

## THE PROFESSIONAL CODE:

### The AG Bell Academy Principles of Professional Behavior and the AG Bell Academy Rules of Conduct

The Academy is dedicated to the purpose of promoting the delivery of comprehensive services to children who are deaf or hard of hearing through certification of professionals involved with enabling and assisting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to listen and speak. Establishing the highest standards of professional integrity based on accepted ethical principles and practice is vital to the fulfillment of this purpose. The Professional Code comprises two separate parts: The Principles of Professional Behavior and the Rules of Conduct. Individuals are expected to adhere to provisions of both parts.

The Principles of Professional Behavior are aspirational and inspirational in nature and, while foundational to LSLS practice, are not actively enforced by the Academy. However, the Rules of Conduct shall be enforced by the Academy through its Ethics Committee, applying the AG Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language Statement of Practices and Procedures. Certain types of conduct may be contrary to both the Principles of Professional Behavior and the Rules of Conduct. That type of conduct is subject to review by the Ethics Committee pursuant to its procedures.

The Rules of Conduct apply to Academy certification holders who are responsible for the proper delivery of (re)habilitative services to such clients and their families. The Rules of Conduct also seeks to protect persons served and to ensure the integrity of recognized auditory-verbal and audiologic (re)habilitative practices as conducted by LSL Specialists. The fundamentals of professional conduct are described in the Rules of Conduct as they relate to responsibility to persons served, to the public and to the professions engaged in the provision of auditory-verbal, educational and audiologic (re)habilitative services.

## AG BELL ACADEMY PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

### PRINCIPLE I:

Individuals should honor their responsibility to make fully available to all children who are deaf or hard of hearing those aspects of auditory-verbal, educational and audiologic (re)habilitative practices that encourage habitual and maximal use of hearing technology, and are known to have positive effects upon the human auditory system and the subsequent development of verbal communication.

#### **Examples:**

- Individuals should support programs for the early detection and identification of hearing loss and the auditory management of infants, toddlers and children so identified.
- Individuals should seek to provide the earliest possible use of the most appropriate technology in order that their clients obtain the maximum auditory benefits possible.
- Individuals should seek to instruct primary caregivers in ways to provide optimal acoustic stimulation within meaningful contexts and support the development of the most favorable auditory learning environments for the acquisition of spoken language.
- Individuals should seek to integrate listening into the child's total personality.
- Individuals should view communication as a social act and seek to improve verbal (spoken) interaction within the typical social dyad of infant/child and primary caregiver(s), with the provision that one-to-one teaching is critical to communication development.
- Individuals should work to ensure that the child's emerging speech will be self-monitored through audition to the greatest possible extent.
- Individuals should strive to use natural sequential patterns of auditory, perceptual, linguistic and cognitive stimulation to encourage the emergence of listening, speech and language abilities.
- Individuals should make ongoing evaluation and prognosis of the development of listening skills an integral part of the (re)habilitative process.
- Assuming appropriate consent from a child's parent(s)/guardian(s), individuals should endeavor to mainstream/integrate children who are deaf or hard of hearing into regular education classes with appropriate support services to the fullest extent possible.
- Individuals are expected to adhere to principles established for their certifications.

### PRINCIPLE II:

Individuals should honor their responsibility to hold paramount the welfare of persons served in a professional capacity.

#### **Examples:**

- Individuals should maintain high standards of professional competence in rendering services.
- Individuals should provide professional services with honesty and compassion and should respect the dignity, worth and rights of those served.
- Individuals should use every resource, including referral when appropriate, to ensure that the highest quality service is provided.
- Individuals should not discriminate in the delivery of professional services on the basis of disability, race, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

- Individuals should provide accurate information about the nature and management of hearing loss and about the services and products offered.
- Individuals should evaluate the effectiveness of services rendered and of products dispensed. Individuals should provide services or dispense products only when the individual, in his/her professional judgment, believes that benefits can reasonably be expected.
- Individuals should maintain adequate records of professional services rendered and products dispensed.
- Individuals may make a statement of prognosis, but should not guarantee results, or otherwise mislead or misinform the client and/or families served.
- Individuals should recognize the right of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to select the type of (re)habilitative, communicative or educational system or program they wish for their child.
- Individuals shall charge only for services rendered. They shall not misrepresent, in any fashion, service rendered or products dispensed.

### PRINCIPLE III:

Individuals should honor their responsibility to achieve and maintain the highest level of professional competence.

#### **Examples:**

- Individuals engaging in any aspect of the profession should perform within the scope of their competence, education, training and experience.
- Individuals should maintain professional competence, including participation in continuing education.
- Individuals should provide appropriate supervision and assume full responsibility for services delegated to their staff.
- Individuals should ensure that all equipment used in the provision of services is in proper working order and is properly calibrated.

### PRINCIPLE IV:

Individuals should honor their responsibilities to the public by providing current and accurate information and education, and by developing appropriate services and referrals for unmet needs.

#### **Examples:**

- Individuals should not misrepresent their credentials, competence, education, training or experience.
- Individuals should not participate in professional activities that constitute a conflict of interest.
- Individuals should not misrepresent diagnostic information, services rendered, or products dispensed or engage in any scheme or artifice to defraud in connection with obtaining payment or reimbursement for such services or products.
- Individual statements to the public should strive to provide accurate and current information about the nature and management of hearing disorders and professional services.

### PRINCIPLE V:

Individuals should honor their responsibilities to their own profession and maintain good relationships with Academy certified colleagues, members of allied professions, parents and students. Individuals should uphold the dignity and autonomy of the profession and maintain harmonious inter-professional and intra-professional relationships.

**Examples:**

- Individuals should inform colleagues and the public in a manner consistent with the highest professional standards about products and services they have developed.
- Individuals should assign credit to those who have contributed to a publication, presentation or product.
- Individuals should not use professional or commercial affiliations in any way that would mislead or limit services to persons served professionally.
- Individuals should provide professional services by exercising independent professional judgment, regardless of referral source or prescription.
- Individuals should not discriminate in their professional roles on the basis of disability, race, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

**AG BELL ACADEMY RULES OF CONDUCT**

1. Individuals shall hold and maintain all licenses or certifications required by their jurisdiction. This includes participation in continuing education requirements, if mandated by the jurisdiction.
2. Individuals shall not reveal any professional or personal information about the person(s) served professionally unless required by law to do so.
3. Individuals shall not be convicted of a felony or a crime of moral turpitude that is related to the individuals' professional practice.
4. Individuals shall uphold their monetary commitments to the Academy. It shall be a violation of these Rules for an individual's certification fees to remain unpaid 60 days after becoming due.
5. Individuals shall not engage in any form of intentional misrepresentation in connection with their professional activities.
6. Individuals shall cooperate with the Academy's disciplinary action and other proceedings.
7. Individuals shall not engage in materially false or misleading practices in connection with their professional activities.
8. Individuals shall not commit any act or omission in the course of their professional dealings that demonstrates gross negligence or willful misconduct.