

Hearing Loss 101: The Basics of Living With Hearing Loss

Thursday, April 17, 2025, 7:00 pm

Zoom!



- What is hearing loss
- How can you tell if you have a hearing loss
- What to do
- Assistive technology and safety
- Buying a hearing aid
- Adjusting with modifications
- Coping tips
- Sharing with HLAA DownEast



Presented by Margaret Myatt, a lifetime hearing loss person. Certified by Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) in Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT)



Introduction – Margaret Myatt

- Hearing aids since age 30 and a family tradition.
- Even with aids, still struggle
- Biggest sadness—suffering husband
- What to do? (2013)

Googled “Hearing Support” and discovered HLA-Central Massachusetts



- **Became active** in the support-advocacy group – learning, enjoying new friends.
- **Goals:**
 - To teach and help other Hard-of-Hearing (HOH)
 - To advocate for public hearing assistive technology
 - To get the word out!





HLAA Downeast Chapter

The mission of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Downeast Chapter is to educate Mainers with hearing loss (as well as their families and friends) about the causes, nature, and complications of hearing loss and what can be done to better cope with that loss.



NEWS | ABOUT | UPCOMING EVENTS | RESOURCES | ACCESSIBLE N.E. THEATERS | HLAA NATIONAL | HLAA VIRTUAL EVENTS

March, 2025 New England Regional HLAA Conference – A Huge Success

April 14, 2025 - by Margaret Myers

March 28 – 30, 2025 – The New England Regional HLAA Conference Over 100 people across New England came together to learn, share, network and have fun at the New...

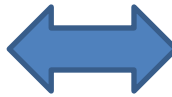
READ MORE...

Please make a donation to HLAA DownEast

We are a 501(c)(3) chapter of HLAA. Because no goods or services are provided in exchange for your donation, it is tax deductible. We will add you to our mailing list and hope you learn things and participate!

