of the six sessions the parents attended.

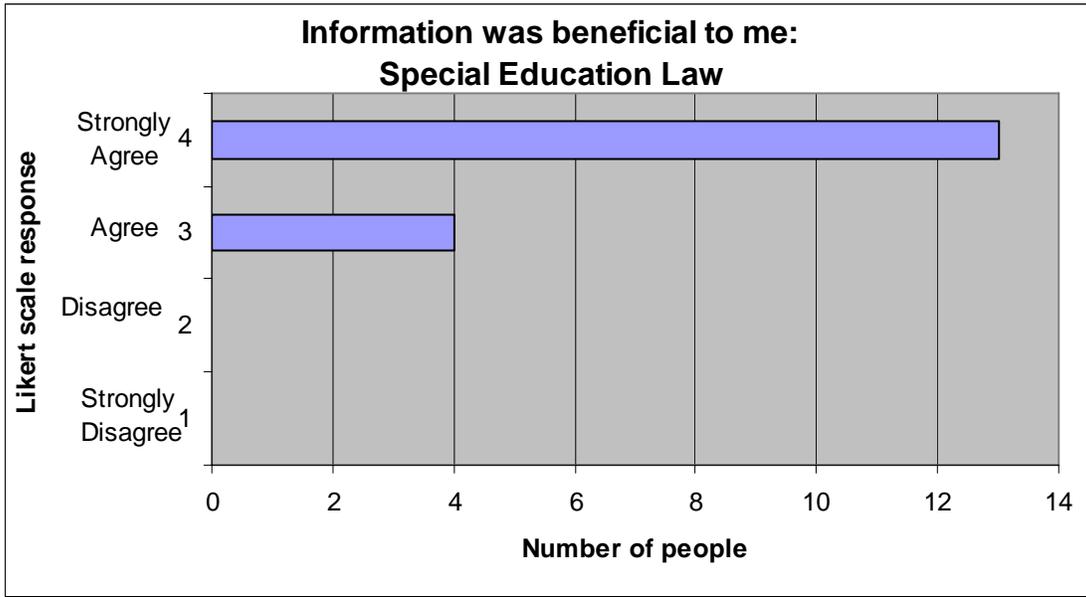
**Table 4- Parent Response to Quality of Presentation**

<b>The Presentation was clear and understandable.</b>				
<i>Session Name</i>	Strongly disagree [1]	disagree [2]	agree [3]	strongly agree [4]
Special Education Law	0	0	3	14
New Technology	0	1	3	14
Mainstreaming	0	0	5	13
CID Graduate Panel	0	2	8	6
Research Advancements	0	2	7	6
Early Language Development or Developing Complex Language at Home	0	0	0	12

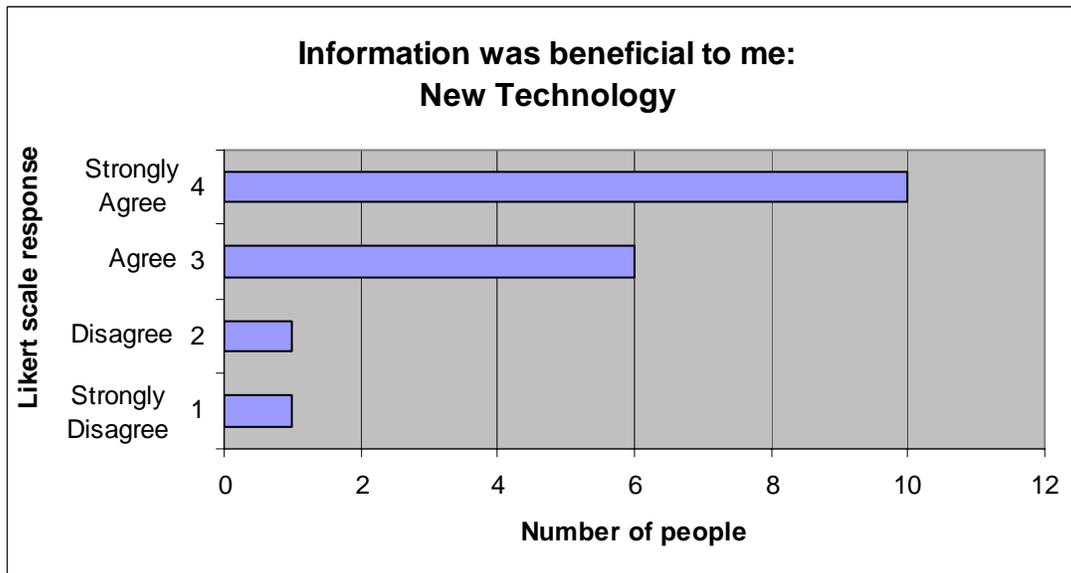
Graphs 1 through 6 are visual representations of the data that was accumulated from the evaluation survey regarding whether the parents thought the information that was presented in

