World Hearing Day: 3 March 2016

CHINDHOOD HEARING LOSS

ACT NOW, HERE'S HOW!

Report of activities
World Hearing Day, previously referred to as the International Ear Care Day, is observed on 3 March every year. The aim of the day is to raise awareness of hearing loss, and to promote ear and hearing care at a national and community level across the world. Every year, this day addresses a specific theme, and to reflect this, activities are carried out by WHO and its partners.

This year the theme for World Hearing Day was Childhood Hearing Loss: Act Now, Here’s How! WHO Headquarters, WHO Regional Offices, Member States and collaborating centres were involved in organizing this day.

Around 360 million people- 5% of the world’s population- live with hearing loss which is considered disabling. Of these, nearly 32 million are children, with the majority living in low- and middle-income countries. WHO estimates that around 60% of childhood hearing loss could be avoided through public health initiatives. If children develop hearing loss interventions are needed to ensure children reach their full potential. In response to this, the theme for World Hearing Day 2016 focused on raising awareness about the causes of childhood hearing loss and strategies for its prevention. On this day, WHO developed and released a series of informational products including:

- A report on Childhood Hearing Loss: Act Now, Here’s How;
  [http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/WHD2016_Brochure_EN_2.pdf](http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/WHD2016_Brochure_EN_2.pdf)
- Posters and banners;
  [http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/WHD2016_Theme_poster_EN.pdf](http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/WHD2016_Theme_poster_EN.pdf)
- Handouts;
  [http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/WHD2016_Infographic_EN.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/WHD2016_Infographic_EN.pdf?ua=1)

All materials were prepared in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish and translated by partners into other languages as well.
Activities in WHO headquarters

On 1 March 2016, WHO-HQ held a press briefing at the Palais des Nations in Geneva to raise awareness of childhood hearing loss and outlined ways to prevent and mitigate it. A press release was issued and can be accessed at http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/notes/2016/childhood-hearing-loss/en/ This was widely covered by press and media around the world.

On 3 March 2016, a seminar was held at WHO-HQ to discuss “Childhood Hearing Loss: Act Now, Here's How!” Dr. Etienne Krug, Director, Department for Management of Noncommunicable Diseases, Disability, Violence and Injury Prevention (NVI), WHO chaired the session. Key messages of childhood hearing loss were discussed, and a seminar was held on the importance of timely interventions, necessary public health measures, and public awareness. Speakers included:

- Nassozi Kiyaga, on ‘Empowering people with hearing loss: experiences in Uganda’.
- Paige Stringer, on ‘Appropriate interventions promote access to language and learning: my experiences’.
- Pierre Lutz, on ‘Early identification improves outcomes: my experiences’.

Free ear and hearing screenings were provided to WHO-HQ staff. A small screening area was set up and WHO staff were invited to get their hearing tested. Informational materials were provided for reading. Staff who failed the screening test were provided with further information regarding local ENT specialists to investigate for hearing loss.

Activities Around the World

On 1 March 2016, the European Parliament hosted a lunch debate entitled “Hearing Awareness. Professional Care Makes you Smarter and Healthier.” The debate was organized in cooperation with the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers’ Association (EHIMA), the European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals (AEA), and the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH). The objective of the event was to raise awareness of the importance of hearing checks and the key impact of professional hearing care on the ability of individuals to live healthier and more active lives. WHO technical officer participated in the debate and spoke on Why “Get Smarter & Healthier through Professional Hearing Care” is important for young children.
Australia

‘Hear and Say’ marked World Hearing Day with the launch of their School Hearing Screening Program. It is expected that by the end of the 2016 school year, 8,000 students will be screened in more than 80 schools. Hear and Say’s goal is to make annual school hearing screenings a regular occurrence in every primary school across Queensland. In addition, The HEARing Cooperate Research Centre promoted the Day and their Longitudinal Outcomes of Children with Hearing Impairment (LOCHI) study via social media.