MAINE USA

We Have a Winner of Our Scholarship for a First Time Attendee to the HLAA

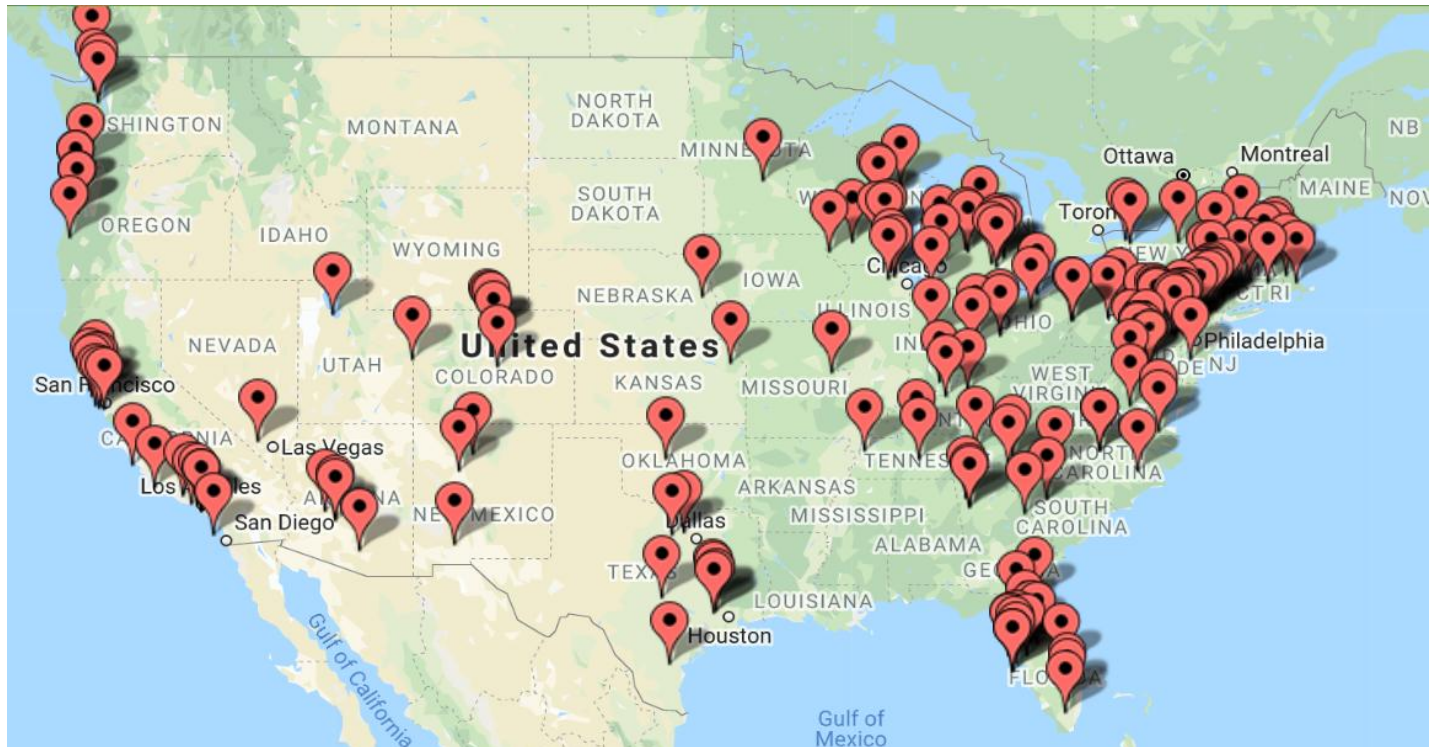


www.hearinglossmaine.org



www.hearingloss.org

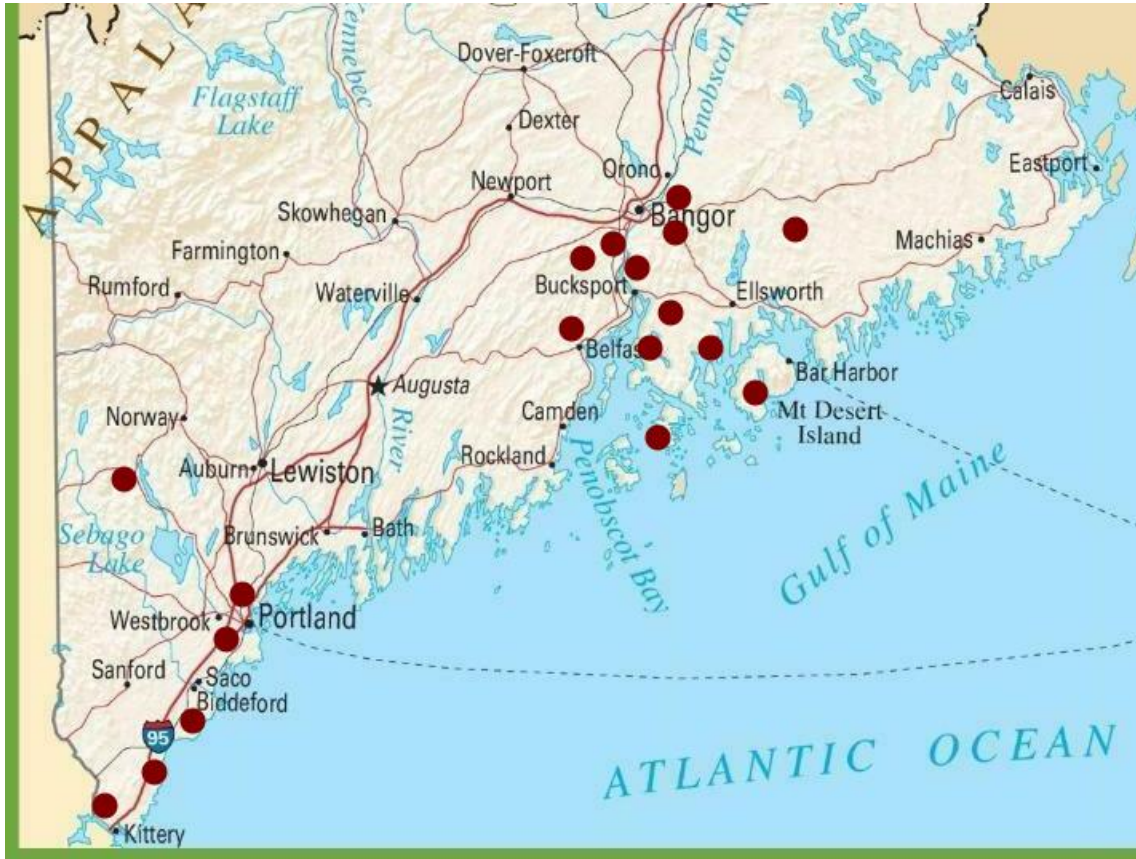
About 120 chapters



Sharing ideas for hope and better lives with a hearing loss



HLLA DownEast – Our dilemma – geography. Bangor to Kittery = 178 miles.



Solutions!

Zoom – Especially in the winter.
Is April winter?

Regional gatherings

May 17th – Augusta lunch

May 22 – Bangor Aging Expo

June – National Convention

July 19th? – Blue Hill/Ellsworth

August 16th - Kennebunk

Please send your town to Pat so we can plan effective, robust regional gatherings.

patdobbiscoach@gmail.com



Shameless Advertisement



(But hey... can you blame me? 🤦)



Back to our regularly scheduled program...

Do You or a Loved One Have a Hearing Loss?

Do you Struggle

- When two or more people are talking?
- TV volume is never right?
- With a noisy background?
- Asking people to repeat themselves?
- Do you guess what others are saying?

If you answered "yes" to three...



...you are experiencing hearing loss.

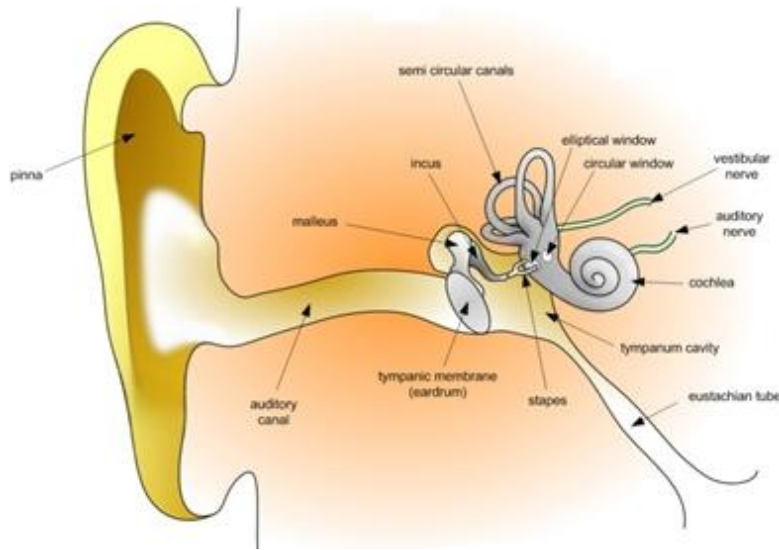


Hard of Hearing Community

- **20 percent (50 million) of American adults have hearing loss.**
- **4,000 new cases of sudden deafness occur each year in the US.**
- **2 to 3 out of every 1,000 US children are born deaf or hard-of-hearing.**
- **Only 1 out of 5 people who could benefit from a hearing aid actually wears one.**



What is Hearing?



