



**Fédération Européenne des Parents d'Enfants Déficients Auditifs**  
**European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children**  
**Europäischer Verband der Eltern Hörgeschädigter Kinder**  
**Federación Europea de Padres de Niños con Discapacidad**  
**Auditiva**



# FEPEDA NEWSLETTER

## *Greetings from the President*

Dear Members,

Year 2020 has been very exceptional due to the worldwide COVID-19 situation. The pandemic has also affected FEPEDA's work and activities planned for this year. However, even though the situation has been challenging we have still managed to continue our important work in many ways - I would warmly like to thank you all for being such a huge help with keeping our projects ongoing.

As part of our 30-year-anniversary celebration one of the highlights this year has been our Photo Campaign. The campaign brings together children and young people across Europe under the motto "Together for the future". The feedback from the campaign has been extremely positive and our plan is to keep it ongoing in the coming year as well.

Another big project this year has been our Family Survey, the goal of which is to provide with new information on the situation on hearing impaired children and young people throughout Europe. The survey will also give us information, which have been the biggest changes since the previous surveys carried out in 2000 and 2013. The survey was translated into 16 languages and altogether we received amazing 1 273 replies from 26 different countries! A big thank you to all families who had time to answer to this important questionnaire. A deeper analysis is currently in process and the results will be presented at our coming meetings next year.

On behalf of the Bureau and Secretariat I wish you a happy holiday season. Stay healthy and all the best for the New Year 2021!

Sari Paloposki, President of FEPEDA

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## Previous FEPEDA Meetings



FEPEDA's General Assembly and two Management Committee meetings were held online in October 2020.

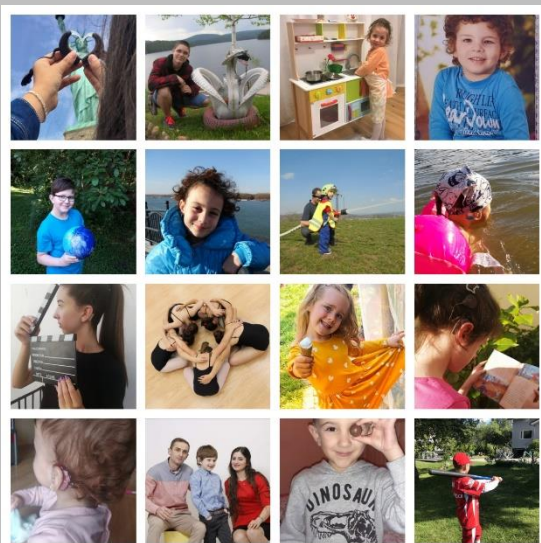
The General Assembly approved last year's accounts and activity report as well as next year's budget and action plan. Discussions were productive and fruitful. Next year's main goals are to keep our planned projects ongoing as well as prepare a deeper report of the results of the Family Survey to be presented at different forums during the next year.

This year there were also elections to the Bureau. Sari Paloposki was re-elected as President (till next spring), André Cuencá as Secretary General, Carmen de Lamo and Cosmin Brasov as Vice Presidents.

A three-year period of the Secretariat in Finland has ended in the end of October. FEPEDA wants to express a warm thank you to the Finnish Association and especially to Petra Paloposki for her great work as FEPEDA's Secretary during the past three years!

From the beginning of November all questions can be sent directly to the President ([sari.paloposki2\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:sari.paloposki2(at)gmail.com)).

## Photo Campaign



FEPEDA launched the Photo Campaign this year as a celebration of the 30-year-anniversary. FEPEDA sends a warm thank you to all the children and families who attended in this campaign. The campaign got so much good feedback, so we are going to continue this project. Below you can find the link to see the video!

<https://fepeda.eu/photo-campaign-together-for-the-future/#more-2429>



## *Advocacy and Networking*

Due to the pandemic situation all planned face-to-face meetings have been cancelled, postponed or alternatively held online. Hopefully the situation will be better next year!

### Upcoming FEPEDA Meetings

- Bureau Meetings in 2021:

Spring and autumn  
/online/exact dates to be confirmed

- Management Committee Meetings in 2021:

- 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
Venue to be confirmed  
/online meeting

- Autumn 2021 / venue and date to be confirmed

- General Assembly 2021:

- Autumn 2021 / venue and date to be confirmed

### **European Disability Forum (EDF)**

EDF's General Assembly took place in the beginning of June. Due to COVID 19 the meeting was held virtually. FEPEDA was represented by André Cuencá.

FEPEDA is a full member of EDF and has been active in this forum since many years.

### **FCEI (Family Centred Early Intervention)**

The next FCEI-conference (Family Centred Early Intervention) is postponed till May 2022 due to difficult pandemic situation. Further information will be sent to members later.

### **World Hearing Day 2021**

The World Hearing Day will be celebrated on third of March, 2021. FEPEDA has traditionally participated in the day and this is our plan next year as well. We encourage our member associations to do the same! Material and further information will be sent to members when available.

