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**SUGGESTIONS FOR POSITIVE INTERACTIONS WITH
HEARING CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN**

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EILEEN McCARTIN: Good afternoon. I am happy to be here today to talk about parenting. I don't pretend to have all the answers by any means. I do have practical experience as the mother of three teenagers who are 19, 18 and 15. My oldest daughter is a sophomore at Virginia Tech, and my two sons are in high school, a senior and a sophomore.

My own hearing loss began in childhood, and I became profoundly deaf as an adolescent. So my time as a parent is divided into two periods, the time when I was profoundly deaf and the time after I got my cochlear implant. I look at parenting from two windows of opportunity.

Prior to my CI, I relied on lip reading, sign language, and written communication. After my CI, I could hear quite a lot. I could actually use the phone. I could do a lot of things that make parenting a lot easier. However, in some situations, I am still functionally deaf.

I am going to talk today about my experience and not really present research in any way. Although, a lot of research exists on deaf parents raising hearing children, that research is focused on culturally Deaf parents who have their own set of issues unique to that population. I think our group, people who are late deafened or hard of hearing, are presented with a different set of challenges.

Some of those challenges are that you can actually share the same language. For the most part, we use English, or another spoken language, with our children. Many of us are not signing. Or if you are signing, it is not the primary way of communicating. We do, however, share some of the same problems with the Deaf community in that we often have to use relay. We have to use a lot of text-based communication. In that way, we have similarities, but the cultural things are not quite as severe or different.

Times have changed since the past. Dr. Robert Davila talked about his experiences as a parent.

Dr. Davila mentioned having his children run over to the neighbor's house to find out about what had happened to President Kennedy and Oswald, if he had been shot and who shot him. Davilla's child would return with a note, with some information, and then, of course, that information generated another question. So, they would send the child to another neighbor and get that information back. And so it would go from neighbor to neighbor, until they pretty much were satisfied with the information. On hearing that story, some people say, "Oh, that is sad. That poor hearing kid had to do all those things."

When I heard that story, I thought there were a lot of positives in that story. That child had the opportunity to meet his neighbors and develop social skills that he might not have had if he were not a child of deaf parents. The child also learned how much his parents wanted to be connected to the world, that they valued that connection to the greater world beyond themselves. I think that is a way the parents imparted their values such as, "Yes, we are deaf, but we still want to know what is going on. We still want to be a part of the world." That is a very important thing to teach your children.

At the same time, I want to say that you never want your child to take on adult problems. You never give them a problem beyond their ability to cope. You don't want to burden your child with adult problems like your anger or your feeling about how deafness is unfair. You do want to share with your child that there are problems in life that you need to resolve or work through. And you have to be the model for overcoming and resolving communication challenges.

That is the most important message I want to impart today. We have to be the model of what we want. We have to present to the child the behavior that we want them to give back to us.

Today, we parents have more resources at hand than did deaf parents before us. We have the Internet. We have relay. Also I don't think children are going to be traumatized because they have deaf parents although there is some research that shows there are kids who felt resentful of their deaf parents. I think also when you have a hearing spouse; sometimes you tend to depend too much on that hearing spouse. Maybe the relationship started where the hearing person had more control over the relationship, and you depended on him or her to do things. Once you become a parent, you have to change that way of thinking. You have to become a lot more assertive, and even swallow some pride to understand doctors and teachers and other professionals.

For example, during a pregnancy, you have to be very assertive. You cannot be about yourself anymore. It is about the child. The first time I was expecting, I was not at all assertive. I would ask the doctor to communicate with me, and if I didn't understand, they would write on that paper sheet that is

put on the examination table. They would write the instructions or information, and I would just take that paper home with me. Even though it is not very conventional, it was something that I was able to do, and the doctors were always pretty good about writing everything down.

Now, it is legally possible to have an interpreter at the birth. The last thing you need to be worrying about is lip reading during labor. You can get an interpreter, which helps ease your mind. You don't have to worry if you are going to understand or not going to understand and it helps you if you have questions about the machines and about the baby once it is born.

The infant/toddler stage is when you have to start modeling what you want, and you need to talk to your baby. There are some cases where children of deaf parents do not develop speech at the same rate as hearing kids do, but that often is resolved with appropriate special education or modeling.

