



What is the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell)?

The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is an international nonprofit organization that brings families and professionals together to support children with hearing loss. AG Bell's community comprises families who have children who are deaf or hard of hearing, adults who are deaf or hard of hearing, and the professionals who work with them, including teachers of the deaf, speech-language pathologists, audiologists and certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialists (LSLS®).

OUR HISTORY

Although widely known as the inventor of the telephone, Dr. Alexander Graham Bell was first and foremost a teacher of the deaf. Dr. Bell established two organizations: the Volta Bureau in Washington, D.C., which served as a repository for information related to hearing loss, and the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf. Over time these organizations evolved into what is now known as the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is "Working Globally To Ensure That People Who Are Deaf And Hard Of Hearing Can Hear And Talk." To carry out this mission, AG Bell is organized into four goal areas: Advocacy and Communications, Community Building, Capacity Building, and Leadership and Management.

ADVOCACY

AG Bell works to promote issues relevant to children and adults with hearing loss to legislators, regulators, healthcare systems, the media and educational and legal systems. AG Bell participates in a variety of coalitions that address issues of concern to the larger community of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, such as the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance (DHHA) and the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH), among others.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

AG Bell's vibrant community of 17,000 provides information and opportunities to network for families of children who are deaf and hard of hearing, for professionals, including teachers of the deaf, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and Listening and Spoken Language Specialists, and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing. Community Building programs include:

- **Online Resources.** AG Bell's websites (www.agbell.org, www.agbellacademy.org, and www.agbellinternational.org) provide ongoing support and education through the ages and stages of childhood development for those with hearing loss. Parents and caregivers can find information on hearing health and technology, education and advocacy resources, and legal resources in English and Spanish.
 - **Parent Advocacy Training (P.A.T.).** P.A.T. is an online course that enables parents to successfully advocate for their child and make sure his or her educational needs are met. P.A.T. is offered free of charge.
 - **Financial Aid and Scholarship Programs.** AG Bell offers financial aid and scholarships to help support a listening and spoken language outcome for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. Programs are classified by age and educational level and range from infancy through post-graduate school.
 - **Leadership Opportunities for Teens (LOFT).** AG Bell's acclaimed LOFT program is offered annually and designed for participants to develop skills in individual leadership, communication, teamwork and self-advocacy.
 - **Volta Voices.** A quarterly magazine with features and regular columns that focus on the latest in hearing technology, communications access, educational approaches and professional development.
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- A photograph showing a woman with dark hair and a purple top looking down at a young child. The child, wearing a blue t-shirt with a smiley face, is holding a yellow toy that looks like a Pikachu. They are sitting at a wooden table outdoors.

CAPACITY BUILDING

AG Bell works to increase the number of highly trained professionals available for families and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to achieve a listening and spoken language outcome.

- **LSLS Certification.** The Alexander Graham Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language credentials Listening and Spoken Language Specialists (LSLS®). The LSLS certification distinguishes a professional who has demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities to work with children who are deaf or hard of hearing to achieve an outcome of listening, spoken language and literacy.
- **Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) Symposium.** AG Bell hosts a Listening and Spoken Language Symposium that focuses on professional development for teachers, therapists and early interventionists.
- **The Volta Review.** AG Bell's scholarly peer-reviewed online journal offers the latest research in the field of listening and spoken language development. Recent topics include early hearing detection and intervention and professional development.

ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

AG Bell is governed by a volunteer board representative of its community of families, professionals and adults living with hearing loss. AG Bell has a professional staff of 30 who are based at the organization's historic headquarters, the Volta Bureau in Washington, D.C., and at AG Bell International in Madrid, Spain.

