

7 Tips for Helping your Child Hear

Start Young If your child has hearing loss and has been fitted with hearing technology, encourage them to wear their hearing aids or cochlear implants as much as possible. Young children are especially notorious for removing their hearing devices, but it's important that you keep putting them back on, and encourage them to wear them as much as possible during the waking day. This will ensure they have optimal access to your voice and other stimulating sounds.

Provide a Calm Environment If your child is having a difficult time focusing on a conversation, try to reduce the level of background noise when talking with them. This could mean turning off the TV, music or other noise.

Utilize Additional Devices Hearing aids or cochlear implants allow most children to understand speech from about 6 feet (1.8 meters) or less. There are additional devices that can be used to improve your child's listening ability over distance.

For example, a Phonak Roger or FM system is proven significantly beneficial in improving speech understanding across distance and in noise. The Roger/FM microphone can be worn by a teacher, placed on a table for small group discussions, or passed around between students to ensure the child is able to fully participate and interact in classroom discussions. These solutions can also be useful at home, in the car, at the park, when playing sports, at restaurants or when shopping. Roger, FM and other wireless devices can also connect to multimedia devices like TV, MP3 players and mobile phones, allowing the child to hear those devices clearly

Be Patient and Repeat if Necessary Hearing loss makes it so certain sounds are more understandable than others. It's important that everyone around the child is able to remember this, practice patience if the child doesn't understand, and be prepared to repeat key points or rephrase sentences using different words.

Inform Others Ensure your child has a good relationship with their teachers or caretakers, and they understand the needs and expectations of your child. This may mean facilitating communication techniques, such as setting up a signal for your child to let the teacher know when they are struggling to hear. This allows the teacher to change their techniques, without interrupting the entire classroom.

Encourage Independence Encourage your child to become their own hearing technology specialist. As they grow older and gain independence, they should be able to identify when their devices are not working and to do basic troubleshooting.

Continue Advocacy and Awareness Stay in frequent contact with the teacher or professional who specializes in working with the students with hearing loss in your school or school district. Ensure the communication needs of your child are supported. Find out if your school district provides or funds devices such as a Roger or FM system, and advocate for communication accessibility in the classroom.