You can buy alerting devices that show you whether the baby is crying or something is happening you need to react to. If the baby is in a different room from you, and you can't hear the child, you can have the lights flashing. When my daughter was born, my husband built a light signaling system that we put right above her crib. During her babyhood, she never touched it. We used it and that was really good. Another thing he did was he put a video camera in her room. I would see the lights flash telling me there was a sound coming from her room. I would assume she was crying when my husband said she was just fussing and not really crying. But I would see the lights flashing and I wanted to be sure she was not really crying or in need.

So he said, "Let's do this. I will set a video camera up in the room so you will be able to see the feed from another room. You can see what she is doing in that room and then you will see that she is not really, really crying. She is just walking around in her crib fussing and she just wants attention." For me that was our solution because I know that hearing people can hear the difference in the kinds of crying, but I could not.

My son came along less than two years later, and by the time he was eight months, he had taken off that alerting device and dismantled it. He was just a totally different child all together. My son was very active. On the one hand, my daughter, who is great with language, picked up sign language and used it, but my son was quite the opposite. All he would do was point to things.

If the child's parent has a hearing loss, the child may behave differently in some ways. They will all have different needs and different demands and different reactions. But every child is unique and his or her peculiar behaviors are often not at all related to having a deaf parent.

Grandparents, if you visit your grandchildren, keep little things like your hearing aid batteries

and medicines out of the line of sight of the grandchildren. They look like candy.

When you have a little baby, consider bringing him with you all the time so you can see him or her. When the baby is out of your line of sight, it is hard to hear what she or he is saying or doing. Also, they really want to be with you all the time so having them nearby is a good thing for both of you.

In the doctor's office, you can't expect the baby and child to respond to his name being called. Also, sometimes the medical personnel pronounce the name differently from you. I remember once, I was in an office one time, just sitting there, and they called my name. Even though I wrote on a paper that I am deaf, they called my name. I sat there for an hour, and finally asked how come I was not being called? "I asked that you come out and get me."

The receptionist said, "Your child is hearing. We thought he would hear." I was upset about that. It is important to direct professionals to direct their communication to you and not to the child.

When you go to doctor visits, have everything written down for you. I learned from one incident that you have to really insist the doctor tell you exactly what the prescription is and exactly what course of drugs to follow. Once when my son was four, he had ear tubes put in and the doctor said to give him antibiotics, and I did. However, the antibiotics prescription that was labeled as being prescribed for ten days was supposed to have been refilled and given for twenty days instead of for ten days. The prescription itself said ten, but the doctor must have verbally said to refill it once and continue. I didn't get that information. Sure enough three weeks later, when we went back to the doctor, the infection had not cleared up. When I found out the error of the prescription length, that was when I decided that I would be much more insistent on making sure that I had everything written down. Ironically enough it was this ENT doctor, who deals with patients who have hearing loss on a regular basis, who was the least cooperative of all the doctors I have dealt with.

If you have a day care provider, have a written log that goes back and forth between you. That helped us a lot. At the end of the workday, I was tired and it was really hard for me to hear what the day care provider was telling me about my child, so I asked her to write a paragraph or two a day about what happened during the day. I also could write to her, perhaps, about what was going on in the home. We had this back and forth communication, which was a lot easier than spoken communication. Also the log is a good memento for when the child gets older. You have that memento of the time period when they were four or five years old at day care.

During the preschool years, it was really hard for me to understand first names or any child's

name because that little voice a child has is very hard to hear. If you can get the first names of your child's classmates, you have a lot better chance of lip reading what the child is saying. You could also ask the teacher to give you a list of all the first names of the kids. When you get the class photo, ask the teacher to write the names under each child's picture so you know who is who. If you have birthday parties, put nametags on the kids. That really helps because you can identify which child is which. When your child talks about that child, you know who he is referring to, what he looks like, how he behaves. You have a much better chance of understanding what your child is saying later on.

I'd like to open up the floor to you. Would you now like to share any successful experiences you have had in raising your grandchildren or your own children?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: When I go visit my granddaughter who is three, I ask my daughter what my granddaughter has been interested in lately, who her friends are and so forth. Getting some information previous to communicating with my granddaughter has been very helpful because when she says Bobbie or something, then I know who she is talking about. I don't have to get my daughter to interpret for me. Sometimes I still have to get my daughter to help out since she usually knows what her daughter is talking about. I also have told my granddaughter that I am hard of hearing, and have taught her a few signs. She seems to be interested in that.

