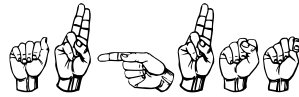


# Tidbits

NDSD/Resource Center

August 21, 2023 Volume 7-Issue 1



## August FROM DONNA'S DESK

The summer is coming to a close and we are gearing up for school to open. We have missed students' smiling faces and can't wait to see how they have grown!

Many exciting things happened over the summer here at NDSD/RC. Our HVAC and Roofing projects are wrapping up. We hired new staff and are still looking for a few (share our opportunities with others <https://www.ndsd.nd.gov/about/jobs>!). Our Facilities Department has been busy all summer with repairs, cleaning, remodeling, and beautifying our campus. We have a new Student-Parent Handbook and a new Policy Manual, which will be on the website soon. These are living documents that will be reviewed during the year to ensure we have a solid foundation as an agency, a school, and a residential program.

For this 2023-2024 school year, we are looking forward to improving our admissions process and our IEP and evaluation processes. We will be implementing Conscious Discipline training throughout the year. If you are interested to learn more, please let me know. We will be examining Deaf-friendly curriculum and learning about bilingual strategies. As always, we will continue learning alongside you in our Deaf Education journey.

As I wrap up my first YEAR (how did that happen?), I would love to know more from you! What are your hopes and dreams for the North Dakota School for the Deaf/Resource Center? Call me at 701-665-4410 or drop me a line at [donna.e.sorensen@k12.nd.us](mailto:donna.e.sorensen@k12.nd.us) or stop by and visit!



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**The Education Staff are excited to get back into the classroom and see what all of our students have been up to over the summer!**



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## Nurses Corner



Lisa Elverud, LPN joined NDSD Health Services for the 2023-24 school year. Lisa comes to us with 20 years of nursing experience. We are so excited to have her on board and providing health and wellness to students and staff in the evenings.

~Nurse Tracy

# Meet our New Dorm Staff



## **Megan George - Director of Student Life**

Hails from Maryland & considers DC to be a personal playground. Graduated with Bachelor of Science in Deaf Studies in 2019 at Towson University. Obtained Master of Arts in Sign Language Education in 2022 at Gallaudet University. Enjoys nature tremendously and is an avid athlete - loves biking and hiking. Hopes to get a chance to explore local outdoor sports!



## **William Smith - Student Life Counselor**

An environmentally conscious Floridian man who shows his love for nature. Born and raised in Tampa, Florida. Graduated from Brandon High School in 2014. Passionate hiker with a goal to visit every National Park and its attractions. Filmography is a huge interest and as well as Anime as it shares lots of lessons about life.



## **Krysten Williams - Student Life Counselor**

Born in Florida & raised in North Carolina. Graduated from Model Secondary School for the Deaf in 2009. Attended Art Institute of Charlotte for Bachelor of Science in Photography. An avid reader and enjoys manga, graphic novels, and general works of fiction & non-fiction. Enjoys arts such as painting, drawing, and various mediums. Enjoys rewarding time with video games during free time.





## **North Dakota School for the Deaf/ Resource Center Parent-Infant Program and School Age Outreach Specialists (Statewide Services)**

The ND Parent-Infant Program for deaf and hard of children (PIP), birth to five, and their families is a statewide program. It is family centered and is individualized to meet the family's needs based on the hearing levels of the child. The program provides information to families and professionals statewide. Home visits are offered to families to provide unbiased information about hearing loss, auditory skills development and amplification, communication choices and technology options, development of sign language skills, networking with professionals, other parents, and deaf individuals.

Along with home visits, PIP specialists consult in daycares and preschool settings. We are also available to participate in IFSP meetings. We have trained professional staff to address the unique needs of deaf/hard hearing children.

This same team is available for School-Age Outreach services. These services are provided statewide to schools who have students with hearing loss, age 3-21 years.

All of our specialists are teachers of the deaf plus elementary or secondary education degrees. Each member also has other areas of concentrations such as early childhood, special education, interpreter/sign language instructor, dual sensory training, speech and language and access to a consulting audiologist.

