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SUPPORT COMMUNICATION EDUCATION

**O**ur mission is to demonstrate a cost-effective model for education of deaf and hard-of-hearing children that enables them to perform at an academic level consistent with their hearing peers.

## How many children are affected by deafness ?

- There are over 3,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing students in the Los Angeles area, and over 60,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing students enrolled in K-12 classes in the U.S.

## Why is TRIPOD needed?

- 90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents who initially have limited ability to communicate with them.



TRIPOD Educational Director Cindy Murphy works with students on their oral skills.

- The average deaf high school graduate reads only at a fourth to fifth grade level.
- Less than 2% of graduating deaf students qualify for admission into a 4-year college.

## What is TRIPOD?

TRIPOD is a private, non-profit educational research organization committed to helping families raise their deaf and hard-of-hearing children in a supportive environment. TRIPOD applies the educational principles of leading deaf educators at the TRIPOD Educational Model School.

## What is the TRIPOD Educational Model School?

The TRIPOD Educational Model School, in partnership with the Foothill and Pasadena Special Education Local Plan Agencies (SELPA's), co-enrolls deaf and hard-of-hearing students into classes with hearing students in the Burbank Unified School District. TRIPOD is recognized as a regional program by the California State Department of Education. As a result, deaf and hard-of-hearing students and their siblings attend from more than a dozen school districts in Southern California.

## Expanding the TRIPOD Educational Model

Our goal is to make the TRIPOD Educational Model a guideline for deaf education nationwide. TRIPOD hosts many visitors each year to observe its Model School. TRIPOD personnel also serve as consultants to other school districts wanting to replicate the TRIPOD model. The TRIPOD Educational Model is now being replicated in four school districts within California, as well as in school districts in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and Texas.

## Future Plans

- Fully document the success of deaf and hard-of-hearing children in the TRIPOD Educational Model School through a series of research reports, including academic performance and cost/benefit analyses.
- Further strengthen the aural/oral component of the program through upgraded staff training and addition of specially trained staff.
- Acquire state-of-the-art technology to assist reading and speech skills for deaf and hard-of-hearing children.
- Continue to enhance the TRIPOD Educational Model through ongoing application of deaf education research at the TRIPOD Educational Model School.

At TRIPOD, it's often tough to tell the deaf and hard-of-hearing kids from the hearing kids without a scorecard.



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## How is TRIPOD different?

- **Co-enrollment of deaf and hard-of-hearing students with their hearing peers.**

Students are taught by both a general education teacher and a special education teacher working as a team. Deaf and hard-of-hearing students acquire information directly from a teacher without having to go through an interpreter. This also provides the deaf and hard-of-hearing students with a sense of belonging and peer group support among their hearing classmates.

- **Inclusion of parents and siblings**

TRIPOD's Family Sign Program provides instruction in Sign Language to families in their home environment in order to bridge the communication gap that often exists with young children in the critical early years of language growth and development.

At TRIPOD, siblings are enrolled in the same schools, which allows hearing siblings to learn to communicate with their deaf brothers and sisters in a natural school setting.



Executive Director Carl Kirchner hosts Judy Heumann, Asst. Secretary of the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, during a tour of TRIPOD.

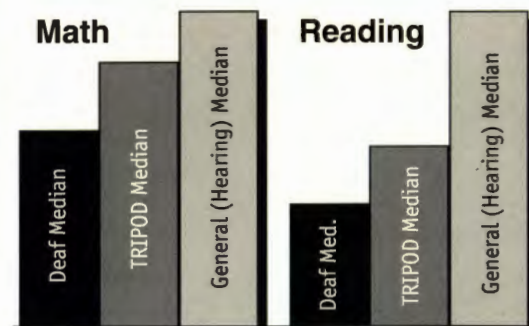
## What does TRIPOD provide?

In addition to expertise in deaf education, the following special services and educational and support staff, which are key components of the TRIPOD Educational Model, are currently funded by TRIPOD.