EILEEN McCARTIN: I want to add to that. We think it is obvious that the children know we are hard of hearing, but they don't. They don't really understand it. Especially my children, who are children with a deaf parent. I am the only mom they have ever had. They haven't seen anything else, and a lot of our friends are deaf. To them the world is hard of hearing, or deaf. That is normal.

But you need to sometimes tell your child that you are hard of hearing, and what that means. Sometimes, they don't really get it. Maybe you say, "My ears don't work well." You have to repeat that in a lot of situations because even though we think that it is obvious, they forget. You need to say it more than once. You say, "Now, remember, I am hard of hearing (or deaf), and you need to look at me. Let's look at each other when we talk." Say it over and over again because they don't remember things from a long period of time.

For example, my daughter would be crying and making sounds I couldn't hear. So she asked me, "How come you don't come when I am crying? Why don't do you that?" Sometimes I would come when she was crying and sometimes I didn't. If I saw her crying and I would go. She learned to come

up to me and tap me and say, "I am crying." She would look at me and say, "I am crying." She'd sit on the steps saying, "I am crying," and sign to me. Once I saw that I would respond and I say, "Oh, I am sorry."

They may need to be told. They don't really understand why you don't respond. They wonder, "Why don't you do that?" Other people do.

This occurs in a lot of situations. If you are talking when they are talking, they say, "Why are you doing that?" I say, "Well, I didn't hear you talk. Let's take turns or look at me when it is my turn to talk." So they look at you in a puzzled manner. You need to say that that didn't work and then try to figure out what works for you two.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I would think that, along with what you were saying about your granddaughter, that when you go to visit, it would be good for the adult in that family to tell you what the child's limitations are or, for instance, if her friends come to visit, what they can and can't do in advance so there is not this big tug of war between you and the child, and then she would probably get angry with you for imposing limits on her and so forth.

EILEEN McCARTIN: Yes. I also want to share a story. When my daughter was two years old, it was hard to understand what she was saying, but she was pretty good with the alphabet. She wanted to remind me I had forgotten my wallet, and I could not understand the word "wallet" to save my life. So we went through the alphabet. Is it A? Is it B? Is it C -- had to go all the way to W. She couldn't really spell but she knew the first letter of words, the first initial consonant sound. So I got "W" and I thought, what are all the words that began with "W," "wish, "wig," "wallet." Yes, it was wallet! She was asking me if I had brought my wallet. It took us so long to communicate that and I was so depressed after that because it took us 15 minutes to figure out this stupid word wallet. While I was bothered by it my daughter was not because she didn't know anything better.

As I look back on that, I realize that she was able to learn the alphabet and put it to good use at an early age. However, there are some times it is just really hard to be a deaf parent or deaf grandparent. It is just not easy. Learning the finger alphabet, even just a little bit, I think helps a lot, because knowing the first sound helps you out a lot.

Signing can also be confusing sometimes. My daughter could sign the number "three." When people would ask her how old she was, and she would sign "three." When you ask a hearing child how old he is, he will say three with this configuration (W). My daughter learned the difference between a

“hearing” three (three middle fingers) and a signed three (thumb, index and middle fingers). So even at a very young age she knew how hearing and deaf people are a little bit different.

This brings us to when the children leave preschool or daycare to go to a public kindergarten. My daughter had a difficult time going to kindergarten because she was used to communicating in an environment with lots of deaf people. She went to Gallaudet day care and I was her mom. There was a lot of signing and looking at people in her life. When she went to kindergarten, she would always be tapping the teacher, and the teacher, would say, “Why are you touching me? Don't touch me. It's not necessary.”

The teacher would be talking and not looking at her, and she would be offended because she thought that the teacher was not talking to her, that she was ignoring her. If the teacher looked away, when Johanna was talking, she would stop talking because she was almost trained that if a person is not looking at you, you don't talk.

Once, the teacher came to me and said, “Your daughter takes offense when there is none intended.” Of course, I didn't really think about why that was, but after some time talking to the teacher, I realized it was because Johanna was behaving in a deaf way in a hearing environment.

I had to explain to Johanna that with these people you don't do the things you do with deaf or hard of hearing people. You have to not touch them. You know, they might not freak out, but they probably don't want to be touched. Teachers and peers don't need to be looking at someone to be heard or to speak

So she had to learn that and that was different.