Bangladesh

Led by Centre for Disability in Development (CDD), nearly 12,000 people were reached for Bangladesh's World Hearing Day activities. CDD partnered with 37 organizations to carry out various activities. These activities included awareness sessions, group meetings, orientations, rallies, seminars, cultural programs and street performance. Many groups were targeted such as community members, students, teachers, parents, health workers, and people with disabilities and their families.

Belarus

Led by the organization “Harmony of Sounds” and Vyales ltd., in partnership with Cochlear AG, the day was marked with an event at a school for children with hearing loss. Parents, teachers and students all attended the event. The school children organized a concert and a discussion was held for parents and teachers to share their thoughts, opinions and concerns.
China

China devoted a week to ear and hearing care from March 1-7. Led by 15 central government bodies including Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Civil Administration and the WHO collaborating centres, this week was filled with a variety of activities such as advocacy and promotion through media, hearing screening in communities and schools, hearing aid donation and services, and community awareness sessions. Approximately 700 million people were reached through these activities. A press conference was held and reported in many newspapers, on TV and online. Free hearing consultations were offered in the Jiangsu province hospital where nearly 800 patients were consulted. In the Qixia district nearly 300 children were screened for hearing loss in primary schools and approximately 20,000 people were reached through various activities in the district. A charity concert was held by CRRCDC (China Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Deaf Children) at the National Centre for Performing Arts in Beijing to increase awareness of the importance of safe listening. Government officials and nearly 2,000 people attended the concert. Brochures on hearing care and free hearing tests were offered to the audience.

Colombia

Colombia observed World Hearing Day by promoting awareness via media, television and radio. Interviews were held on Caracol Radio, Colmundo radio, Colombia National Radio and others. Various bulletins and newscasts were posted on to websites including the Colombian Audiological Society’s page, Colombia Medical Federation etc. Their promotional activities were over the course of three days, and are estimated to have reached thousands of viewers. A community awareness session was also held and led by Medihumana and Mediglobal groups to promote ear and hearing care, and the importance of early detection and early intervention.
**Chile**

For World Hearing Day, Chile’s activities were focused on broadcasting messages and raising awareness. Two interviews were held on Chilean National Television and CNN Chile. Ministry of Education posted a report on the JUNAEB (National Board of Student Aid and Scholarships) webpage, highlighting the date and the work of JUNAEB in schools in relation to prevention of hearing loss and ear care.

**Denmark**

To commemorate World Hearing Day, the Danish Association of the Hard of Hearing undertook an awareness-campaign for all the public schools in Denmark. Schools were called on to spend 15 minutes on March 3 discussing childhood hearing loss and noise damage prevention. A promotional video was made for the day and the campaign included awareness sessions in schools, articles and radio interviews. World Hearing Day activities lasted one week, and an estimated 500,000 persons were reached through these activities.

**Egypt**

Cairo University Audiology Centre and Rotary Club marked the occasion of World Hearing Day with the hearing screening of school children in Quesna, the largest province of Monofia. 5,125 children from eight primary schools were screened, ranging from 4-8 years of age. The Egyptian Audio-Vestibular Medicine Association (EAVMA) celebrated by hosting an event for hearing-impaired children and their parents in one of the major parks in East Cairo. Children were enrolled in guided tours through the park, visited the zoo and attended a music show. Parents of hearing-impaired children participated in the event.
Germany
Bundesverband der Hörgeräte-Industrie (BVHI) celebrated World Hearing Day with a number of different activities. An online platform was created and opened to the public to allow WHD activities to be registered and advertised. On this day, hearing loss awareness was raised and prevention was advocated. Screening was offered by 1930 specialists, and several university clinics held open door days. Other activities included cultural activities in communities (concerts), museum-tours for people with hearing loss, and lectures on hearing loss prevention. BVHI also cooperated with a nationwide radio station to broadcast spots and interviews. Nearly 15 million people were reached through print and online, 9 million people were reached through the radio, and several thousand people were reached directly through participating specialists.