each session was beneficial to them. Each graph shows how many parents indicated their levels of agreement or disagreement to the statement. The graphs are presented in the order the sessions occurred.

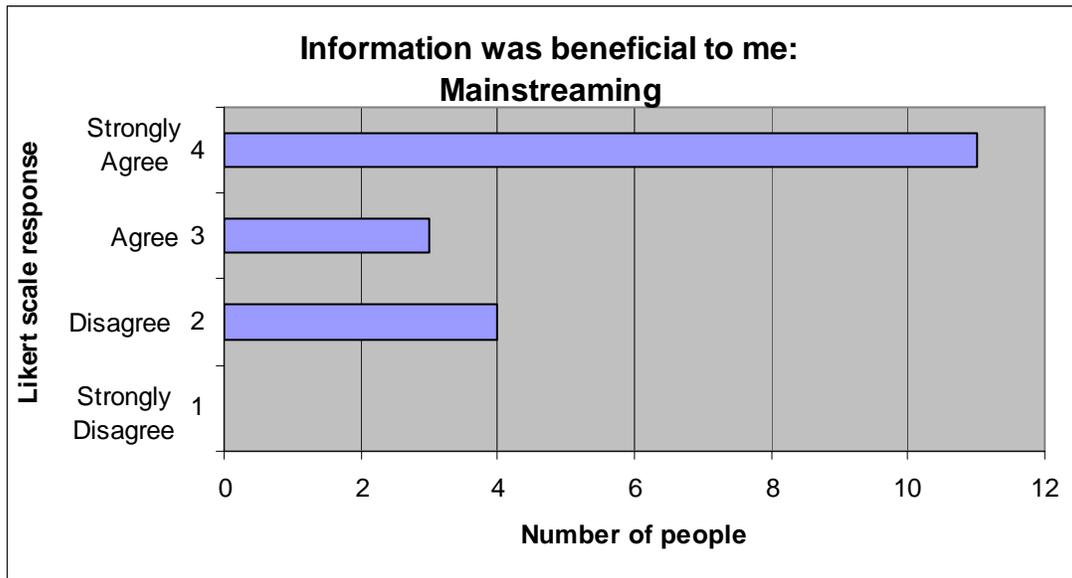
**Graph 1**



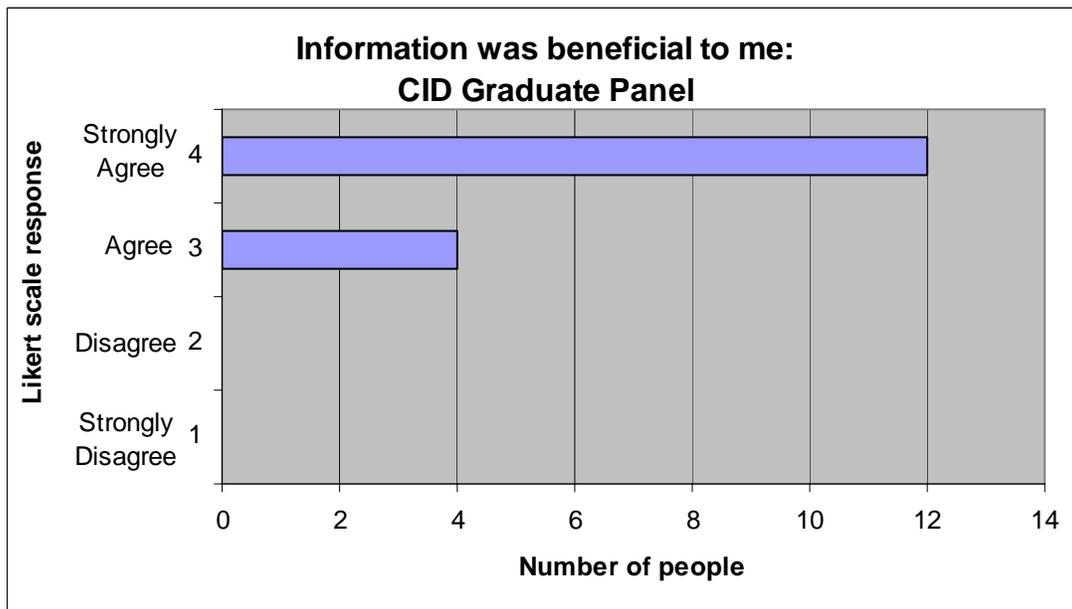
**Graph 2**



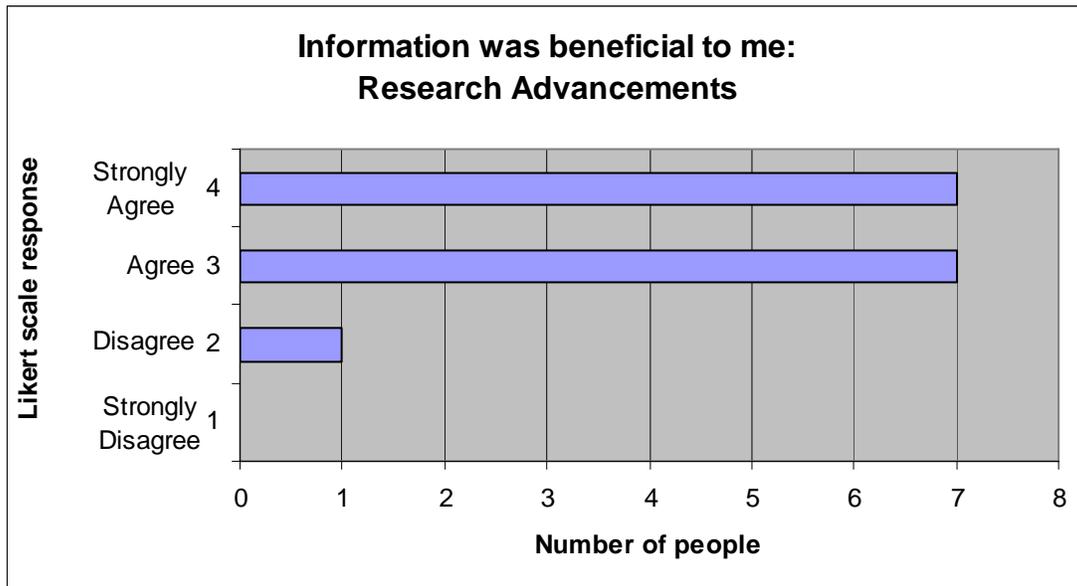
Graph 3



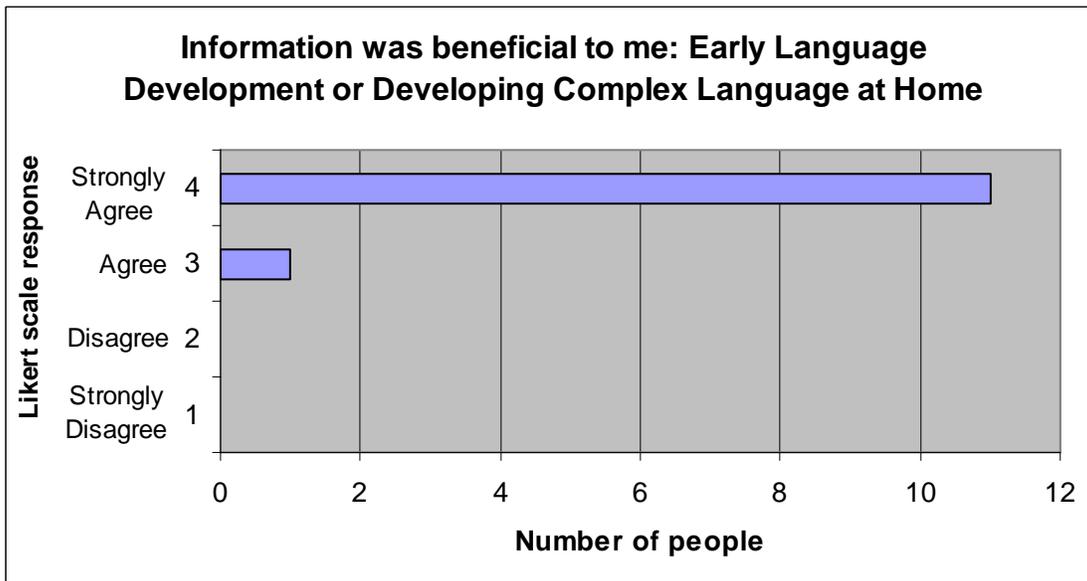
Graph 4



**Graph 5**



**Graph 6**



The second half of the evaluation survey asked parents to write in answers to questions that assessed the reasons behind their motivation to attend the workshop, why they thought parent education is valuable, and what were the strengths and weaknesses to the workshop. The following tables display the comments the parents gave for these questions.

**Table 5- Parent Response to Question 1**

<b>1. The primary reason I attended this workshop was:</b>
This is our responsibility to educate ourselves to best serve our son.
To learn how to be a better advocate for my child
To gain more information to help with raising our son
To better help my grandson
New information related to deaf education and technology
To gain information to make sure that I am providing all of the possibilities that I can for my daughter
Speakers appeared interesting and always looking for information
To learn all I can to help my child develop and increase my understanding of what my child is going through
legal issues
To learn something new
To learn more about how to help my child
To learn about special education law and mainstreaming into public schools
To gain more information and insight to better help my daughter