### **Our newest member of our team is Jodi Scheeler**



*Jodi Scheeler will be working from the Minot regional office.*

My name is Jodi Scheeler, and I am excited to be a part of NDSD/RC this year! As a child, my family planted dreams for a career in deaf education one day. I am humbled to have now practiced special education for 27 years after achieving undergraduate degrees in English Education and Deaf Education and later a graduate degree in Special Education with emphasis in Deaf Education at Minot State University (MSU). Early in my career, I worked as an itinerant teacher of deaf and hard of hearing for Elko County School District in Nevada, a teacher of community sign language classes, an adjunct instructor at Minot State University in Minot, and an educational interpreter for Minot Public Schools. For the past twenty years, I have worked as an itinerant teacher of deaf/hard of hearing for Souris Valley Special Education Unit, serving rural school districts in northwest North Dakota. For the past two years I have been doing the same role for Minot Public School District. I have had the opportunity to continually hone my skills in the deaf education with continual professional development to support families and school teams such as training in "See the Sound: Visual Phonics," CID SPICE curriculum and many other specific to students with hearing loss. Most recently, I am currently getting in-depth training in the SKI-Hi Curriculum geared for babies and toddlers with hearing loss.

I am blessed with an amazing husband and two extraordinary daughters. In my free time, I love creative adventures in art, travel, cooking, and gardening!

For more information, contact Nicole Swartwout at (701) 858-3357 or [nicole.swartwout@k12.nd.us](mailto:nicole.swartwout@k12.nd.us)

# Do hearing aids prevent falls?



According to a study of people aged 40 to 69, a 25-decibel hearing loss which is equivalent to going from normal to mild hearing loss triples your chance of falling, even mild hearing loss can affect the risk of a fall.

Another study, from a team at the University of Michigan, analyzed data on nearly 115,000 seniors newly diagnosed with hearing loss (but otherwise healthy). It found that 13 percent had an injury in a fall within three years, compared to 7.5 percent of the general population their age.

## **Reasons hearing loss may increase risk of falling**

**1. Hearing taps your brain reserves.** If you're concentrating harder to interpret sound, you may have less mental resource available for balance. Gait and balance are actually very cognitively demanding.

**2. Aging affects both hearing and balance.** Age-related hearing loss may be linked to declines in the vestibular sense, a set of receptors in your inner ear, which comes into play whenever you move your head. It's also activated by the downward force of gravity, giving you a sense of where you are: your grounding.

**3. Sounds help us balance.** Stable sounds act as a kind of "auditory anchor." But you have to be able to hear them. When people with hearing loss hear stable background sounds, their posture tends to improve.

**4. Hearing loss is linked to mood.** People may be less alert when caught up in a fog of misery or anxiety. Hearing loss increases the risk of depression. Depression is linked to more falls and those falls tend to deepen depression in another classic bad cycle.

## **So, do hearing aids help prevent falls?**

The University of Michigan study found that a first-time hearing aid cut the risk of a fall-related injury by 13 percentage points in the next three years.

Research is finding that people are more stable when wearing hearing aids. It's very likely that treating hearing loss (with hearing aids or other implants) will also serve as a type of 'balance aid' like a cane.

In addition to treating hearing loss, experts say; keep moving. Walking, balance exercises and resistance exercises to strengthen muscles can keep seniors on their feet. You can build strength and improve your balance in as little as two 15-20 minute strengthening sessions a week.

(More information can be found at: [www.healthyhearing.com](http://www.healthyhearing.com))



**The bottom line: If you're concerned about your balance and you have hearing loss, hearing better may make a difference.**

**From your Adult Outreach team:** Kristen Vetter, Dawn Sauvageau, Karen Zinke, & Kathy Frelich



## What's Happening



Our Staff are engaged in the Conscious Discipline training using the Introductory 10-course online modules. If you are a parent and would like to be involved in this training, please contact Donna Sorensen at [donna.e.sorensen@k12.nd.us](mailto:donna.e.sorensen@k12.nd.us) or 701-665-4410. There are limited spots available. This training will continue through this school year. [www.consciousdiscipline.com](http://www.consciousdiscipline.com)