Outer Ear: Catch the Wave - collects sounds, vibrations

Middle Ear: Good Vibrations

Sound waves travel through eardrum which delivers vibration to the ossicles (tiny little bones)

The Inner Ear: Nerve Signals Start Here

Vibrations enter the **cochlea**, filled with liquid, with tiny hair cells which trigger an electrical signal to the auditory nerve, to brain to interpret

When hearing works, it is huge! Components:

Amplitude Whisper to jet plane - loudness
(0 to 120 decibels)

Frequency Rumble to a sizzle –pitch, high-low
(20 to 5,000 Hz)

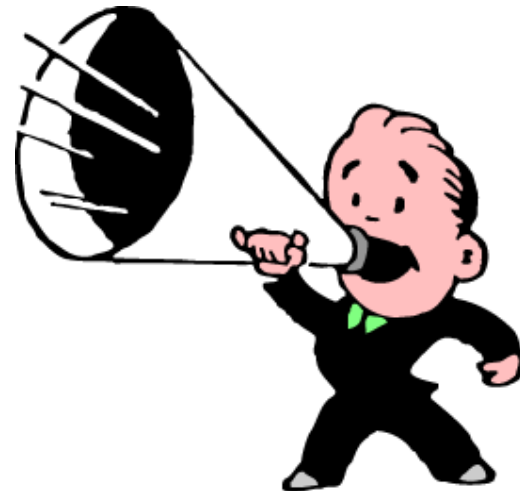


With Hearing Loss...

- Pitches (frequency) and tones are lost
- Can't hear in noisy restaurants (Relative amplitude, relative loudness)
- Can't suppress unwanted sounds
- Loss of direction of incoming sound

Affects family life, workplace relationships, communication

Amplification of sound helps, but....



**Different Sounds Have Different Frequencies.
If Frequencies are Missing....**

I wa a lo ly ay n e ar .

I wa a lo ly ay n e ar .

I wa a lo ly ay n e ar .

Even with amplification,
meaning is missing....



Shouting Doesn't Help

I wa a lo ly ay n e ar .

It was a lovely day in the park.



Shouting Doesn't Help

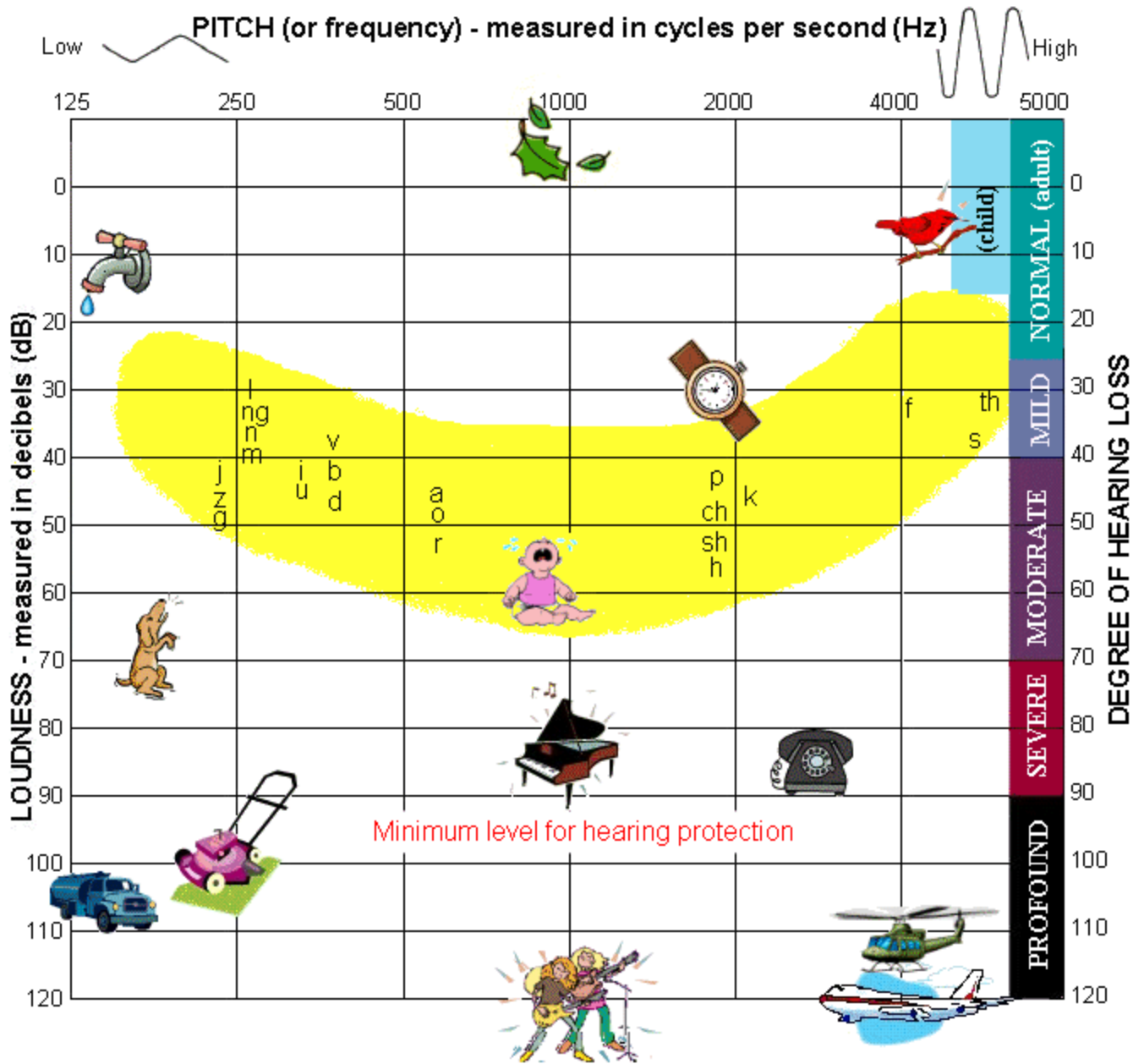
I wa a lo ly ay n e ar .

I want a lonely hay anteater.