To learn more about my child's rights and the new technology that is coming out
To educate myself
To gain knowledge to support my hearing impaired daughter
I have a hearing impaired son who I want to be able to serve and raise as best as possible

**Table 6- Parent Response to Question 2**

<b>2. What I liked most about the workshop was:</b>
The deaf panel, the lawyer, and meeting other parents
Special education law information, special school district services- mainstreaming, and Barb's presentation on complex language
Pretty much everything, well informative, lawyer and researcher were great
The special education law and the graduate panel
The special education law section was very informative and helpful in regards to my rights as the parent of a disabled child
All the different presentations to speakers. It was nice to learn a little bit about so many different topics
I liked hearing from the hearing impaired students
Moved quickly, yet good variety
Learning new ways to help my child with her language
Sessions were well done and appropriate in length
The graduate panel- hearing them speak and explain what their life was like and what their life is currently like was very helpful as to what to look forward to
Informal and useful information
The law section was beneficial to us as parents of a young hard of hearing child; Language development was excellent!! Great and to the point
Variety of topics covered

Special education law, new technology, food and drinks
--

**Table 7- Parent Response to Question 3**

<b>3. Some ways the workshop could be improved are:</b>
No comment
It was great!
Vendor booth on safety (i.e. fire alarms, etc) would be helpful
No improvement necessary
Perhaps limit breaks to 1 in the morning and 1 in afternoon, maybe we should have allowed 1 hour per speaker
Research development was a bit too technical but I realize doctors have to work very technically so he did relatively good on making it clear considering the topic
Add a panel of parents with hard of hearing kids that are mainstreamed
Translators for the hearing for the CID Panel presentations and for the tables/booths
none
I thought it provided good information and was well worth my time
More talk on parenting and mainstreaming from a social and familial perspective; more time with the panel; less time on the details of the science of cochlear implants

**Table 8- Parent Response to Question 4**

<b>4. How did this workshop meet your educational needs as a parent?</b>
Understanding our rights and proper resources; the future research was amazing
Help me understand complex language skills/pragmatic language skills; Help me to reassure I have wonderful people to offer support along the way!
It brought up new topics and issues that may come up with language at home
Being given resources
Excellent
Realized how much development is happening for deaf children
Great, timely topics
Very much, the information was excellent, these sessions should be more frequently
CID graduates show you there is hope for the future
Helps me think about the future and what issues to be aware of
All areas-really, each session was very informational; It all demonstrates that the hearing disability has a very bright future; Thanks!

