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The Hidden Consequence of Hearing Loss: Social Isolation



Hearing loss, a prevalent yet overlooked condition affecting millions of people worldwide, impacts an individual's life in various ways. One such impact is the risk of social isolation, potentially affecting a person's mental well-being and overall quality of life.

Communication is the cornerstone of human interaction, enabling us to connect, share experiences and form meaningful relationships. The inability to effectively communicate due to hearing loss can take a toll on one's well-being. Feelings of frustration, embarrassment and inadequacy may arise when individuals struggle to understand. The constant effort required to navigate social situations can lead to mental exhaustion, discouraging individuals from engaging in social activities altogether.

Recognizing the impact hearing loss can have when it comes to social isolation is crucial in fostering a supportive and inclusive society. By raising awareness, we can encourage efforts that support the unique needs of individuals with hearing loss – resulting in a sense of confidence in engaging with others. Here are just a few suggestions for preventing social isolation as it relates to hearing loss:

- **Get Regular Hearing Check-ups:** Whether someone already experiences hearing loss or not, hearing evaluations allow for early detection of hearing loss and can introduce interventions promptly.
- **Try Various Communication Strategies:** Effective communication techniques for people with hearing loss include facing your communication partner, speaking clearly and using visual cues. Employing assistive listening devices or telecommunications equipment can also help mitigate communication challenges.
- **Create Inclusive Environments:** Public spaces, workplaces and social events should be designed to accommodate individuals with hearing loss. This can include adequate acoustic design, visual notifications and access to assistive listening devices.
- **Promote Supportive Communities:** Groups that are understanding and supportive of individuals with hearing loss demonstrate empathy and awareness of challenges faced by people with hearing loss.

Hearing loss can be a silent barrier that separates individuals from each other. By raising awareness, providing support and creating inclusive environments, we can ensure that individuals with hearing loss are not left behind and can fully participate in the social fabric of our communities.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SERVING LOUISIANA

We recently celebrated 25 years of providing service for Louisiana Relay! To extend gratitude to the community of Relay users in Louisiana and the organizations who work to support and serve them, we hosted a fun and successful open house.

Thank you to all who came to celebrate this milestone! We look forward to the next 25 years.



Members of the Louisiana Relay team



Beth Slough (Hamilton Relay) and Karen Babineaux (Louisiana Relay Administration Board)



Community organizations who joined the anniversary celebration



Scan to watch the Anniversary video

Introducing Our Newest Outreach Team Members!

We are excited to welcome three new members to our Outreach Team. Connor Fitzsimmons, Melanee Rodriguez and Caleb Miller recently joined Hamilton Relay and bring a wealth of experience to their new roles.



Connor Fitzsimmons, Maryland Outreach Coordinator

Connor was previously an account executive and digital specialist at a local radio station. He has a Bachelor of Science in communications from James Madison University. Connor joins our team with experience in communication, customer relationship management and business relations.



Melanee Rodriguez, Virginia Outreach Coordinator

Most recently, Melanee was an outreach and resource coordinator at Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center. She has a degree in business administration from J. Sargent Reynolds College. Melanee has experience in community outreach and is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.



Caleb Miller, Utah Outreach Coordinator

Caleb is a Utah native and most recently worked as a remarketing coordinator and consultant. He is currently finishing his degree in public relations and strategic communication from Utah Valley University. Caleb comes to Hamilton with knowledge of Deaf culture, networking, public relations and customer service. He is fluent in French and American Sign Language.

LOOKING FOR NOMINATIONS!

Do you know someone who is deaf, DeafBlind, late-deafened, hard of hearing or has difficulty speaking and is making a difference in their community? Or do you know of an organization or group that is working to better the lives of those communities? If so, please nominate them for the Hamilton Relay Community Leader Award! We are looking for individuals or organizations who possess a commitment to volunteerism, leadership and advocacy.

To nominate a leader in your community, visit HamiltonRelay.com/CommunityLeader. Nominations are due July 14, 2023.



CUSTOMER CARE CORNER:

Answering Your Questions About the Analog-to-Digital Transition

The telephone industry is in the process of replacing traditional telephone service (copper telephone lines/analog) with internet-based service (fiber lines/digital) — which is what's called the Analog-to-Digital Transition. The benefits of the transition include increased speed, longer lifespan of the technology and greater security.