I thought I was doing pretty well with the parenting thing, but a few years ago I found a videotape of my son who was two or three years old at the time. I was able to look back at a time in a very different light. I had had a cochlear implant when my youngest son was six so I missed all the early language years. I always thought that my youngest son didn't have much spoken language because his signing was really good. I thought his signing was his primary language and spoken language wasn't. Well I found that was not the case. A video camera had been set up and left on at a birthday party when he was just two or three years old. He was playing with his trains, and this two/ three year old, who I thought had hardly any spoken language, was actually giving a soliloquy about the trains. He was naming the trains and describing what they were doing. I was shocked. I could hear him for the first time.

I had missed hearing him when he was two and I missed hearing them all until they were at least

school age. I got kind of emotional about, and so I spent some time watching and listening and trying to hear all the things I missed. I was feeling deprived that I have not heard those things. But then I stopped watching and turned off the tape. I said to myself, my child is not in that videotape. My child is in front of me here, and I cannot look back. I can only look forward and do what I can now with the hearing that I have.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: My ten year old has learned over time to talk to her grandmother face-to-face, and I think she is pretty good about it. Our problem is that she is physically active. She bounces around a lot, so it is hard sometimes to keep her focused in conversation.

EILEEN McCARTIN: That reminds me of what someone was telling me her grandmother would say to them. This woman had 12 grandchildren. She said, "When you are all together, all 12 of you together, you are poison. But when you are one on one, you are precious." Then, she would take them out with her, one by one -- and this grandmother wasn't even hard of hearing -- to do some an activity together. Maybe bake bread or work on a hobby they both enjoy, but make it something with predictable language (you are baking bread and you are going to give me the yeast and the milk...). You are serving as a model. You are teaching that child to bake something, but also teaching him how to communicate with you. The words that they are going to talk about are predictable to you, so doing things together one-on-one with your grandchildren, with your child, is a very good coping approach to raising hearing kids.

When my kids were in school, I wanted to get involved but not in something that required a lot of hearing. I was a Girl Scout leader and, truth be told, I was not good being a Girl Scout leader but I did it because I got to spend time with my daughter and she wanted to do this Girl Scout thing. I found out it was okay because you have to work on projects. The projects are very communication friendly because they focus on one topic. If you can volunteer with your kid in school, I think that is good, but at the same time it can be very difficult.

Outside the Girl Scouts, I was also a volunteer behind the scenes. I was the controller for the soccer league. I did the books, wrote the checks and paid the bills for the maintenance of the fields. I felt I was involved but I wasn't in a situation where I had to communicate.

Another thing you need to remember is you need to have emergency numbers. Before I was able to use the CI, I had to use the relay, which was very difficult. I often had a friend get a hold of me.

Nowadays it is much easier to communicate with e-mail. I have a pager and the e-mail comes straight to my pager. Technical advancements now solve that phone problem.

Before, it was hard to explain to people how to use the relay. When my kids were five years old, they often would use the phone themselves to set up appointments for me. Now I probably would want to take more responsibility for that.

I think in some ways it is beneficial to have a deaf mom because it teaches kids to empathize with kids who are different. My son became good friends with a neighbor across the street, a Korean boy who spoke very little English. My son did whatever he needed to communicate with him. He was able to gesture and he just didn't let the language barrier stop the friendship. I think he learned some of those skills because he has a deaf mom. The attempt to communicate might fail in the beginning, but there are other ways to communicate and you need to keep pursuing until you get it. I think that that helps him. He is much more outgoing than the other children.

I asked my kids what some of the pros are in having a deaf mom. They said that some of the pros were they could make a lot of noise, they could use bad words and they could turn the TV up really loud and I wouldn't know. At the same time, you need to monitor that they don't use those bad words. So I asked my neighbor let me know if my son was saying bad words because I wanted to know. I am sure they still say bad words when I don't hear them.

One of the negatives for having a deaf mom is they didn't like it when I called them. I would call up to them in their room, and they had to stop what they were doing, come all the way downstairs to answer me. They couldn't do the same thing. They couldn't call to me and have me go up to them. They complained that that was not fair. They can't say, "I will be right there," because I keep calling and calling until they come. You need to save that calling for when you really need it and instead go up to them. When you go up to them and talk to them, you are modeling what you want. You want them to come up and talk to you.

