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Caring for Our Community

Help for the Hearing impaired

The first cry of a new baby, the sound of music or the thrill of a sports announcer calling a gold medal performance are things most of us take for granted.

But for many thousands of New Zealanders such sounds are not always audible.

Indeed, around 10 per cent of the population – or approximately 400,000 of us – are deaf or have some form of hearing impairment and need support and educational services to ensure a better quality of life.

The deaf and hearing impaired are to be found in every community and there are services available to assist anyone requiring help.

Here in Kapiti and Horowhenua there are two organisations that would welcome your call if you have doubts about your hearing.

They are the Kapiti Hearing Association and the Horowhenua Hearing Association, both voluntary bodies and members of the Hearing Association of New Zealand and the National Foundation for the deaf.

Heather Dawson, secretary of the Kapiti association with around 100 members would like to hear from people who feel they may have a hearing impairment.

She mentioned signs of hearing loss, being:

1. You think other people **MUMBLE**
2. You need to ask for things to be **REPEATED**
3. Others complain you have the TV **TOO LOUD**
4. Hearing in group situations **DIFFICULT**

If you answered yes to any of the above you may have a hearing impairment. But assistance is available.

Readers wanting further information can contact Heather Dawson in Paraparaumu –phone 902 1866; fax 904 1840 or email: Kapiti@hearing.org.nz
Leonie Miles' is available by phone at 368 2469 or email: Levin@hearing.org.nz

Heather Dawson points out that some people may be reluctant to seek help because they have heard stories about the exorbitant cost of hearing aids.

"They are not the only answer," she said. The volunteers work with a Life Unlimited hearing therapist to provide a support system for each individual to ensure a better quality of life.

In addition to the direct help in improving hearing, the branches of the national association publish newsletters, organise support groups, workshops and social gatherings for members who need not have a hearing impairment.

Membership costs \$20 a year.

Leonie Miles, secretary of the Horowhenua branch describes work on her patch as similar to that in Kapiti, pointing out that a nurse makes a fortnightly call at the Levin headquarters to check hearing and provide advice. There are also other services available, including appointments with a hearing therapist and Palmerston North based audiologist Sally White who visits every three weeks.

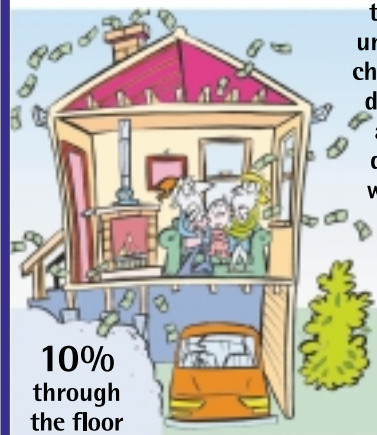
Leonie Miles and her colleague Helen Ryan have 180 members in their branch, with the workload increasing as more and more young people seek help with their hearing.

Household heat loss

42% through the ceiling

12% through windows

12% through unblocked chimneys & draughts around doors & windows



10% through the floor

12% through walls

Heating savings

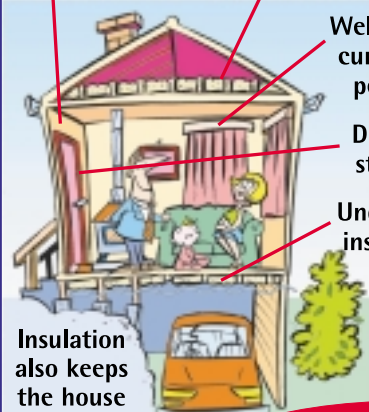
Wall insulation

Ceiling insulation

Well-fitting curtains & pelmets

Draught stopper

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