The final aspects the parents were asked to share were any other comments they would like to make in respect to the workshop and if they would like to see the workshop be an annual event. Every person responded to the question regarding a possible workshop for next year by circling yes. There was one individual who did not respond to that question, but this individual had not responded to most of the write-in answer questions as well. Table 9 shows the other comments the parents made.

**Table 9- Parent Response to Question 5**

<b>5. Other comments</b>
Should be done with different topics each year
Thank you. Very informational. This was well-organized and timely. Great job!
Really enjoyed CID graduates. Struggling to understand what one student was saying showed me what it was like to be hearing impaired. They were very inspiring. I also enjoyed Dr. Warchol. Developing language at home was useful.
Thank you! What a great opportunity to get together with other parents and learn relevant information- on a non work day/weekday to meet needs of working parents. It was a wonderful session.
I really appreciate all of the hard work from the staff, and speakers to take the time to come in on Saturday to help educate the parents. It is greatly appreciated
Well done Megan, Chris, Pat and CID teachers who made it happen! Thank you!
Had fun, very informative!
Great job Megan! Much appreciated
The speakers all did well and had a lot of useful information
I really enjoyed the workshop
Thank you all for your time and support
A little information for parents who send their children to private/religious institutions would be great; this was excellent!

## Discussion

The data that was collected from the evaluation has given us vital information about the workshop and insight into any future workshops that the school would like to pursue.

### *Workshop Attendance*

Despite what appears to be a low percentage of parents who attended compared to the total number of parents who have children enrolled in the school programs, the workshop was well attended. The school staff, who oversee a variety of activities throughout the year, including parent organizational events, were pleased with the turn out. There were a few people who returned invitational slips but did not actually attend the workshop. This was due to a few different reasons including that it snowed briefly in the morning around the time the workshop was commencing. This could have detracted parents who lived far away or who simply did not want to face the weather. Several teachers reported that specific families had other activities

going on that day or things had come up during the previous week and that those families were less likely to attend because of it. The attendance in the afternoon began to drop due to other engagements the families had to attend.

### *Workshop Evaluation*

The workshop evaluation aimed to assess the parents' perceptions of the workshop, what they learned, their beliefs on parent education, and to gain more information for possible future workshops. This was done through yes no questions, rating the parents' judgments on a Likert scale, and through open write-in questions the parents were asked to answer. Table 3 showed the yes or no responses of parents to whether they had or had not learned new material. There were only two sessions that parents reported they did not learn new material. These sessions were New Technology and Mainstreaming. The parent who marked 'no' for the New Technology session indicated on the evaluation survey that the reason this was so was two fold: their child had recently received a cochlear implant and they had attended the informational session on bilateral cochlear implants. This parent felt up to date on this information already. The two parents who indicated they did not learn anything new from the Mainstreaming session did not provide any reasons.

Table 4 evaluated whether or not the presentation was clear and understandable. This question was included to know whether the information was presented at a level the parents felt was appropriate for their own learning. To be an effective workshop, information must be delivered in a manner that is understood. This was crucial in this workshop due to the fact it was designed for the needs of the parents. It would not be successful if the needed information was given to the parents on a level that was too scientific or full of a particular field's jargon. This was also used as an indicator on the presenter's value. If the workshop becomes a reoccurring

event, it would be important to know how effective the presenter was previously to determine if a new presenter would be required.

The table indicates that almost all the parents agreed the information was presented in an effectual way. There were five instances where parents did not feel this way. Both the New Technology and the Research Advancements sessions are based on scientific information. While it is important to realize that not all the parents agreed with this statement, the percentage of those who did not, is not significant enough to warrant concern that the information was unattainable to the parents. The other session that parents said the presentation was not clear and understandable was during the Graduate Panel session. This was possibly because the speech of the participants on the panel was difficult to understand.