I think at different ages my kids have had a love/hate relationship with sign language. When they were young, they thought it was cool because it makes them different, but at the same time it is different. As they get sensitive to looking different from their peers, they don't like to have to sign to me. On the other hand, my middle son now signs to me and he knows that girls are very interested in it. He signs to me a lot when there are girls around, and then he gets caught up in a conversation with them. He is using the sign language to meet girls.

They also say, "You know, Mom, she is just weird sometimes because she doesn't hear." When I

say something totally off the wall, they kind of accept that. I asked my youngest child to give me some advice for people who have hearing children of deaf parents. He said, "I don't know because I never had a hearing mother. I mean, I don't know what it is like not to have someone like you."

So for them it is normal. Whatever they have is kind of normal. I keep asking them to say what some benefits are but they don't see the pros and cons of it.

When my daughter and son were teenagers and coming home later, I had to know when they came in. Since I couldn't hear them come in, I would get in their bed, so when they came home, they had to toss me out of their bed. Then I would go to my bed. I knew when they came home, and they couldn't really get out of missing their curfew. When you have adolescents, you can't just give up your responsibility. They will take advantage of your not hearing, I promise you that.

When my daughter was ten years old, and had just gotten my implant, we were arguing about something. Then, she turned around and she muttered something under her breath. I heard her for the first time and I said, "Johanna, did you just say blah, blah, blah?" She turned around, her eyes were like saucers. She could not believe I had heard her. She took two steps back as if a miracle happened. She said, "You heard me?" She knew that the CI was helping me enough that she had to be more careful about what she said. I promise you that I know that my kids still probably talk behind my back, but I try to tell them that it makes them look bad, not me.

I think that you need to emphasize to the child that the communication has an effect on both of you. If you get upset with your mom, she is going to get upset with you. I think we need to model not getting angry because if we get angry, they are going to get angry back with us. We need to be the model of what we want the grandchildren and the children to do, and it is not easy.

There are things you can do that are deaf friendly. Camping is probably not that deaf friendly because it is dark out there, but at the same time, when you have flashlights, you can work one-on-one. Maybe it will work for you. You need to think about some things that work well with you in some of those relationships. You probably also need to decide what is not worth doing. Maybe you decide not to go to church because you can't hear the choir, the sermon, or the prayers. Or you may decide to still go to church just to be in a quiet place. You make whatever decision works for you.

Sometimes you have to be at an event such as a student's graduation. When my daughter graduated from high school, I asked a friend to CART for me, which she did without charge. Otherwise CART is very expensive. I advertised about CART to all the people at the graduation, and about fifteen people sent me e-mails and said things like, "My grandmother would like to see that." We had a section

in the room set aside for people who were mostly hard of hearing, older people who wanted to be able to hear the graduation ceremony and the speeches. I got a lot of letters back from people who said it is the first time I have ever been able to go to a graduation and really understand what they were saying.

Of course, a lot of times you might be going someplace, and you are not going to get CART. Sometimes it helps if you can try to get the FM systems at the bigger arenas. Sometimes try to get the speech beforehand. I have asked the speaker to give me the speech beforehand or give me the list of names of kids who graduated with distinction, or something like that. Maybe you don't even have to go, but be there at the end of it when it is over.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We only have the one ten-year-old grandchild. My wife has already decided that she is going to be a CART reporter when she grows up. I don't know if that is going to happen, but she is becoming sensitive to the special needs of a hard of hearing person, her grandmother. I think that does give her an advantage in how she will treat any person who may be a little different in some way.

EILEEN McCARTIN: If you are at a distance, not in the same location as your granddaughter, e-mail and sending pictures is really important. You can continue a relationship that way. Also, do not resent your child for being able to do the things you couldn't do. I think that is important, too.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are you a part of the Deaf culture in your community? Do you involve your children in that? If you go to social events do they go with you?

EILEEN McCARTIN: I have created my own community in that I have friends in mixed marriages, meaning a deaf spouse and a hearing spouse. They are not necessarily two deaf parents signing all the time. My friends are people who are sign friendly or deaf friendly, but for the most part; I don't really involve myself in the non-speaking, signing community. I am involved in the signing/voicing, the simultaneous communication group.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I am a hearing spouse. My wife has been a member of a Hearing Loss Association, formerly the SHHH, for probably 15 years, and I have always gone with her. I was just wondering whether there is an age when we should try to bring our granddaughter to some of these

events in order to increase her understanding of the problem.

