

RIDBC Teleschool is an innovative program that uses videoconferencing and other technologies to provide educational services to deaf or hard-of-hearing children living in remote areas of Australia. The program aims to provide these children and their families with access to the same level and quality of service as their metropolitan counterparts. The use of videoconferencing eliminates the need for families to travel great distances while still allowing them to have weekly face-to-face contact with professionals experienced in the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. A recent shift from studio-based videoconferencing to in-home videoconferencing has made RIDBC Teleschool even more accessible to a greater number of families. Multimedia instructional resources are used to support and enhance videoconferences and assist in the dissemination of personal and professional support. A variety of current and emerging multimedia, including Web, video and portable media, are used to develop and distribute innovative educational resources. One recent project involved the creation of a portable video-based learning tool for Australian Sign Language (AUSLAN). Our newly launched Web site allows families in remote areas to communicate with each other, forming a virtual support network. It also provides a unique interactive environment for ongoing parent/teacher communication as well as access to online instructional resources. Current applications will be demonstrated.