The other statement that used the Likert scale was used to assess whether the parents considered the information to be beneficial. This statement was important because the whole basis of the workshop was to meet the educational needs of the parents. If the parents did not believe the information was beneficial, it almost certainly would not have met their needs. The graphs that illustrate this information for each session convey that in three of the six sessions, the parents were all in agreement that the information was beneficial. These three sessions were Special Education Law, the Graduate Panel, and the two concurrent sessions discussing language development. The New Technology session was focused on cochlear implants. This could have effected the parents' response if their child was or was not a candidate for this particular technology. It is also worth noting the parent who indicated that she did not learn any new information during this session was because of another recent event she attended that gave her the information previously.

The session with the most parents disagreeing about the usefulness of the information was from the Mainstreaming session. During this session the presenter answered numerous questions from the parents in attendance. While it is important for other parents to hear these questions, they might have felt the information that was conveyed was not as valuable to them. At least one of the evaluation surveys also noted that their child would not be attending the public school systems and believed the information was too specific to mainstreaming into the public school. This provides insight for future workshops to possibly include more general mainstreaming tips along with how private schools' legal requirements differ.

The Research Advancement session only had one individual disagree the information was helpful and the reason was not specified. The presenter included a lot of information on research that will take years to develop before its application could be seen in daily life. This session allowed the parents to see the research being conducted in the field and how it might affect future generations. The uncertainty of why the parent felt they did not feel the information was beneficial, presented an opportunity to use the information for improvement in further workshop evaluations. In a future evaluation, it might be helpful to include a spot for parent comments to get additional information.

The write-in questions gave parents the ability to include any information they wanted to include regarding the effectiveness of the workshop and any changes they saw necessary. An overwhelming majority of the parents mentioned that the primary reason they wanted to attend the workshop was because of their child. They want to gain support and information to help their sons and daughters. This is consistent with Hoover-Dempsey's research regarding the motivational factors behind parent education and involvement.

A comprehensive list was developed by recording the reasons why the parents felt the workshop met their needs. The unique responses should not be surprising because each parent is at a very different stage depending on the age of their child, the acceptance of their child's disability, and the level of knowledge they feel they still need in specific areas of their child's development. It is a challenge to keep all of these factors in mind when planning a workshop for parents of children whose age range varies so greatly. From the parents' feedback in relation to this workshop, it would appear that this challenge was met.

The other questions allowed parents to offer feedback and comments about what areas could be improved, what they liked most about the workshop, and any other additional comments they wanted to include. The questions provided information for use in future years, for things to change and things to keep the same. The parents were very honest and forthcoming with their ideas.

The parents indicated they would like this workshop to be an annual event. The school staff and director were pleased with the outcome of the event and will certainly be continuing it in some way in the future. The frequency of it however, is something that the school staff will need to determine after discussion. While it is obvious the interest is there, it is important not to have the enthusiasm and interest fade by having another one too soon. Topics would need to be varied and or further specified each year. An idea of a workshop every two or three years was suggested to keep parents abreast on changing topics without overloading them with the same information each year. It may be considered to have a half day workshop in the in-between years. There are many possibilities for the future, and the school staff now has more information to help in their planning.

## **Conclusion**

This study's goal was to create a workshop for parents that encompassed their educational needs. Based on the data that was collected from the workshop evaluation, the researcher has shown this to be a success. This study was based specifically on the needs of the parents of children enrolled at the Central Institute for the Deaf. For this reason, the researcher cautions anyone wishing to directly replicate the study. The study should be based upon the unique needs and qualities of a specific school. The basic outline of procedures to create a parent workshop are able to be generalized but the specific topic areas would need to be researched and developed around another school's parents' needs. Overall, the workshop demonstrated that the parents' educational needs can be met through a workshop that is based on those needs and takes into consideration factors that will encourage parent involvement.