Ghana
The Day was celebrated by various organizations including the Speech Therapists and Audiologists Association of Ghana, the Otorhinolaryngology Society of Ghana, and the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital. Activities included interviews and talks on TV and in newspapers, presentations on various topics, and ear and hearing screening for newborn and school children.

Guatemala
For World Hearing Day, different regions of Guatemala conducted various activities. Sonrisas que Escuchan, a non-profit organization that provides hearing care services, organized an information campaign though 90-second spots on TV, every day throughout the month. During these spots, various topics were discussed such as World Hearing Day, primary care and hearing care, hearing aids, and cochlear implants. An interview on childhood hearing loss was conducted on a major TV newscast. The Hearing Centre, CEDAF, offered complimentary field audiometry to all children with cochlear implants.

Honduras
In Tegucigalpa, Honduras, the Day was celebrated with an opening of an Audiology Clinic. The opening was marked with a presentation for parents of children with cochlear implants, and other ENT doctors.
India

Led by Ashray Akruti, activities included free ear and hearing screening camps for school children in government schools and senior citizens in old age homes in Hyderabad, free hearing aid distribution, a poster release for “Ear and Hear Care,” and a national short video contest and award ceremony. A highlight for the Day was the inauguration of a Mobile Hearing Clinic Van, a sound proof mobile van fitted with hearing screening equipment. In addition, the Dr. S.R Chandrasekhar Institute of Speech and Hearing held free hearing screenings. The Society for Sound Hearing with the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare in India, and supported by CBM and other partners, participated in various activities for WHD in New Delhi. The day was promoted via radio and TV, various screening camps and awareness sessions were held, presentations were given and some states organized walkathons. A Cochlear Implant Conclave was held in late February to mark 10 years of initiation of cochlear implant surgery and to celebrate WHD, with discussions and presentations on various topics. In the eastern state of Manipur, the World Hearing Day activities were carried out over the period of one month by the Department of Health. Awareness camps were held in different districts with participation of school children, parents and health workers. A programme was organized on 3 March to raise awareness on hearing screening, with the participation of senior level state officials, doctors and health workers. Radio and TV programmes were aired and news reports published.

Iran

For the Day, WHO posters and banners were translated to Persian language and displayed at health centres around the country. A national conference on “Commemoration of one decade of effort focused on universal neonatal hearing screening” was held by the State Welfare Organization (SWO) of Iran. An annual painting competition about ear and hearing care for kindergarten and preschool aged children was held. An announcement that a national, universal neonatal and newborn screening program would be integrated into the primary health care system of the I.R of Iran was made.
Kenya

Led by Operation Ear Drop Kenya, World Hearing Day was celebrated with a variety of activities. The Day was advocated through posters, banners, flyers and t-shirts and promoted through media coverage. The focus of the day was a free medical camp offered at a primary school. Over 600 school children, where they were screened for hearing loss or infection, and those with problems were treated or referred. All were educated on healthy ear care and hearing loss prevention.

Madagascar

Under the direction of the Ministry of Public Health, and in collaboration with CBM and other private and public sector partners, World Hearing Day was observed with an awareness campaign, a presentation, and widespread screening and provision of ear care to over 100 people. Banners and posters were displayed at major hospitals in the capital and flyers were distributed to attendees of the presentation. Speeches were given by professional bodies, the Central Ministry, La Société Malgache d’ORL, and private partners.

Malawi

The World Hearing Day was observed as a collaborative effort with participation of the Director of Clinical Services, CBM, ABC hearing centre and the Hospital Director for Lilongwe. A health education band composed a song on ear care, sketches were made on the theme of the day and radio programmes were broadcast over five different channels. An awareness session was organized at the Bwaila Health Centre in Lilongwe and media outreach undertaken.

