

Yes, Virginia, There Is Such a Thing as a Pediatric Audiologist

By Torryn P. Brazell

DEAR ABA,

I am a pediatric audiologist and 38 years old. A few of my colleagues say there is no such a thing as a “pediatric audiologist.” Please tell me the truth. Are there pediatric audiologists?

**Sincerely,
Virginia**

DEAR VIRGINIA,

Your skeptical colleagues are wrong. There are pediatric audiologists. They exist as certainly as tympanometry and pink hearing aids and Mr. Potato Head exist.

Kids are not small adults. Alas! how dreary the world would be if there were no pediatric audiologists.

**Sincerely,
The ABA**

* With apologies to newsman Francis Pharcellus Church, who answered eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon's letter to the editor asking if there really was a Santa Clause, New York Sun, September 21, 1897.

The Commitment of ABA Pediatric Audiologists

Over the past 18 months, the ABA certified 44 pediatric audiologists in California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Puerto Rico. Sixteen of these audiologists dedicated a weekend in September to their profession by participating in the ABA Inaugural Eastern Pediatric Audiology Specialty Certification (PASC) Conclave. The conclave was an intensive two-day meeting of certified pediatric audiology thought leaders who completed in-depth work on future PASC examinations.

The conclave was facilitated by Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), a company that supports a number of certification and licensure programs and serves as the ABA's primary testing contractor in the design, development, implementation, and maintenance of the PASC examination. Once the pediatric audiology subject matter experts (SMEs) were trained in standards-setting, they wrote new pediatric audiology examination questions, reviewed questions that had been beta-tested on previous exams, explored fine points of exam answers, and used the modified-Angoff technique, a statistical method, to score each exam question. In their spare time, they completed a literature review of PASC study materials.



Here are some comments from attendees who participated in the conclave:

“This has been an amazing process. Before the conclave, I had no idea how much thought, effort, and analysis goes into formulating every question on the PASC exam.”

“The PASC is a tangible recognition of our qualification pediatric audiologists and I’m very proud to have attained this certification. My hope is that pediatric audiologists embrace the PASC and continue to look at it as affirmation of higher knowledge.”
—Barb Morris, AuD, Bay State Health

“Attending the conclave was challenging and interesting, and it reassured me of the validity of the whole pediatric audiology certification process.”
—Virginia Corley, PhD, Sumter Hearing Associates

Participating in this PASC conclave really affirmed my commitment to the field of pediatric audiology. Most importantly, it provided a venue for thought leaders to bring their respective-setting experience to create a refined and more sensitive PASC evaluation as we strive to change the current paradigm of pediatric audiology.”
—Arlene Balestra-Marko, AuD, Hear 2 Learn

“Having the PASC certification is helping distinguish my facility as a resource in our community for pediatric patients.”
—Amy Catanzaro, MA, Clarke Schools for the Deaf

“Rigorous...mentally stimulating...challenging old beliefs and habits. Lots of fun, lots of brainpower at the conclave. All for a very important, relevant, and meaningful goal—the PASC.”
—Alison Grimes, AuD, UCLA Medical Center

“The conclave was a great learning experience. I think I learned as much from interacting with other PASC certificants as I did in preparing for the exam initially.”

“Having PASC has provided opportunities to challenge my knowledge, has offered me an opportunity to learn, and apply this knowledge to new skills development.”
—Gail Whitelaw, PhD, The Ohio State University

“PASC is for both pediatric and educational audiologists. The PASC test development follows a rigorous psychometric process that makes every effort to ensure it distinguishes those audiologists who have special expertise from those who do not.”
—Cheryl Johnson, EdD, The ADEvantage/University of Colorado, Boulder

“Kids are not small adults. With the PASC, parents know I have been evaluated by my peers and shown to have special knowledge in pediatric management in audiology.”
—Darcia Dierking, AuD, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago

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