



Date: _____ These suggestions are helpful for _____

Audiologist: _____

Audiologist Contact Information: _____

It may be difficult to notice that a child has mild hearing loss in the classroom. This is because under ideal listening conditions, the child is able to hear the majority of the spoken signal and particularly in ear grades, hearing-impaired students are able to follow instructions by watching the other students (e.g., lining up at door for recess). However, there are certain listening situations which can be difficult:

- **Hearing in the presence of background noise:** Students with mild hearing loss may have more difficulty understanding speech in noise than their normal-hearing peers. The difficulty may be exacerbated if the speaker is located far away from the child.
- **Hearing certain word distinctions:** Students with mild hearing loss may be unable to hear the soft parts of speech, which include sounds that denote tense, plurality, possessives, etc. This becomes much more difficult when background noise is present. This can be particularly challenging for children, as they are still learning language and cannot fill in those missing pieces of speech as well as an adult can.
- **Listening at the end of the day:** Students with mild hearing loss may experience increased fatigue due to the increased listening effort needed to perform at the same level in listening tasks as their normal-hearing peers. This may cause them to look inattentive, less engaged, or may be uncooperative.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF MILD HEARING LOSS

Studies of children with mild hearing loss have indicated that speech and language skills often develop normally. However, studies have shown that when no special educational services are received, these children perform poorer academically than their normal-hearing peers. In fact, they may be more likely to repeat a grade than their peers. Additionally, these children are more likely to be viewed as inattentive by educational instructors. Studies have also found that these children are more likely to feel more stressed over school and exhibit poorer self-esteem than their normal-hearing peers

HELPING THE STUDENT WITH MILD HEARING LOSS AT SCHOOL

The suggestions below can help your student in the school setting, in conjunction with recommendations from the Audiologist. There are many strategies to ensure this student has appropriate access to classroom material. The child's academic progress should be monitored closely, and suspected problems addressed quickly.

- A Teacher of the Deaf (TOD) or educational audiologist added to the student's service plan or 504.
- The student should be seated close to where the teacher does most of the instruction. Allow the student to sit a little off-center in the room to allow him/her to more easily turn and look at classmates who are speaking.
- Avoid seating the student near sources of noise or distraction like the door to the hallway, ventilation system, or next to a very active student.
- Consider adding environmental modifications to reduce the amount of noise and reverberation such as carpeting, caps to chair legs, closing window shades/curtains, or adding noise absorbing panels to different portions of class walls. A TOD or educational audiologist can assist with specific recommendations and/or modifications.
- Encourage the student to ask for repetition as needed and move his/her seat for special activities to the best position for listening.
- During spelling tests, ensure that the student heard all parts of the word being tested, including possessive endings, plural endings, etc. This can be done by providing the word in a sentence to provide context cues.
- Gain the student's attention prior to speaking directly to that student or covering pertinent/vital information.
- During class discussion, call on other students by name and by pointing to allow the student to "tune in" to the new talker.
- Provide materials to the student in writing when possible.
- Consider giving the student information ahead of time for pre-studying.
- Encourage the student to explain the hearing issue to friends in a natural fashion. Help the student realize that everyone has to ask "what?" often!
- Technology such as an FM system or sound field amplification system may be recommended by the audiologist. Using this system, the teacher wears a microphone which transmits his/her voice to receivers on the student's ears or to speakers in the classroom. This helps improve the student's ability to hear the teacher's voice clearly and consistently.
- FM systems and hearing aids do not restore a child's hearing to normal like eyeglasses do for vision. Even with hearing aids and/or an FM system, a hard-of-hearing student needs all of the above accommodations.
- ***Please be aware*** that some children are extremely embarrassed or self-conscious about wearing an FM system or being singled out in any way. Be careful to not draw attention to the device or single out the student in any way.

With permission, please do not hesitate to contact your student's audiologist with any questions!