

BHI Launches Discussion Forum

July 23, 2010



The Better Hearing Institute (BHI) announced today that it has launched a discussion forum to help people and their families cope with hearing loss.

This unique online forum covers a wide range of hearing health topics. It is designed as the go-to place for people with mild-to-severe hearing loss who are looking for a peer support community where they can chat and exchange information on hearing loss, treatments, tinnitus, hearing loss prevention, and other related topics.

To participate in the discussion forum, visit www.betterhearing.org, click on "Discussion Forum," and go to "Welcome!" to register.

Moderated by BHI, the free discussion forum will have quick and convenient access to a wealth of accurate and valuable hearing health information found on the BHI web site.

"Hearing loss is challenging for many people to deal with because it can be so isolating," says Sergei Kochkin, PhD, BHI's executive director. "Unaddressed hearing loss can affect virtually every aspect of a person's life. Even when someone with unaddressed hearing loss is surrounded by loved ones, the impaired ability to hear and actively participate in conversation can leave the individual feeling cut off."

Kochkin said that connecting with others with hearing loss grappling with the same issues can provide great comfort and support.

The BHI discussion forum index includes topics such as Hearing Loss 101; Hearing Loss Treatment: Hearing Aids; Hearing Loss Treatment: Alternative/Supplementary Options; Tinnitus (Ringing in the Ears); Financial Assistance; Hearing Loss Prevention; Childhood Hearing Loss; Family and Relationships; and Hearing Loss Technology.

According to a BHI study, the number of Americans with hearing loss has grown to more than 34 million—roughly 11 percent of the U.S. population. Over the past generation, hearing loss has increased at a rate of 160 percent of U.S.

population growth and has remained one of the nation's most commonly unaddressed health conditions.

"Unaddressed hearing loss silently erodes one's quality of life, undermining family relationships, interfering with short-term memory, and creeping into virtually every aspect of daily living," says Kochkin. "But hearing loss can be easily diagnosed, and there are modern-day solutions that can help people hear better—so they don't need to draw back in silence.

"BHI is offering this forum so we can better help the large numbers of people with mild to severe hearing loss. We urge anyone with hearing loss—or anyone who cares about another with hearing loss—to join the online forum and share their questions and experiences. We want anyone with hearing loss or other hearing health issues, no matter how mild or severe, to find the support and help they need."

Hearing health professionals are encouraged to refer their patients to this new BHI resource.