

## Top Tips for Success: Making It in Today’s World!

Panel: Matthew Wren, Sara Borean, Andrea Scott, and Taylor Walker

Panel Moderated by Catherine Luetky, LSLS Cert. AVT and Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

**A** panel of VOICE graduates; shared their personal journeys growing up with a hearing loss and the successful strategies that enabled them to achieve their personal goals.

**Be independent** – Challenge yourself and new opportunities will open up. Life is a learning curve; it is OK to make mistakes.

**Don’t be afraid to ask for help** – Be upfront about your hearing loss. There are a lot of people out there who want to help you. Talk to your guidance department – every school and university has one. Use the resources available, they can make your life easier.

**Stand up for yourself** – Don’t let people tell you that you cannot do something. You can! Prove them wrong!

**Don’t give up** – Keep pushing forward; life gets better after high school. People become more accepting.

**Find something that you love and do it!** – Volunteering is a great way to start a budding career or an exciting hobby. Be prepared to adapt your goals; find something that works for you.

**Be patient** – Other people often do not understand what it is like to be deaf. You have a unique perspective on life as a deaf person. Do not be afraid to give your employers, peers, teachers/professors, and friends guidelines; this will make it easier for them to know how to meet your needs and utilize your skills.

And remember having a hearing impairment does not change who you are – if anything, it makes you stronger!

By Ashley S. Garber, MS  
CCC-SLP, LSLS Cert. AVT

## Language: Behavioural Building Blocks

**A**s parents, the behaviour of our young children is always on our minds: encouraging appropriate behaviour, discouraging unpleasant behaviour, promoting good habits, and maintaining a peaceful, productive home life. For the parents of children with hearing loss, these typical concerns can seem extraordinary given the focus that they already have on the language needs of their children. It is this focus on language; however, that provides parents with the perfect building blocks to support their child’s behavioural development – and vice versa.

From very early ages, language and behaviour development are linked. It is in infancy that children learn about cause and effect as related to communication – crying brings action, smiling gets attention, etc. Once this concept is firmly in place, the consistency that we use to

pair actions, body language and consequences with spoken language is all important; both in establishing behavioural expectations and in further developing language. The “blocks” will build on each other as follows:

- In new situations, use of familiar language will help children to make connections with known scenarios
- Capitalizing on a child’s growing knowledge of related behavioural expectations will allow for further expansion of language concepts
- As behavioural expectations increase, using known language will help children to understand new standards

For example, when a child is first introduced to the task of play