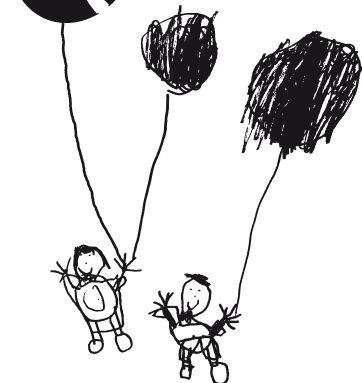


learning links



Helping Kids Learn

www.learninglinks.org.au

Information Sheet 38

Working with children who have a hearing aid or implant

By Jo Dawe, Early Special Educator

These simple strategies will help a child with a hearing impairment to learn and communicate.

- Check hearing aids/cochlear implant and FM systems at the beginning of sessions.
- Have spare batteries/implants on hand.
- Bring yourself to the child's eye level.
- Catch the child's auditory or visual attention.
- Use the child's name to gain attention.
- Ensure the light is on you and behind the child (for example, don't read in front of a window).
- Use normal language and speak at a normal rate. Don't use exaggerated lip patterns.
- Use natural body language and gesture.
- If there is no response to a comment or question or a message has not been understood then rephrase the sentence and use language that is familiar to the child.
- Make use of visual aids and do not turn away from the child while you are speaking.
- Give the child time to respond.
- If hearing is better in one ear than the other, then the child is best seated with the better ear toward the speaker. A position towards the front of the group is beneficial. A child with a unilateral hearing loss may have difficulty hearing a person who addresses them from the side of the poor ear, so consider seating during games, general conversation at a table and group time.
- Be aware that the child with a unilateral hearing loss may have difficulty localising the source of the sound. This is especially difficult in a noisy environment.
- Be aware of the child's auditory environment. As much as possible minimise background noise. For example a room that has been carpeted and has soft furnishing such as curtains, rubber on chair legs, tablecloths on the puzzle table, etc will minimise the noise in the room. You can also limit excess noise by not banging or moving tables during group time, not dragging chairs and asking for lawns to be mowed before or after the child's session.

Learning Links is a non-profit charity assisting children who have difficulty learning and their families.

We raise funds to help children from birth to 18 years by offering a range of services including the following.

Early Childhood Services for children from birth to six years.

- Early childhood intervention and support for very young children.
- An inclusive preschool for children with and without special needs.
- An assessment and consultancy service for families who are concerned about their young child's development.
- Specialist early childhood teaching and therapy.

School Age Services for children from Kindergarten to Year 12 who have low support needs.

- Comprehensive assessments.
- Small group tuition and therapy.
- Occupational and speech therapy programs combining specialist education services and therapy.
- Outreach programs.
- The Ronald McDonald Learning Program for seriously ill children and the Reading for Life Program for children falling behind in their reading.

Family Services helping and supporting families and health professionals.

- Centre and home-based family counselling.
- Parenting Programs and groups for families.
- Case Management Services.

Professional Development for teachers and health professionals.

Presentations, workshops and advice on identifying and helping children with learning difficulties, learning disabilities and developmental delays.

Learning Links has branches in six Sydney locations at Peakhurst, Penshurst, Fairfield, Miller, Dee Why and Randwick. We also offer some services to children in country NSW, the ACT, Victoria and New Zealand. A complete list of branch locations and contact numbers is on the back cover.

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