



INTERNATIONAL EAR CARE DAY – ACT NOW, HERE’S HOW!

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ATTENTION: NEWS EDITORS AND REPORTERS

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INTERNATIONAL EAR CARE DAY – ACT NOW, HERE’S HOW!

In South Africa, 20% of the population is reported to have significant and permanent hearing loss, with studies suggesting that about 3 to 6 babies in every thousand babies born develop hearing loss or have major hearing difficulties.

Children are the focus of the 2016 International Ear Care Day themed: *Childhood hearing loss: act now, here is how!* The day commemorated annually on 3 March aims to draw attention to the fact that the majority of causes which lead to hearing loss in children can be prevented through public health measures. Further, those who have hearing loss can benefit greatly from early identification and suitable, timely interventions. The day aims to raise awareness about public health strategies to reduce the prevalence and impact of hearing loss.

To mark this day, the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, housed in the School of Human and Community Development at Wits will gather students on the Great Hall steps and arrange them into the word **HEAR** and then take a photo of this gathering, to highlight the issue of deafness on campus. Students will also be handing out flyers and carrying posters highlighting the need for ear care.

The students will gather from **13:15** until **14:00** on **Thursday, 3 March 2016** outside the **Great Hall, Braamfontein Campus East**.

The day, also forms part of celebrations of the Wits Department of Speech Pathology, which marks its 80th anniversary this year. The Department offers services to the public through the Wits Speech and Hearing Clinic.

“This year, people are encouraged to consider deafness and related issues. People who are deaf may be excluded from many social, political, educational, cultural and economic circles because hearing people may find communicating with them difficult. It is through advocacy campaigns such as International Ear Care Day that we hope to change mind sets and invite people to think about services and how they empower themselves,” says Dr Victor De Andrade, Speech Pathologist, Audiologist and Lecturer at Wits.

Wits University offers a range of services in this area ranging from hearing tests to deaf baby support services and sign language lessons. For more on these, visit:

- [Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology](#)
- [Centre for Deafness Studies](#)
- [Wits Disability Unit](#)

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