How can the Analog-to-Digital Transition affect Telecommunications Relay Services?

When telephone lines are upgraded to digital, relay services and the use of relay devices can be affected. If you experience garbling, loss of text or gaps in your communication while using your assistive equipment — such as a TTY, VCO (Voice Carry Over) phone, HCO (Hearing Carry Over) phone or CapTel® 840 phone — it may be a result of the upgrade.

How do I know if I have analog or digital lines?

If you are not sure if changes have been made to your telephone lines and you are experiencing issues with your connection to Relay, contact your telephone service provider to inquire about possible changes in your area.

What solutions can keep me connected to Relay?

With the transition from analog to digital lines, you may need to consider acquiring internet service. This may necessitate that you update your Relay equipment to a device that is compatible with a digital (internet) line.



If you are experiencing issues with your TTY, one possible solution could include Real-Time Text (RTT)/TTY accessibility on a mobile device. More information can be found at fcc.gov.

If you are experiencing issues using a VCO phone, HCO phone or a CapTel 840 phone, possible solutions include:

- CapTel 840i
- CapTel 2400i
- Hamilton Mobile™ CapTel® app for iOS and Android™
- Hamilton Web™ CapTel®

CELEBRATING THE NEXT GENERATION

Each year, students who are nearing high school graduation have the opportunity to receive a \$500 scholarship from Hamilton Relay to go toward their post-secondary education. Scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors who are deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind or have difficulty speaking and who reside in a state where Hamilton Relay is the contracted relay and/or captioned telephone service provider. Interested students complete an application and essay on communications technology.

Here are the recipients of the 2023 Hamilton Relay High School Scholarship:

Connecticut, Stephanie Bryant
Kentucky, Laura Adams
Massachusetts, Jared Campbell

Idaho, Kyser Bake
Louisiana, Sidnie Florence
Washington, Raymond Singkeo

Iowa, Luke Holdgrafer
Maryland, Kaden Sharpless

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SUMMER WORD SEARCH

Give your brain some exercise with a word search that highlights some of this season's newsletter topics and stories.

W N W G V N H N V H X R I A Q
G O O L L A O S M O R E S P G
L I P U V I U I Z L Y W L X D
J T N I V D Z L T E I O G Z N
N A J V H Z P M K A M P D S S
R L S Q T S B U F D R M B S F
Y O O M X H R J M E I E N E E
L S N K E D S A B R X F N N H
M I D N I E C D L S Y C L E X
P P G I O E N A V O E R H R G
T X L E G C D A L O H N Q A T
A N A I S I U O L E Q C G W M
N Z A J N V T A E E B D S A I
U C Z W J J U A M K M L H P E
U L I M X X B L L Z T G Z T M

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CALEB
LOUISIANA
LEADERS

GENERATION
SCHOLARSHIP
ISOLATION
EMPOWER
DIGITAL

SMORES
AWARENESS



Hamilton Relay Service
1006 12th Street
Aurora, NE 68818

Address Service Requested

From Our Kitchen to Yours

Take these sweet treats to your next cookout! Recipe courtesy of Beth Slough, Director of Account Management and Compliance.



COCOA PEBBLES™ S'MORES BARS

Servings: 24

Allergens: Dairy

Bake Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

8 whole graham crackers	1 (10 oz) package miniature marshmallows
1 package (8 squares) semi-sweet chocolate	1 (13 oz) package Cocoa Pebbles cereal
2 tbsp butter, divided	

DIRECTIONS

1. Line a 13"x9" pan with foil. Grease the bottom and sides.
2. Place graham crackers on the bottom of pan, cutting crackers to fit.
3. Microwave chocolate and two tablespoons of butter in a four-quart microwavable bowl on high for 45 seconds or until melted.
4. Add marshmallows, mix to coat.
5. Microwave 1 1/2 minutes or until melted, stirring after 45 seconds. Add cereal. Mix to coat well. Press firmly over graham crackers in pan.
6. Cool and cut into squares.