- Family Sign Program
- Audiologist
- Deaf Education Supervisor
- Interpreters
- Full and Part-time Teachers and Aides

## **TRIPOD Students Excel vs. National Deaf Averages**

**(but we still have a lot of work to do to close the gap with hearing students)**



1995 Stanford Achievement Test Scores, students aged 9-16, averaged and normalized to National General (hearing) Median. National General Median equates to performing at grade level.

- Deaf and hard-of-hearing students in co-enrolled classes perform at similar academic levels, and with similar distribution of test scores, as hearing students.

- The longer a student is in the TRIPOD Educational Model School, the better he/she does compared to national deaf averages.

- Deaf and hard-of-hearing students at the high school are already achieving at an academic level that will enable them to go to their choice of college.

- Hearing students in TRIPOD classes outperform their hearing peers in traditional classrooms.

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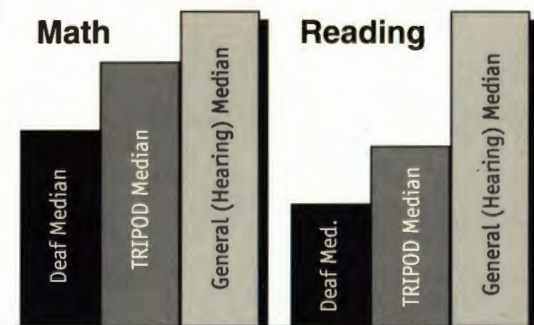
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## TRIPOD EDUCATIONAL MODEL SCHOOL

• **The Montessori Parent-Infant/Toddler Program** serves children from the time they are identified with a hearing loss through age three. Instruction is provided in oral and/or sign language methodologies during weekly home visits. Weekly play groups at TRIPOD and Parent Support Group meetings further encourage communication development.

• **The Montessori Pre-School/Kindergarten Program** focuses on education of the whole child, including social skills as well as academics. It stresses the importance of language development by emphasizing both aural/oral skills and visual language.

• **The Elementary Program** is aligned with the Burbank Unified School District where hearing, deaf, and hard-of-hearing students are co-enrolled. Students are taught by both a general education teacher and a special education teacher working as a team. This allows the deaf and hard-of-hearing students to acquire information directly from a teacher without having to go through an interpreter. It also allows for more individualized and small group work, and provides the deaf and hard-of-hearing students with a sense of belonging and peer group support among their hearing classmates.

• **The Middle School and High School Programs** continue the co-enrollment philosophy which enhances social and emotional growth, as well as academic growth, due to continued interaction with hearing peers.

## TRIPOD TOUCHES LIVES

"We're thrilled to have our daughter in TRIPOD. To be fully integrated with hearing children has made the difference. Her language skills and social interaction have really skyrocketed."

Patsy Walker  
Parent, North Hollywood, CA

"It's neat to know different people. You get to know how to sign and talk to them. I've taught things to my deaf friend that he didn't know before...like how to swing a baseball bat and how to play tag."

Dale Mivelaz, age 10  
Student, Washington Elementary School

"In this program, I can see more development in the children. With both hearing and hard-of-hearing teacher role models, I see the whole child develop and integrate in ways that are not possible when there are mostly hearing teachers."

Patty Ivankovic  
Teacher, TRIPOD

"I was impressed with the spontaneity during interactions between hearing and deaf TRIPOD students...and that's one of the key characteristics that a good grasp of language gives to children - the spontaneous sharing of thoughts and feelings."

Kathryn Meadows-Orlans, PhD.  
Gallaudet University, Senior Researcher

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## THANK YOU

More than words (or signs) can express

### Founders

(\$250,000 - \$499,999)

Nonie & Rick Bourke  
Rags for Riches Foundation  
Ralph M. Parsons Foundation  
Megan Williams

### Benefactor's Circle

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Michael Shamberg  
The John and Maria Laffin Trust

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Rhea Perlman & Danny Devito	Pacific Theatres Agency
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Above donations are cumulative.

## TRIPOD thanks everyone who has kindly given over the years.

TRIPOD's first student, Jacob Shamberg, shown here working with Preschool students Katherine Lees and Alfredo Aguilar, exemplifies the spirit of TRIPOD.



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