## Guest Corner



### Face Masks And Hearing Loss In School:

### How to Support Your Child

For children with a hearing loss, this year has created new challenges in the classroom. First there was the switch to online learning, and then as some countries allowed in-person teaching, a new challenge has emerged in classrooms: Face masks and hearing loss. Masks prevent lip reading, restrict visual cues and even dampen speech transmitted from the mouth of the speaker. All of this can make listening more challenging for children with a hearing loss and cochlear implants. In this article we share a few ways you and your child's teacher can help support their listening experience.

#### 1. Find The Ideal Seating Arrangement

Even something as simple as preferential seating can assist children with a hearing loss understand their teacher's speech better. Select a seat that's close to the teacher, and away from background noise sources like air conditioning units, noisy computers, rowdy peers, open windows and doors. This will assist them in concentrating on their teacher's voice.

#### 2. Make The Most Of Remote Microphones

Remote Microphones like the Roger Pen, Roger Select and [AudioLink](#) allows your child to hear the teacher's voice clearly. This means they do not have to rely as much on lipreading or visual cues. Remind your child's teacher to position the remote microphone as close to their mouth as possible and to check the connection to your child's processor daily.

#### 3. Advocate For Clear Face Masks

Ask your child's teacher and classmates to consider wearing clear face masks, so that your child can still read their lips. There are several companies that make face masks with a clear window, and some are even registered with the FDA.

#### 4. Customize Your Child's Face Mask

Having elastic bands around your ears can start to hurt, especially if you wear audio processors or hearing aids. Try a "mask strap" to take some of the pressure off and consider using wig tape to keep your child's behind-the-ear audio processors in place when they adjust their mask.

#### 5. Remind Teachers To Speak Clearly

Ask your child's teacher to speak slower and louder than usual to help overcome the sound dampening

effects of face masks. They can even use a bracket (a frame) under their mask which will keep the mask elevated from their lips for extra clarity.

#### 6. Ask Teachers To Check Understanding

Another way teachers can support your child is to purposefully check for understanding throughout the lesson. This way they can tell if your child is keeping up, or if they need extra attention.

#### 7. Ask For Help

It's not just teachers who can help, but classmates too! You can ask one of your child's friends to share their notes at the end of the day to make sure they didn't miss anything.

#### 8. Prepare Ahead

Ask your child's teacher to provide a general outline for the day's topics with instructions in advance. You can prepare your child for the day and make sure he can follow along a little easier.

#### 9. Use Speech to Text Technology

Speech to Text software can help your child follow the lesson. Ask your child's teacher to open a document on their phone, tablet or laptop and share it with your child. This way, they can then use Speech to Text for live captioning.

#### 10. Prerecord The Lesson

Another way to provide captions is for the teacher to pre-record the lesson and use a captioning feature so that your child can follow along. It might also be helpful to record the lesson in real-time and allow the child to listen to the lesson after school if he has missed anything which was explained or discussed

## Country News

### News from Bulgaria



The Association of Parents of Hearing-Impaired Children – APHIC took part in "National Career Days 2020" - organized by the biggest provider of HR services for employers and job seekers in Bulgaria.

The eleventh edition of the exhibition offered a variety of job opportunities for hearing-impaired young people who are seeking a career in information technology and telecommunications to meet with companies in the sector and find their new job or internship opportunity. Although held in the conditions of anti-epidemic measures, the meeting was successful and focused on creating long-

term relationships and future relations

The participation of APHIC is part of the activities that support the establishment of an effective mechanism for professional development for people with hearing impairments.

The Association of Parents of Hearing-Impaired Children offers supported employment service. The model uses a partnership strategy to enable people with hearing disabilities to achieve sustainable long-term employment and businesses to employ valuable workers

The service covers the preparation of individual profiles of jobseekers, activities to increase the employability of hard of hearing persons as well as sustainable workplace

Work plays a pivotal role in defining an individual's quality of life and must be an integral part of a person's overall life experience. Supported employment offers an innovative process that enables employment as an achievable goal for people with disabilities just as it is for non-disabled people in our society.

The participation was part of project BG05M9OP001-2.011-0006 "Equal Opportunities for Hearing-impaired Children and their Families" funded by Operational Program Human Resources Development 2014-2020, Priority Axis 2, „Reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion“, co-financed by the European Union through the European Social Fund.

### News from Czech Republic

Czech Republic was hit by a second wave of the pandemic situation regarding COVID-19 very hard therefore plenty of our activities were cancelled or postponed. Even though, we have managed to start some new projects.

One of them is cooperation with a student of Masaryk University in Brno. Robert Konečný is a student of a graphic design and he asked us to help him with his bachelor thesis in which he wants to develop a symbol or logo that would look nicely and that would immediately and clearly inform about a child hearing impairment.