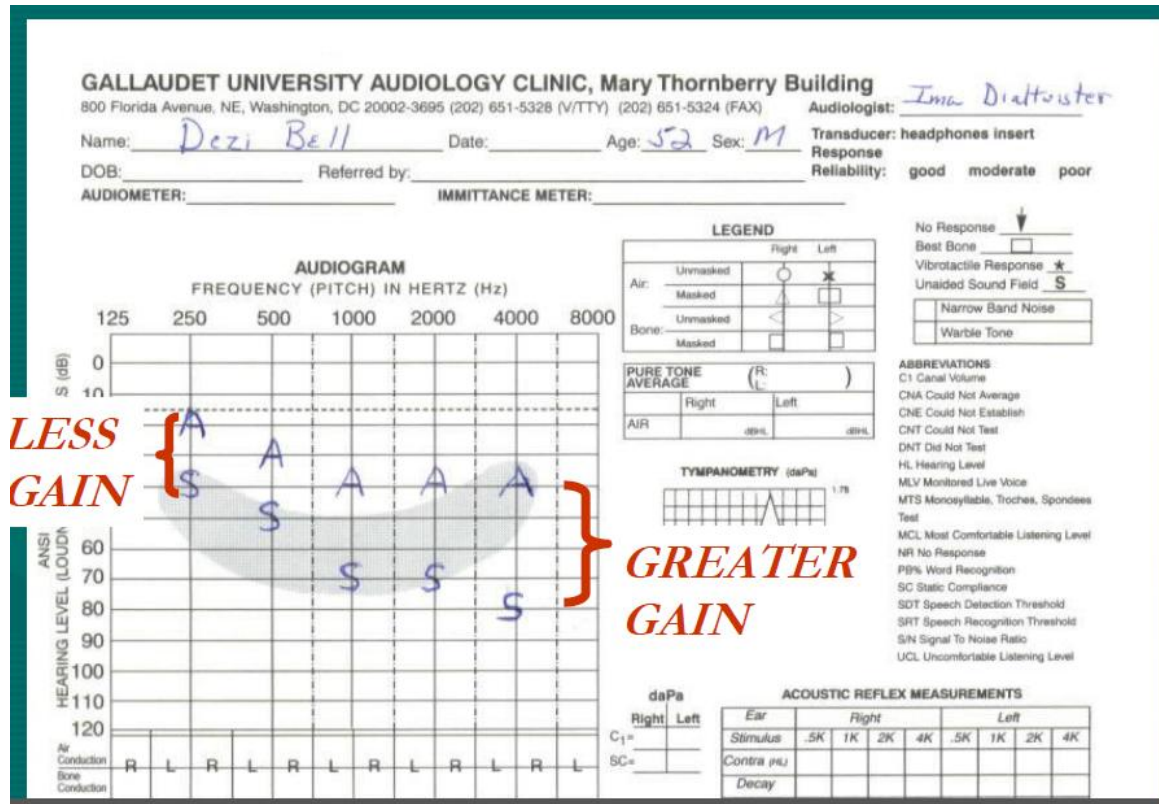


The brain fills in what it can – based on experience





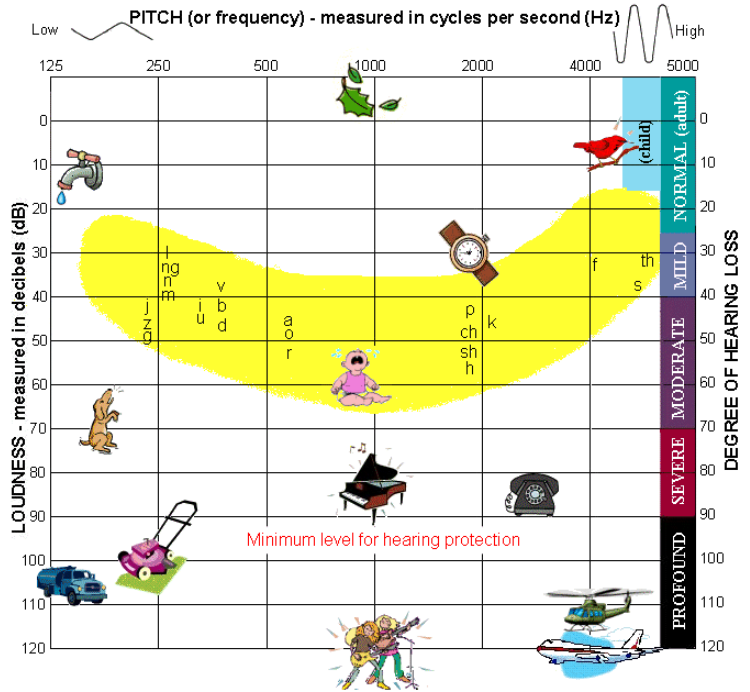
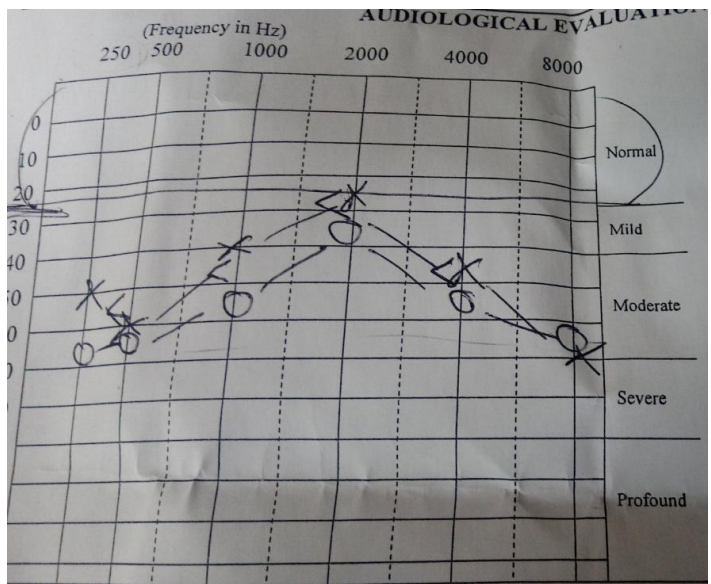
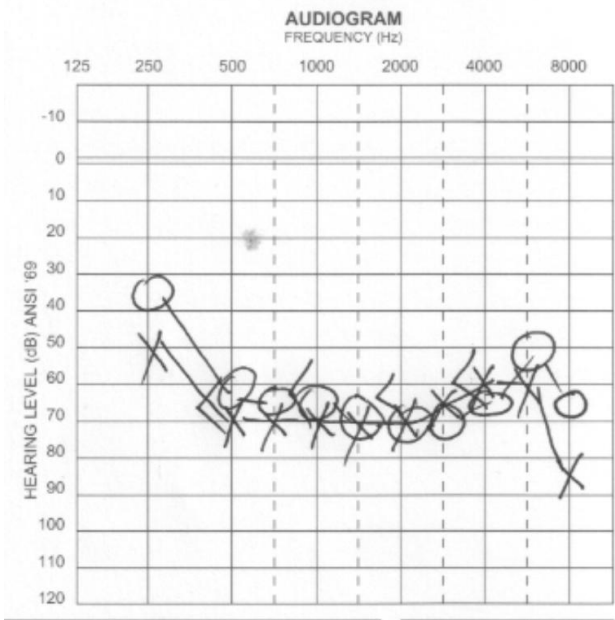
Goal: Manage Gain of Sound