Mexico

World Hearing Day was coordinated by a professional body of audiology in the state of Morelos. Two interviews were conducted on national television with transmission to local states. These interviews addressed paediatric hearing care to raise awareness before World Hearing Day. Interviews were also conducted with local and national newspapers on March 3 to raise awareness on the importance of neonatal hearing screening. In addition, a meeting was held between PAHO and the Secretary of Health to address hearing health issues.
**Nepal**

On 3 March, Nepal highlighted the issue of deafness among the public through an article published in a national magazine. The article raised awareness about hearing loss and prevention in relation to the theme of childhood hearing loss.

**Nigeria**

World Hearing Day was observed in many cities and towns across Nigeria with the organization of advocacy seminars and workshops. At Wesley School for the Deaf in Lagos, free otoscopic check-ups were performed for the primary school students with referrals made to the local ENT department when needed. An audiologist addressed parents, caregivers and school staff members about childhood hearing loss and general ear care.

**New Zealand**

The National Foundation for the Deaf promoted World Hearing Day and childhood hearing loss through mass advocacy and awareness. They distributed WHO materials to their member organizations, composed the materials into a highly visible pack and mailed them to every Member of Parliament, emailed digital materials to all primary school principals in NZ, and also sent materials to Nepal in support of their activities.

**Northern DR Congo**

The Centre d’Education et de Readaptation a Base Communautaire (CERBC-DRCongo), in collaboration with Health Zones, held activities focused on community awareness sessions, screening primary schools, and service provision at Aru Audiology Clinic for children. School children were screened and referred when necessary to a free clinic for treatment. Educational sessions were held about ear and hearing health, and prevention of hearing loss. Short interviews were conducted with teachers, children and medical staff by local journalists, and a discussion was held on the local radio station about childhood hearing loss.
Pakistan

Pakistan Institute of Rehabilitation, and the Comprehensive Health and Education Forum (CHEF) International, observed the Day with different activities. A seminar was organized for students and faculty members of Isra University. Speakers shared their views on important aspects of ear care and reducing hearing loss in Pakistan. Free school screening was conducted, with 115 students screened for hearing loss in Islamabad. WHO posters were displayed in key places. In collaboration with Danishkadah, Jinnah University for Women hosted a seminar to raise awareness on ear and hearing care. Hearing screening was also offered to the students. In the Jati district Sujjawal, Danishkadah collaborated with Handicap International, Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum and German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, to host a seminar and hearing screening in a village.

Slovakia

For World Hearing Day, a press conference was held with a press release that included facts and numbers, and a personal testimony. In collaboration with MEDEL, they released a Slovak version of the video titled “Through the Ears of a Child,” which highlights the advantages of treating childhood deafness or hearing loss at an early age. Press coverage included 29 media reports, five TV reports, and four radio reports.

Panama

National level activities were organized through the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Health, ENT and paediatric societies of Panama, and WHO. A nation-wide awareness campaign was undertaken through a press conference, TV programmes, radio, newspapers, reaching over 2 million persons. Brochures were distributed and posters displayed at various public places.
Philippines

Led by its president Raphael Torralba, the Hard of Hearing Group Philippines organized the World Hearing Day event at the University of Santo Tomas. This included free ear check-ups and hearing tests, a forum on hard of hearing advocacy, and another on proper ear care. At these forums, different topics were discussed such as the availability of a new hearing aid package through insurance, advocacy for hard of hearing persons, and proper ear care etc. This event was led by Hard of Hearing Group Philippines, in partnership with Physicians for Peace- Philippines, Save the Children Philippines, SM Program on Disability Affairs, National Council on Disability Affairs and other key individual partners.

Poland

World Hearing Day was marked by an awareness campaign organized by Cochlear AG Poland. A series of posts were prepared for Facebook, information was included in their newsletter, and press notes were sent to various media outlets resulting in 38 publications. In addition, a competition was held that invited children to draw on how to care for hearing and send in their photos.

