

THE KOOSER PROGRAM

The Hidden Impact of Hearing Loss

The Kooser Program was developed by Cathy Kooser, a licensed independent social worker who has a severe sensorineural hearing loss.

The Business Network Unit (BNU) facilitators of the Kooser Program are certified and taught by Cathy Kooser to ensure and maintain the integrity of the program. With the assistance of local MRS partners, BNU is able to schedule workshops upon request at various sites throughout the state.

THE MISSION

The mission of the Kooser Program is to enhance and empower the lives of individuals with hearing loss and their families through education and support services.

“Another benefit of my consumers attending the Kooser Program was that I saw very little recidivism when the consumer attended the training. Once attending the program, the consumer was much better prepared to plan for future needs related to their hearing loss and much less likely to return for additional services.”

*-Ann Allen Wallace, CRC,
Retired Ohio Rehabilitation Counselor*

For a Workshop Schedule or to register for a workshop, please contact:

Twyla Niedfeldt MS,CRC
Rehabilitation/Hard of Hearing Specialist
Michigan Rehabilitation Services
Business Network Unit
NiedfeldtT@michigan.gov
1-888-271-8337 (toll free, voice)

You may also contact:

Michigan Department of Human Services
Michigan Rehabilitation Services
PO Box 30010
Lansing, MI 48909
1-800-605-6722 (toll free, voice)*

*TTY users may contact us by dialing 711 and providing the relay operator with the toll free number.

Visit MRS on the Internet at:
www.michigan.gov/mrs

MRS PROMOTING
ABILITIES
Michigan Rehabilitation Services

MRS is funded 78.7% with USDOE-RSA Title 1 federal funds, and 21.3% with state and local funds.

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Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Business Network Unit

THE KOOSER PROGRAM

“The Hidden Impact of Hearing Loss”



“Although hearing loss plays a role in shaping and defining those of us who experience it, we cannot let it stop us from becoming who we were meant to be, nor from living the lives we were meant to live.”

Cathy Kooser, MSW, LISW



STATE OF MICHIGAN
Department of Human Services

DID YOU KNOW?

New studies reveal that nearly a fifth of all Americans, 12 years or older, have hearing loss so severe that it may make communication difficult.

One in five American teenagers now experiences some type of hearing loss, an increase of 31% since the mid 1990's.

Untreated, hearing loss negatively impacts household income up to \$23,000 per year, depending on the severity.

People with severe/profound hearing loss earn 50-70% less than their peers without hearing loss; earnings over their working life are between \$220,000 and \$440,000 less.

64% of employees with hearing loss experience communication barriers at work.

People with hearing loss often retire earlier than their hearing peers.

A 2011 study found that only 39% of respondents are open about their hearing loss when it comes to colleagues and acquaintances.

Communication difficulties impact relationships at work, at home and in the community.

THE GOOD NEWS!

The Kooser Program addresses the impact of this "hidden" disability, while also teaching effective communication strategies and coping skills.

Our facilitators are Master's level counselors who have hearing loss and/or work with this population.

WHAT IS THE KOOSER PROGRAM?

An interactive, experiential group process that covers the following topics:

- How to read an audiogram.
- Hearing instruments.
- Hearing loss sensitization for the communication partner.
- Impact on spouse and family
- Acceptance.
- Emotion focused/Problem focused coping behaviors.
- Communication is complex.
- Assertiveness.
- Changing communication behavior.
- Hearing loss in the workplace.
- Relationship issues.

"Buying hearing aids without taking this program is like buying a car without knowing how to drive."

Workshop Participant

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Individuals with hearing loss may bring:

- A family member.
- A friend.
- A supervisor.
- A co-worker.
- A counselor.



WHY?

Because hearing loss impacts EVERYBODY!