- Digital hearing aids are programmed to manage more and less gain

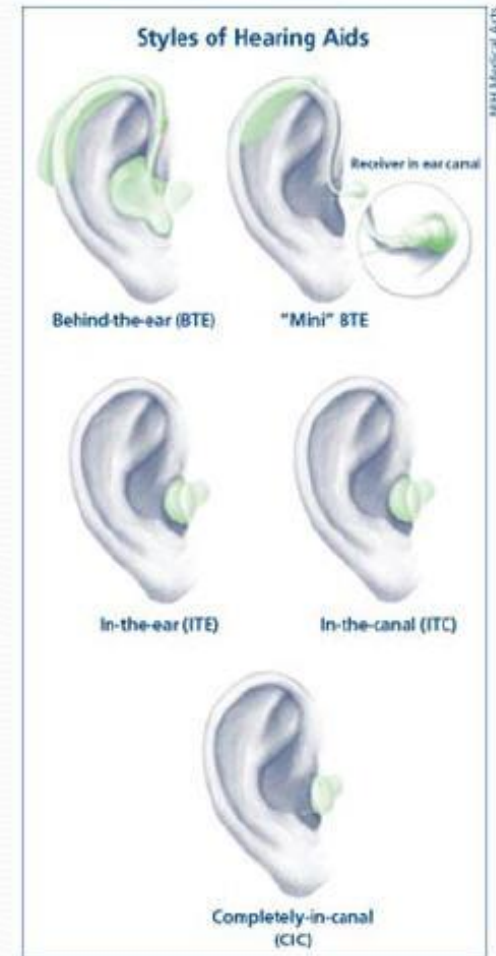
- Reduce background noise





Hearing Aids

Styles of Hearing Aids

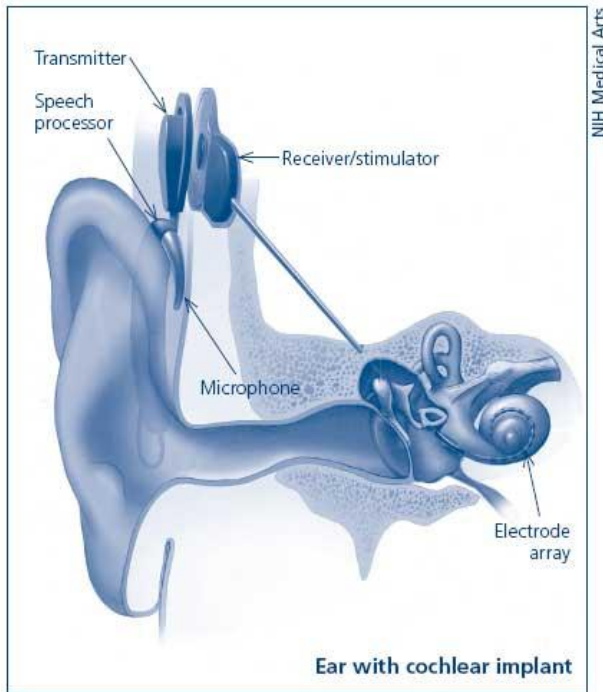


Courtesy of NIDCD/NIH

MH Medical Aids



Cochlear Implants



Electronic device to provide a sense of sound to a person who is profoundly deaf or severely hard-of-hearing

External: Sits behind the ear

Internal: Placed under the skin

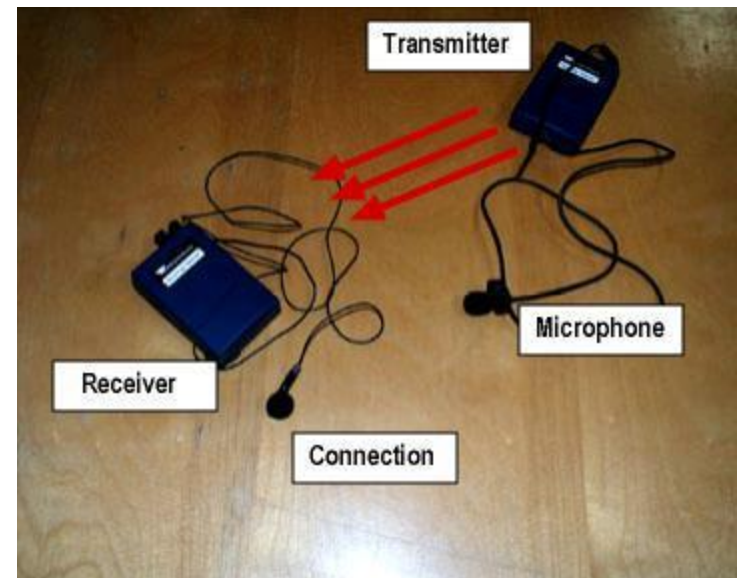
Does not restore normal hearing. Instead, it can give a deaf/HOH person a useful representation of sounds in the environment and help him or her to understand speech.



What Else Helps?