Qatar

Over the course of three days, Qatar observed World Hearing Day with activities such as media advocacy, screenings, service provision, and community awareness sessions. Organized by the Ministry of Health, public awareness activities included lectures and presentations, hearing screening events, and competitions. A special session was organized for those who have hearing aids or cochlear implants.
**Seychelles**

This year, Seychelles observed World Hearing Day with two weeks of activity. The organizing committee had selected various primary schools and elderly clubs/homes to be screened for hearing loss, and Seychelles hospital offered free screening to its workers on 3 March, and a special screening session was offered at the Seychelles Petroleum Company for its staff. 350 people were screened, with 17 fitted for hearing aids. School children were also brought on educational tours of a factory and the airport to learn about unsafe noise levels and hearing safety measures. A small exhibition was set up at a mall where leaflets were distributed and short videos on ear and hearing care were shown. Activities concluded with a presentation on the continued need for awareness about noise induced hearing loss, especially among children.

**South Africa**

The University of Pretoria, in partnership with HearScreen, Vodacom, South African Association of Audiologists and the South African Speech-Language and Hearing Association, launched its National Hearing Test App, HearZA. HearZA allows for a free hearing test for every South African and links them to their closest hearing health care provider if they fail the test. They also hosted a social media awareness campaign with '#CanYouHearThat' challenge. In addition, the University of Witwatersrand Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology hosted an event to commemorate World Hearing Day 2016. Students raised awareness about deafness on campus and distributed the WHO's pamphlets and infographics. The event had radio and newspaper coverage. The Day was also promoted by the South African Association of Audiologists (SAAA) with development of innovative information materials.
South Korea

Led by the Korean Otological Society, lectures were held at several university hospitals on topics such as hearing loss and otitis media. Lectures were also given at nearly 30 senior welfare centres around the country on hearing aids, presbycusis, otitis media and others.

Turkey

Turkish OKSUD and Konya Karatay Audiology celebrated World Hearing Day with “Konya is Hearing” project in Konya, one of the largest cities in Turkey. A march was held in the centre of Konya with approximately 1,300 people marching. Organizations at the march included hearing impairment societies, speech rehabilitation centres, hearing aid sales centres and various community members.

Uganda

To commemorate World Hearing Day 2016, the Department of ENT at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) organized an outreach activity to one of the orphanages in Mbarara. A total of 56 children were screened for hearing loss.

Vietnam

Vietnam celebrated the World Hearing Day through an event organized by the Department of Child Care under the Ministry of Labor with Sonova Vietnam to build awareness of hearing care and the role of early intervention. In addition, children from a deaf school in Hanoi gave a performance.
Organizations

Agir Pour l’Audition

In collaboration with L’Oréal Group, an awareness event was held for employees. Educational materials were distributed and films were played. Hearing screening was also offered. A health forum was held for secondary school students in Paris, where lectures were given on hearing health and an interactive activity on noise levels took place.

American Academy of Otolaryngology

AAO supported World Hearing Day by promoting the day on their Facebook page. They posted the WHO infographic for Childhood Hearing Loss, and a link for followers to learn more.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

ASHA commemorated World Hearing Day by raising awareness through posting WHO’s Infographic on childhood hearing loss to their social media account. Over 100,000 social media users were reached.

CBM

CBM promoted World Hearing Day through their online webpage and posts on Facebook. They also worked in collaboration with different countries to support their World Hearing Day activities.

Cochlear Ltd

Cochlear Organization helped promote World Hearing Day through social media. They created a promotional video featuring cricket player Brett Lee, and also shared inspiring stories on social media of people who are part of the global Cochlear Family whose lives were impacted by Cochlear devices. In addition, Cochlear distributors in different countries also hosted activities, as seen in Poland and Belarus.

