

# A Sound Foundation Through Early Amplification 2001

*Proceedings of the Second International Conference*

*Edited by*  
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and  
Judith S. Gravel, Ph.D.

**A Sound Foundation Through Early Amplification 2001**  
***Proceedings of the Second International Conference***

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## PREFACE

In 1947, Sir Alexander and Lady Irene Ewing, in their book *Opportunity and the Deaf Child*, described their landmark approach to auditory training and communication development in young children with hearing loss, a philosophy we now term “early intervention”. In post-war England, despite “abundant evidence of the great benefit derived from the regular use of hearing aids” (p. 91), there were practical (physical weight 1.5 pounds) and electro-acoustic limitations of personal amplification devices that limited their use in young children. These great advocates for use of residual hearing advised, “hearing aids be only used by under-fives [years] intermittently and for frequent short periods” (p. 94)” and further concluded, “with three to fives, home use of an aid should only be undertaken under the closest expert supervision” (p. 93). Clearly in 1947, the term ‘early amplification’ had a different connotation than it does today.

Half a century later, these great pioneers of our field would, no doubt, be amazed by the advances in hearing instrument technology. Moreover, we can only imagine how heartened they would be by the newborn hearing screening initiatives underway worldwide, with the ultimate goal of providing early intervention to infants with congenital hearing loss within the first six months of life. Despite these advances, pediatric audiologists have come to realize rapidly that the fitting of current amplification technology to infants and young children with hearing loss remains a most challenging clinical problem.

To assist clinicians in responding to these challenges, the Second International Conference was designed to overview current research and new developments that are relevant to the provision of a sound foundation through early amplification to infants and young children with hearing loss. Almost immediately following the highly successful (first) International Conference *A Sound Foundation Through Early Amplification* in October of 1998, planning was initiated for a second meeting three years later. Many (us very much included) thought that no conference or proceedings publication could possibly surpass the quality of the first. Yet on November 8–10, 2001 in Chicago, the Second International Conference proved the doubters wrong. Twenty-three faculty and over 450 attendees, who traveled from more than 20 different nations, came together for a stimulating and enriching educational event. In our opinion, the chapters contained within this volume of the Proceedings of the Second International Conference: *A Sound Foundation Through Early Amplification* 2001 reflect the high-quality, breadth, depth and the excitement of the meeting.

Numerous individuals contributed their time and talent to make the second international conference so highly successful. We thank our colleagues, John Bamford and Patricia Stelmachowicz who served as the other two members of the Conference Steering Committee. An outstanding faculty willingly shared new knowledge and insights. We are indebted to these individuals, all who gave superb presentations and subsequently conveyed that information through the excellent chapters they wrote for this volume.

We thank Cathy Jones, Dee Lower, and Liz Brassine and numerous others at Phonak US who deftly orchestrated the conference. Their meticulous planning of local arrangements, audio-visual support, poster session, social events and the post-conference workshops, as well as their attention to the comfort and well being of the conferees and speakers is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks to Mike Jones, President of Phonak US who continues his generous support and enthusiastic commitment to the concept of international conferences that deal exclusively with the amplification needs of infants and children with hearing loss.

From her office at Phonak AG in Stäfa, Switzerland, Claudia Bachler provided invaluable help with preparations on both sides of the Atlantic. As was true of the first conference, Ora Buerkli at Phonak AG continues to be its strongest advocate and most fervent supporter. Ora's foresight and sensitivity transformed a concept into a reality for yet a second time. We are appreciative of the support of Bob Banbury, Managing Director of Immediate Proceedings Limited, Suffolk, UK who ushered along the publication of these Proceedings in such a timely manner. Finally, we are deeply grateful to Carol Van Evera whose competent and indefatigable reviewing and style editing of the submitted manuscripts made the process of publishing these proceedings even feasible.

The initial planning for the Third International Conference (Chicago, November of 2004) has begun. While awaiting that event, we hope you will read and reflect upon the wealth of information contained in these Proceedings. Our goals for this volume will have been achieved if the information contained herein is of benefit in your daily work with infants and children with hearing loss, and fosters further research in our complex and richly rewarding field.

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**Reference:**

Ewing, A.W.G., and Ewing, I.R. 1947. *Opportunity and the deaf child*. London, England: University of London Press Ltd.

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# DEDICATION

*“Teaching is reminding others that they know just as well as you”*  
*Bach, 1977*

These Conference Proceedings are dedicated to our teachers –

***Mark Ross and Fred H. Bess***

They encouraged and supported us, gave willingly of their wisdom and imparted their passion for this field. Their mentoring continues to affect every aspect of our professional lives and we will always be grateful.

***Richard Seewald and Judith S. Gravel***



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Please join us for the next conference, "ACCESS Achieving Clear Communications Employing Sound Solutions" to be held in Chicago, IL November 11-13, 2003.



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