Home and workplace

- **Behavior Changes** – family , friends
 - Seating and positioning
 - Quiet restaurants
- **Personal Hearing Assistive Technology**
 - Bluetooth streaming
 - FM systems
 - Captioning – TV, telephones
 - Shaking alarm clocks
 - Strobe fire alarms



Assistive Listening Systems

- **Bluetooth transmission** – personal streaming devices. “Pocket Talker.”
- **FM systems** - accessible, adaptable
 - personal and public systems
- **Infrared systems** - light based, linear
 - theaters



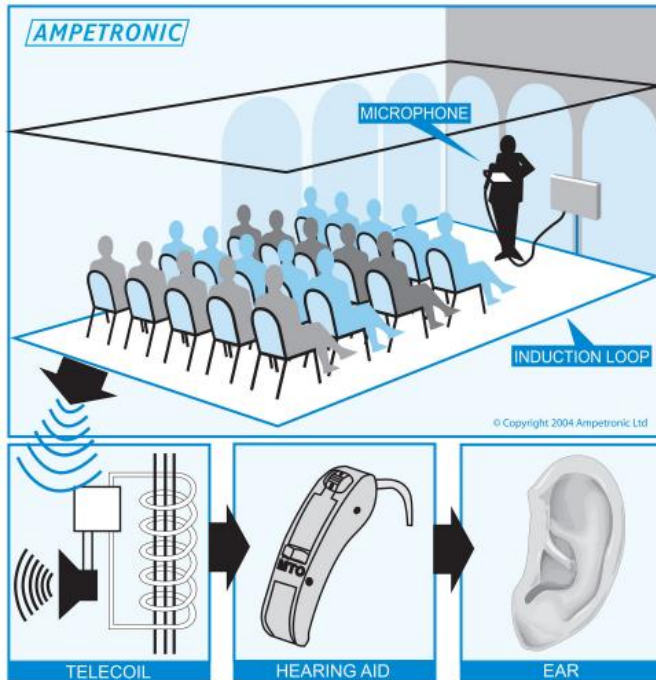
Theaters and Movies



- Open Captioning-Theaters
- Closed Captioning-TV
- Captioning glasses
- GalaPro



Let's Get Looped!



- Looping a meeting room – some rooms better than others.
- Best time – during construction
- Looping information booths
- Receivers for non-hearing aid people
- Banks, theaters, taxis, churches, libraries, classrooms, museums,
- Affordable ... sort of



Accessible N.E. Theaters

New England Accessible Theaters (and we are trying to add museums, medical facilities, etc.)

Last updated 8/12/2024 (a few entries). Please send additions or changes to hearinglossmaine@gmail.com

In addition to the list below, Shanahan Sound provides a [Loop Locator](#) for their looped locations throughout New England. [Loop Locator](#)

Assistive Listening Device Locator (Provider?) <https://www.aldlocator.com>

Maine Theaters

[Alamo Theatre, Bucksport ME](#)

PO Box 900, 85 Main Street, Bucksport, Maine 04416

nhf@oldfilm.org

Has a T-Coil Hearing loop, and Sunday matinees are open captioned.

[Colonial Theatre \(Belfast\)](#)

163 High Street, Belfast, ME 04915



We a
good
your
you t
and

Sec



PortlandStage – The Theater of Maine

25A Forest Ave, Portland, ME 04104

Mail: PO Box 1458 Portland, ME 04104

(207) 774-0465

boxoffice@portlandstage.org

PORTLANDSTAGE

The Theater of Maine

The Main Stage has a hearing loop for all performances. For more detailed information regarding hearing assistance please visit our [Hearing Loop page](#). Hearing Loop receivers/headsets area available and free of charge at the concession stand in the lobby. At this time the Hearing Loop only works in the Mainstage.

Merrill Auditorium

20 Myrtle St.

Portland ME 04101

(207) 842-0800

clare@portlandmaine.gov



Merrill Auditorium is equipped with an infrared listening assistance system. Please let the box office know that you would like the best seating for our system. Please contact a member of the event services staff to obtain a headset. A valid driver's license or credit card is required as a deposit.



Loop Locator » ME

Show 10 entries

Search:

Name	Street	City	State	Zip	Phone	Map
Alamo Theatre	85 Main St	Bucksport	ME	04416	207-469-0924	View
Woodland First Baptist Church	494 Colby Siding Road	Caribou	ME	04736	207-492-2631	View
Franco-American Heritage Center	45 Cedar St	Lewiston	ME	04240	207-689-2000	View
Portland Stage	25 Forest Ave	Portland	ME	04101	207-774-0465	View
Piper Shores	15 Piper Road	Scarborough	ME	04074	207-883-8700	View
Episcopal Church of St John Baptist	200 Main St	Thomaston	ME	04861	207-354-8734	View
Maine Tasting Center	506 Old Bath Rd	Wiscasset	ME	04578	207-558-5772	View

Showing 11 to 17 of 17 entries

◀ Previous Next ▶



CURRENT SEASON EVENTS 52ND SEASON TICKETS EDUCATION

Scarborough, Cornish, and Farmington. They offer a variety of hearing aids designed to work with loop systems, and may be able to program your hearing aids to work with the loop system at Portland Stage.

How to Access our Hearing Loop

- > If you use a t-coil hearing aid:
- > If your hearing aid is not t-coil compatible, but has a remote:
- > If you don't use a t-coil hearing aid or have a remote, but would still like an assisted listening device:
- > Hearing Loop Troubleshooting Tips and Tricks
- > Hearing Loop Troubleshooting Tips and Tricks

Available for Select Performances and Digital Content:

- > Closed Captioning on Digital Content
- > Open Captioned Performances
- > American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreted Performances



Telephones

Disability Rights Maine - Equipment Distribution Program.