## Works Cited

- Bernstein, M., Barta, L. (1988). What do parents want in parent education? *American Annals of the Deaf*, 133 (3) 235-246.
- Brand, H., Coetzer, M. (1994). Parental response to their child's hearing impairment. *Psychological Reports*, 75, 1363-1368.
- Burger, T., Spahn, C., Richter, B., Eissele, S., Lohle, E., Bengel, J. (2006). Psychic stress and quality of life in parents during decisive phases in the therapy of their hearing-impaired children. *Ear and Hearing*, 27 (4), 313-320.
- DesGeorges, J. (2003). Family perceptions of early hearing, detection, and intervention systems: listening to and learning from families. *Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews*, 9, 89-93.
- Fan, X., Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and student's academic achievement: a meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13 (1), 1-22.
- Grolnick, W., Benjet, Kurowski, C., Apostoleris, C., Nicholas, H. (1997). Predictors of parent involvement in children's schooling. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89 (3), 538-548.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K., Walker, J., Sandler, H., Whetsel, D., Green, C., Wilkins, A., Closson, K. (2005). Why do parents become involved? research findings and implications. *The Elementary School Journal*, 106 (2), 105-126.
- Petersson, K., Petersson, C., Hakansson, A. (2004). What is good parent education? *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Services*, 18 (1), 82-89.

November 2006

Dear Parents,

The CID Parent Organization is interested in setting up a full day workshop for the families at CID. The workshop is planned for this spring and will be for family members to attend while childcare is provided. It is important to develop this workshop around your interests. We would like to have your input as to what topics you would like to have included in the schedule. The ideas below were generated at a parent meeting last spring. If there are other topics that you would like to learn more about, please list them on the lines labeled 'other' on the back side of this page. We encourage you to write as many things as you would like to learn about. We will do the best we can to arrange a speaker for the most popular topics.

Once you have completed this survey, please send it back to us in the enclosed self-addressed envelope and the planning will begin. Thank you for your time and your valuable thoughts.

Warmly,

Megan Beauduy

Graduate student in Deaf Education  
at Washington University School of Medicine

Chris Clark

Family Center Coordinator  
Central Institute for the Deaf  
314-9 77-0175

Please circle the topics you would like to see presented at the workshop:

- New Technology being developed for both cochlear implants and hearing aids
- Advancements in research related to the ear.
- Mainstreaming issues
- Deaf culture
- How language develops once children have a cochlear implant
- How to structure more complicated language in your home as your child grows
- CID recent graduates coming to talk about their life in the mainstream classroom
- Young adult CID graduates who are out of college beginning careers
- Special Education Law- what your rights are
- Learn about activities at the deaf clubs in St. Louis

Other worthy ideas: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Any questions, suggestions, or comments, please feel free to email one of us at [beauduym@msnotes.wustl.edu](mailto:beauduym@msnotes.wustl.edu) or [cclark@cid.edu](mailto:cclark@cid.edu)

Once the new calendar year begins, be on the look out for more workshop information!

# WORKSHOP EVALUATION

## CID Parent Workshop

March 3, 2007

Strongly Disagree      Disagree      Agree      Strongly Agree

### *Special Education Law*

**The presentation was clear and understandable.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**This information was beneficial to me.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**Did you learn new material during this session?**

Yes                      No

### *New Technology*

**The presentation was clear and understandable.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**This information was beneficial to me.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**Did you learn new material during this session?**

Yes                      No

### *Mainstreaming*

**The presentation was clear and understandable.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**This information was beneficial to me.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**Did you learn new material during this session?**

Yes                      No

*CID Graduate Panel*

**The presentation was clear and understandable.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**This information was beneficial to me.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**Did you learn new material during this session?**

Yes                      No

*Research Advancements*

**The presentation was clear and understandable.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**This information was beneficial to me.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**Did you learn new material during this session?**

Yes                      No

*Early Language Development or Developing Complex Language at Home*

**The presentation was clear and understandable.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**This information was beneficial to me.**

1                      2                      3                      4

**Did you learn new material during this session?**

Yes                      No

**COMMENTS**

The primary reason I attended this workshop was:

---

---

---

---

What I liked most about the workshop was:

---

---

---

---

Some ways the workshop could be improved are:

---

---

---

---

How did this workshop meet your educational needs as a parent?