We are aware that for many people this is a very controversy question. Is it okay to label a person with a sign that he or she is disabled? We see that it might be a problem, but we work with families in a very close contact and we know that not knowing about the disability can cause more harm than a tasteful sign.



The idea is to develop a sign that might be used e. g. during sport activities such as skiing or cycling, where it can prevent accidents. It can be also used in public transport where there is very often only a call about the change of direction and no written information and so on.

We would like to also gather information about opinions and ideas from different European countries. If you have any comments regarding this topic, we would love to hear them. Please do not hesitate to contact us via email: [hlavicova@infocentrum-sluch.cz](mailto:hlavicova@infocentrum-sluch.cz).

Thank you and be safe.

Nikola Hlavicová, editor and specialist of Information Centre of Parents and Friends of the Hard-of-Hearing

## *News from Lithuania*



This autumn, Lithuanian Association of Families with Deaf and Hearing Impaired Children actively continues its activities including trainings for families with deaf children where parents can gain new knowledge on deaf children needs, share experience and improve their parenting skills.

On September 5-6, trainings for parents of children with cochlear implants were held, while on September 12-13 and September 19-20 parents with children using hearing aids or using no hearing devices were invited to the trainings.

Lectures given by professional lecturers covered topics of improving decision-making, preparing the child for school, parents involvement in children education, supporting children achievements, social and employment benefits, etc.

Parents had an opportunity to communicate and have discussions, exchange contacts, share their knowledge and get needed support and advice. They could also get specialist consultations.

While parents were learning, their children were involved in a separate educational programme organized by PAGAVA staff and volunteers.

Sign language interpreters participated in all activities ensuring access to information for all participants.

All three trainings took place in rural tourism homesteads, so the participants also enjoyed spending some time and admiring autumn nature.

## News from Spain



Carla works in an advertising agency, she is a great professional, hard-working, sociable and committed... and just a year ago she started wearing hearing aids. But to get that opportunity, she has had a lot of teamwork behind her: family, speech therapists, teachers..., which has meant that, like Carla, deaf people can develop their talent and add it to the enterprises staff.

This is the thread of the new campaign that FIAPAS has launched on the occasion of the International Day of the Deaf. Under the slogan "Our Talent Adds Up", we want to highlight everything that deaf people can contribute to a company's team.

This is demonstrated by Juana Rodero, People & Culture Executive of Primark Iberia, Ángela Alonso, Director of the Cartography Service of SERESCO, and José Luis Escuer, Technical Coordinator of IT at Ibiza Airport, companies that have deaf people on their staff.

All the content of the Campaign and its materials can be seen on the website [www.queloescuchetodoelmundo.com](http://www.queloescuchetodoelmundo.com) and with the hashtags #QueloEscucheTodoElMundo and #NuestroTalentoSuma on the social profiles of Facebook, Twitter and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/) of FIAPAS.

This campaign is being carried out thanks to the call for grants under the Personal Income Tax Allocation for 2019 (Ministry of Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Welfare) and with co-financing from the ONCE Foundation, also with the collaboration of Aural-Widex and GAES, a brand called Amplifon.

## News from Switzerland



### Alternative program instead of Parents Conference 2020

Due to the pandemic the Swiss Association of Parents of Hearing-Impaired Children had to cancel its annual parents meeting in autumn. In its stead the association wanted to offer their parents a suitable alternative which led to the idea of a synchronized, local day at the zoo. At four different locations in Switzerland, families and their children were invited to spend a day at the zoo.

Since the conditions were changing frequently the organization had to be continuously adapted. By adhering to strict corona measures, the families were able to enjoy an unforgettable day. In cooperation with the «Stiftung Kinderhilfe Sternschnuppe» (Organization that fulfills children's wishes, similar to «Make a Wish» foundation), the families were treated to the admission to the zoo, participation in a personal guided tour and lunch. The gym bag holding many surprises, that was handed out to the families at the beginning, was seen frequently all around the zoo on the back of a child – with the slogan «friends forever».

Tigers, leopards, lions, llamas, monkeys – to name just a few of the animals the children encountered at the zoo. The weather played along and so the frolicking monkeys, the sometimes-stubborn llamas or the sleeping tigers could be observed outside.

As always, a favorite was the romping around on the playground, where the children had the possibilities to reenact their favorite animals or just to use up some of their energy. Beaming faces were everywhere, dirty clothes spoke for themselves. Especially in view of the looming uncertainty and the many unanswered questions this pandemic brings, this sunny autumn day offered our families a break from all the worries and let them enjoy an unburdened day.

A big thank to everyone who made this day possible with their determination, organizational talent and flexibility.

*More about FEPEDA*

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[www.fepeda.eu](http://www.fepeda.eu)

<https://www.facebook.com/Fepeda-European-Federation-of-Parents-of-Hearing-Impaired-Children-125481214202290>

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*HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS!*