Website: <http://drme.org/deaf-services/tep>

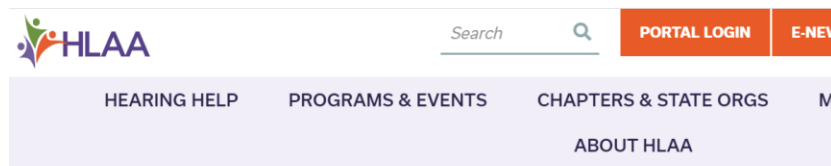
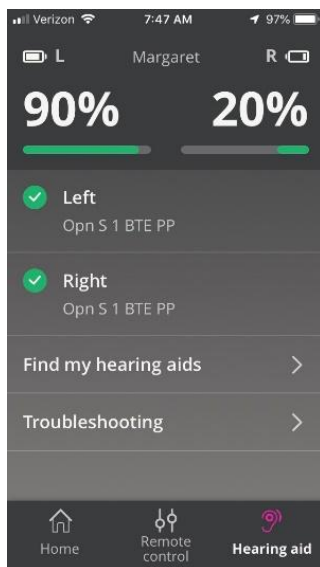
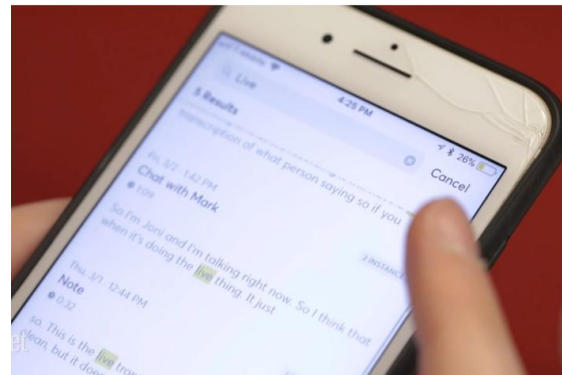
DRM's Telecommunications Equipment Program (TEP) provides communication solutions to anyone who has a barrier that prevents them from using standard phone equipment. Through a simple application process, DRM staff will determine the best amplified, captioned, large button, picture dial, or voice-activated phone to meet your needs; a hearing aid option is also available for low-income clients, ages 65 and older.



More about telephones:



- InnoCaptions
- Smartphone choices
- FCC role
- Otter app (others)



August 9, 2019

Categories: [Advocacy News](#), [News](#), [Newsroom](#)

Tags: [FCC](#), [hearing aid compatible phones](#), [Public Policy](#)

Important News About the FCC and Hearing-Aid-Compa Phones

FCC Establishes Hearing Aid Compatibility Certification and Compliance Deadlines On August 9, 2019, the FCC announced two deadlines for hearing aid compatibility (HAC) compliance. N than September 3, 2019: Wireless service providers must post on their websites expanded information about their handsets' HAC capabilities and retain records on the HAC capabilities of their handsets that ... [Read More >](#)



Hearing

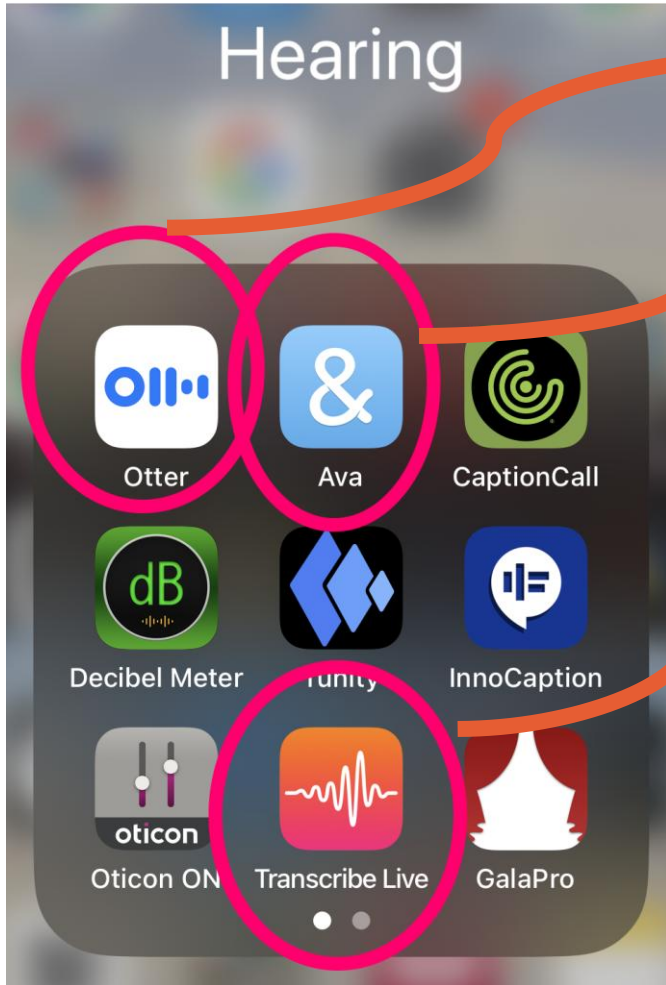
Smart Phone Apps

Otter

Ava

Transcribe Live

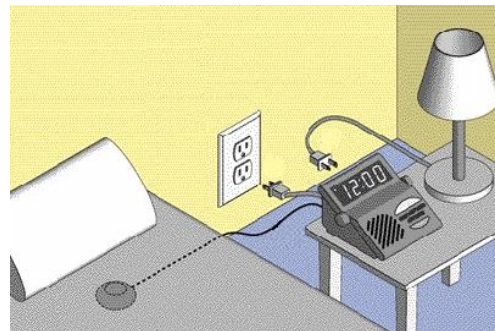
Ambient sound -
Captions for voices
in the room



Personal Safety Devices



- Shaking alarm clocks
- Strobe fire alarms
- CO alarms
- Weather alerts



Sonic Bomb!



Sonic Bomb Dual Extra Loud Alarm Clock with Bed Shaker, Black | Sonic Alert Vibrating, Heavy Sleepers, Battery Backup | Wake with a Shake

[Visit the Sonic Alert Store](#)

4.5 ★★★★★ (36,041) | [Search this page](#)

Amazon's Choice

2K+ bought in past month

\$41⁹⁹

✓prime

FREE Returns ✓

With **Amazon Business**, you would have saved **\$84.08** in the last year. [Create a free account](#) and **save up to 8%** today.