---

---

---

---

**Please Circle Yes or No**

Would you like to see this workshop become an annual event?

Yes

No

Other comments:

---

---

---

---

Thank you for coming today and I appreciate your feedback!

## CID Parent Workshop March 3, 2007

### Schedule

8:15-9:00a.m.	Check in, coffee and donuts
9:00-9:20	Welcome and explanation of school registration
9:20-10:00	<b>Special Education Law</b> with Tom Kennedy
10:00- 10:15	Break
	Please visit our organizational tables in the atrium!
10:15- 11:00	<b>New Technology</b> with Jamie Cadieux
11:00-11:15	Break
11:15- Noon	<b>Mainstreaming</b> with Monica Fanning
Noon-1:15	Lunch
1:15- 1:45	<b>CID Graduate Panel</b>
1:45- 2:15	<b>Research Advancements</b> with Dr. Mark Warchol
2:15- 2:30	Break
2:30- 3:00	Choose One: <b>Early Language Development</b> with Ellie Rice or <b>Developing Complex Language at Home</b> with Barb Lanfer
3:00 p.m.	Open School Registration

- All sessions will take place on the *second floor in the school library* except Early Language Development which will be held in the PACS discovery room.
- Visit the organizational tables in the atrium during morning breaks and lunch
  - Advanced Bionics
  - Med-El
  - Paraquad
  - IMPACT
  - The Deaf Teen Club
  - Sprint
  - The Greater St. Louis Association for the Deaf (GSLAD)
  - CID School Registration
- Please fill out the survey in your folder before leaving today!
- Thank you for coming and enjoy your day!

# CID PARENT WORKSHOP

## Saturday March 3, 2007

Free, all-day workshop for families of children enrolled at CID  
 Morning and afternoon sessions; organizational information tables

Free child care for CID students and siblings

8:15 – 9:00 a.m.	Check-in, coffee and donuts
9:00 – 9:20	Welcome and explanation of school registration
9:20 – 10:00	Special Education Law
10:00 – 10:15	Break
10:15 – 11:00	New Technology
11:15 – Noon	Mainstreaming
Noon – 1:15	Lunch (provided)
1:15 – 1:45	CID Graduate Panel
1:45 – 2:15	Research Advancements
2:15 – 2:30	Break
2:30 – 3:00	Choose one: Early Language Development or Developing Complex Language at Home
3:00 p.m.	Open school registration

**Special Education Law** — A legal expert will provide an overview of your rights as parents of a child with a hearing loss. Find out about the new revision of IDEA and how it will affect you and your child.

**New Technology** — Learn more about available technology for cochlear implants and hearing aids, using bilateral cochlear implants and wearing a hearing aid and an implant together.

**Mainstreaming** — Each child will need a different level of service when she gets to the mainstream. School districts have the responsibility to meet these needs for a free, appropriate education. Discover what public schools have to offer!

**CID Graduate Panel** — Learn about the lives of CID graduates! Students in mainstream schools and young adults with careers will talk about their experiences.

**Research Advancements** — Scientists here and around the country are doing fascinating work on the biology of hearing. Mark Warchol, PhD, a CID at Washington University researcher, will talk about current research in hearing and deafness.

**Early Language Development** — Language development is key to spoken communication. This session will give you insight into typical stages of language development and what the developmental process looks like in a young child.

**Developing Complex Language at Home** — As your child grows, her language continues to expand. Learn what you can do at home as she moves from simple to complex language.

**Please complete the registration below and send it to your child's teacher by February 16, 2007. Family Center parents, please use the CID-addressed return envelope.**

---

### CID PARENT WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

How many adults will attend? \_\_\_\_ How many children will attend? \_\_\_\_ Children's ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Check this box if you would like your hearing-impaired child's brother/s and/or sister/s to attend a special workshop, or Sibshop, which gives siblings of children with special needs opportunities for peer support and education within a recreational context. Children must be at least 5 years old to participate. We will call you with details.