



Hear Our Voices

PRESS RELEASE

Alexander Graham Bell
Association for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing
3417 Volta Place, NW
Washington, DC 20007-2778

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Contact: Mr. Garrett William Yates, Director of Media Relations
202-337-5220 ext. 121
202-337-8314 Fax
gyates@agbell.org

AG Bell Announces Keynote Speakers for International Conference in Italy: *Focus On The Family To Be Theme*

Washington, DC: Noted family psychologist Dr. Dale Atkins and renowned educator Dr. Morag Clark will be the featured keynote speakers at a two-day international conference hosted by the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell).

AG Bell will be bringing together some of the world's most respected experts in deafness and spoken language for the international conference at the Villa Erba Congress Center in Cernobbio, Italy on picturesque Lake Como, May 29-30, 2004. *Focus on the Family: Promoting Listening and Talking* will be the thematic core of this conference designed to provide valuable insight to hearing health professionals, parents, and others who advocate for children with hearing loss to have every opportunity to participate in the full spectrum of life.

Psychologist, author, and lecturer, Dr. Dale Atkins is well known to many families with special needs children, particularly those with hearing loss. A frequent guest on popular American television programs including *The Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, and *The Montel Williams Show*, Dr. Atkins' broad knowledge and strong interest in the continuum of family life, coupled with her professional training in special education, gives her a unique perspective on raising children with hearing loss. In addition to being a dynamic speaker, Dale Atkins is a well-respected relationship expert strongly familiar with the protocols used between professionals and parents. Her keynote address will emphasize the importance of these relationships between parents, and the professionals who work with their children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Said AG Bell board member and past president, Ken Levinson, "In my frequent conversations with parents and professionals, when Dale's name comes up, their reaction is universal: that she is a phenomenal and caring individual who relates to everyone and everything in a consistent manner that offers practical and comforting advice".

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Dr. Atkins is the author of the soon-to-be published, *I'm OK, You're My Parents* (Henry Holt & Company) available in April 2004.

Internationally recognized teacher, lecturer, and mentor, Dr. Morag Clark, will be rounding out the slate of keynote speakers at AG Bell's two-day conference. When she is not participating on the international lecture circuit, Dr. Clark consults and mentors for a variety of international deaf and hard of hearing children's programs in more than 12 countries. She assisted in the development of a spoken language programs for young children with hearing loss in South Africa, Ecuador, Mauritius, and Tanzania and has also helped train teachers of the deaf in Hungary and Turkey. Dr. Clark was awarded the MBE (*Member of (the Order of) the British Empire*) by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, for her international service to the hearing impaired.

Clark is a world-wide advocate of early identification and intervention for children with hearing loss and actively promotes the use of the best technologies currently available to young children so to provide them with the tools they need to develop their listening and speech skills in order to thrive in the mainstream of their cultures. Dr. K. Todd Houston, Executive Director and CEO of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, said, "We are so fortunate that Morag can present at this international conference. Her work takes her to every corner of the world, and her expertise has brought spoken language to countless children from Canada to Zimbabwe".

For further information or registration to attend this much-anticipated international conference, please contact Mr. Greg Zick at 202-337-5220, extension 117 or via e-mail at gzick@agbell.org.

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Founded in 1890 by Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, a noted teacher of the deaf, scientist, and inventor, the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell) is the world's oldest and largest membership organization promoting the use of auditory learning and spoken language by children and adults who are deaf and hard of hearing.

AG Bell promotes early identification of hearing loss and encourages individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing to learn to speak, speechread, and maximize the use of hearing technology to communicate. Members include parents of children with hearing loss, adults who are deaf and hard of hearing, educators, audiologists, speech-language pathologists, physicians, and other professionals in fields related to hearing loss and deafness.

AG Bell is considered the world's preeminent organization promoting the use of spoken language for children and adults with hearing loss. Through advocacy, publications, financial aid and scholarships, and numerous programs and services, AG Bell promotes its mission: *Advocating Independence through Listening and Talking!*

For more information about AG Bell, please contact us at (202) 337-5220 or visit our website at www.agbell.org.