Earn 5% back with Prime Store Card. That would've been



Maine Red Cross Will Install Free Bed-Shaker Smoke Alarms for Hard-of-Hearing or Deaf People

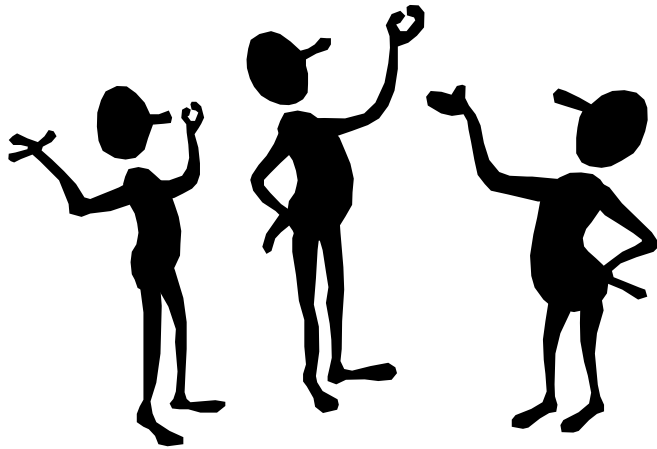
The image is a screenshot of a news article on the WDEA AM 1370 website. The top navigation bar includes the station logo, a menu with 'HOME', 'ON-AIR', 'LISTEN', 'EVENTS', 'DOWNEASTER'S CLUB', and 'MORE', and a 'WHAT'S HOT' section with links to 'SOX SPRING TRAINING SCHEDULE', 'CLOSINGS', 'SCORES', 'WDEA ON ALEXA', 'WDEA MOBILE APP', 'EHS', 'MDI', 'SUMNER', 'DEALS', 'EXPERTS', and 'PET OF THE WEEK'. The main article features a large image of a white bed-shaker smoke alarm. The text reads: 'CHRIS POPPER presented by CARROLL DRUG STORE MAINE RED CROSS WILL INSTALL FREE BED SHAKING SMOKE ALARM FOR DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING'. A small photo of a person sleeping in a bed is visible in the background of the alarm image. The article is dated 'CHRIS POPPER | January 22, 2020' and credited to 'Tim Boyle, Getty Images'. The right sidebar contains a 'FEATURED' section with a 'Ford' logo and a 'BOSTON RED SOX' link, and a 'RECOMMENDED' section with a 'CARROLL DRUG STORE' logo and a 'CALL 244' link.



Google – Maine Red Cross alarms

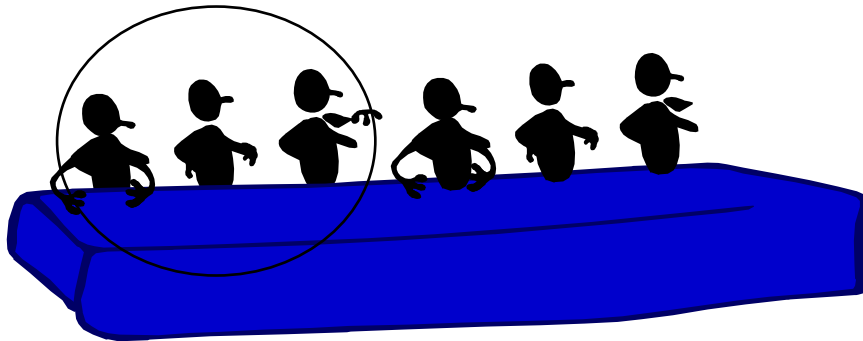
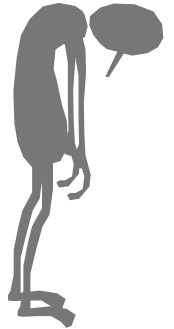
Behavioral Modifications

- **Conversation – small or large groups**
 - Seating and positioning- know thyself
 - Quiet restaurants – it makes a difference



- ‘Fess up – clearly state your situation
- Use technology – public and personal

- To guess or not to guess?
- Keep your sense of humor!



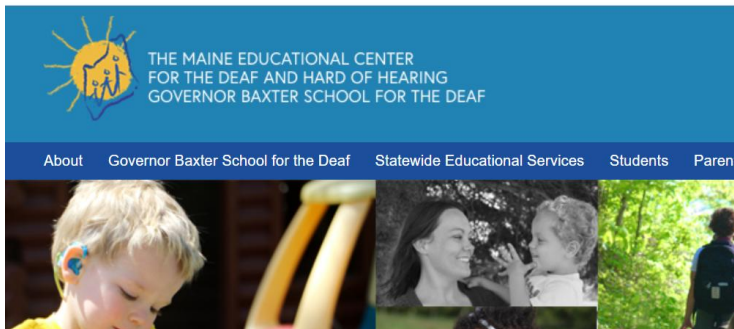
- Identify your sphere of capability
- Take notes... Write notes...



Help – in Maine and Beyond

www.mecdhh.org

Maine Education Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



www.hear-me-now.org



www.hearingloss.org



www.drme.org



A variety of services for people with disabilities. TTY phone program. Legal services, referrals t services.

HLAA Downeast Chapter

www.hearinglossmaine.org



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Can We all Relate?



Many in the community could benefit from accessible hearing assistive technology.



Reasons for Optimism

- **Hearing loss is coming out of the closet – losing the stigma**
- **Technology keeps improving**
- **Over the counter hearing aids**
- **Legislation efforts**
- **Public looping, assistive devices more prevalent**



Conclusion –What to Do For Hearing Loss in Your Life

- **Get assessed – bring a friend**
- **Be honest and keep a sense of humor**
- **Use technology**
- **Use other resources**
- **Know that you are not alone!**



Questions? Comments? Criticisms?



www.hearinglossmaine.org

mmyatt01757@gmail.com