EILEEN McCARTIN: The 11th year is a big year for children. They become more abstract theorists at 11. When they enter sixth grade, everything pretty much is black or white. Everything is good or bad. When they get out of sixth grade, they see things are gray. Things are not necessarily all right or wrong. So I think 11 is a good age for children to go on to the next level to be aware of what things are beyond their concrete knowledge.

As for your grandchild, the best time is when she sees you spending time with other people who are disabled or differently abled. She just sees how you behave with them and she might pick up that behavior, too. I don't think there is a right time but I think I did bring my children with me to some deaf events up till they were about ten. They would enjoy the events to some extent, but when they got to be ten, they didn't want to go anymore because of the loudness of some of the people. My son did not like the loudness of the people talking.

I don't know that you want to force them into your world. My friend's come over with their hearing kids, and that works really well because those kids are in the same situation. Their mother is deaf or their father is deaf and they know what it is like. It is not that they commiserate with each other. Even if it is not said, it is understood that it is okay to have a parent who is deaf or hard of hearing, and you are kind of normal in this environment. In other places, your mother is the only deaf person, kind of weird, but I think when they get with people like them at least sometimes, it helps them to cope.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just wanted to say that we have never had a workshop like this and I have really appreciated having a chance to learn some strategies.

EILEEN McCARTIN: We can learn a lot by coming together and talking about this because it is not easy, but it is possible to be a good parent and have a hearing loss. When I was young, I did not want to have kids because I thought I would never be able to hear them. As I met deaf people later on, I realized there were flashing light systems and other means of hearing your child. It is not a deal breaker being deaf. You can bring a lot to the table even if you are deaf.

Also, a lot of kids are learning signs as babies. Even a little bit of sign language helps a lot. But now as my hearing is better, their signing is worse. The first two can sign fairly well. The third one has totally forgotten it. On the one hand, I wouldn't give up my CI just to have them sign. You can take off

your hearing instruments when they are doing their loud, bad music or when they are screaming at each other. There are pros and cons to every situation, of course, but they are things that you can overcome.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: In general, now, looking at your three, do you see them as being quite different from their peers?

EILEEN McCARTIN: I don't know. I know my daughter likes to read a lot. I don't know that they are very different from their peers. That is a good thing. I don't notice them really standing out being very different. I think if that they are not better, neither are they damaged by having a deaf parent.

I read a lot when I was raised. I read all the time and one of my kids asked me why I read so much. I said, "I read so much because I wish I could have higher level conversations with people, but what conversation I have with people is often very superficial." I didn't get that satisfaction of talking to people that perhaps I would have got if I were hearing. To get that satisfaction in communication, I read a lot. I read all the time. I explained to my kids I read probably a lot more than hearing people because that is the way I interact with the world.

My children read a lot, too, but I think the captions on TV helped them to some extent develop their reading ability. I think they should be on all the time. At one point a friend of my middle son came over and said, "Oh, those captions are distracting. Let's turn them off." So my son turned them off, and I said, "It is my house. You never, ever turn off the captions."

You have the lights in your house when the door bell rings. Kids will come over and ask, "Why do your lights flash when the door bell rings?" When you explain to them and give them, they get a little bit of insight into how other people live.

Go to your kids' elementary school on the day they have Show and Tell and bring in all your devices. Bring in your shake awake and pass it around shaking. They love it. Bring in the baby alarm light, and tell them that when John was crying, he would go "Waa, waa, waa," and the lights would flash. They love that. You show them deafness is fun. It is okay. It is not such a terrible thing.

You don't want to just get mad at them. You don't want to drill in their head there is something terrible about being deaf.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have met your three children and they are very outgoing.

EILEEN McCARTIN: They are very outgoing, yes, they are. They are doing okay so far. So touch wood, they are doing well.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Some younger people really could have benefited from this workshop, so I hope they come next time.

EILEEN McCARTIN: Maybe next time, yes. Thank you for saying that.
Thank you very much for coming.

Eileen McCartin is married and the mother of three hearing teenagers. She has a progressive profound hearing loss that began in childhood. She received her cochlear implant in 1998 when her children were six, eight, and ten. She is currently a teacher in Fairfax, VA.