Hear the World Foundation

In celebration of World Hearing Day 2016, the Hear the World Foundation produced a video and conducted an online awareness and prevention campaign which included an online feature, a blog post and a social media campaign. An online feature was also created, aimed at parents of children with hearing loss. Link to video: http://www.hear-the-world.com/en/about-us/campaigns-events/world-hearing-day-2016.html
Journée Nationale de l’Audition

JNA collaborated with WHO and other partners by organizing the 19th edition of the French National Day for Hearing. The event was launched with a press conference on 3 March and a variety of activities were carried out over a one-week period. These were held in partnership with other stakeholders including the Government of France.

MED-EL

World Hearing Day was supported by MED-EL and the HEARRING group with the launch of a new video Through the Ears of a Child. (www.earsofachild.com). The video highlights the potential advantages of treating childhood deafness or hearing loss at an early age. The video (available in 8 languages) was actively promoted through social media and received over 230,000 video views as well as thousands of likes and shares through social media.

Nonno Ascoltami

Nonno Ascoltami promoted a national campaign with the title “#dica33” a sentence that in Italy translates as “speaking about health,” with 3/3 to symbolize 3 of March, World Hearing Day. The campaign was presented to the national press in the Ministry of Health in Rome. People were encouraged to replace their Facebook icon with the “egg” symbol of 3rd of March to raise awareness of the day.

Society for Sound Hearing International

SSH marked World Hearing Day through promotional activities via Facebook and supporting activities in India.

Report of activities
**Sound Seekers**

Seekers, organised an art colouring competition at the deaf unit at Kansenshi Basic School, Nolda, Zambia. They asked each class to draw what they would like to be when they grow up. Children from six classes took part and they chose a winner from each to receive a prize.

![Sound Seekers image](image-url)

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**World Wide Hearing Foundation International**

The Worldwide Hearing Foundation celebrated World Hearing Day by promoting awareness of the Day’s theme, and advocating its messages online. They promoted awareness about WHD through their website, social media, partners and other social media networks, and through the creation of an animated video. Collaborating with EHIMA, the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association, the video educated about hearing loss and the importance of hearing aids, and is now available in four languages. Link to Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmYjemHyPnI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmYjemHyPnI)

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**Other organizations which collaborated with WHO and participated in World Hearing Day activities at WHO headquarters in Geneva:**

- Deaf Kidz International
- European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH)
- European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA)
- Global Foundation for Children with Hearing Loss
- Hearing Conservation Council
- Ida Institute
- IMPACT Switzerland
- International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics (IALP)
- International Prevention Research Institute
- Semaine du Son
- Starkey Hearing Foundation
- The Ear Foundation
- Union of the European Phoniatricians
News and Announcements: some links


• http://dailymails.com.ng/measles-meningitis-can-lead-hearing-loss/


• http://www.voanews.com/content/who-childhood-hearing-loss-preventable/3217604.html

• http://www.informador.com.mx/tecnologia/2016/648338/6/mas-de-la-mitad-de-los-casos-de-sordera-se-pueden-prevenir-oms.htm

• http://unternehmen-heute.de/news.php?newsid=340362

• http://www.ladepeche.fr/article/2016/03/01/2287152-deficience-auditive-chez-l-enfant-mieux-vaut-prevenir.html


• http://www.cbm.org/World-Hearing-Day-2016-503230.php

• http://www.wwhearing.org/world-hearing-day

• http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/intl/about/media-centre/world-hearing-day-2016

• http://www.kea-audio.org/portal/index.php/world-hearing-day

• http://disabilitycentre.lshtm.ac.uk/world-hearing-day-on-march-3rd-join-us-to-learn-about-childhood-hearing-loss/
INTERVENE

to promote access to communication and education

PREVENT

to reduce the magnitude of hearing loss

IDENTIFY

to minimize the impact of childhood hearing loss

EMPOWER

to ensure participation in society on equal basis with others

ACT NOW, HERE’S HOW

CHILDHOOD HEARING LOSS

www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/en