



Promoting Wearing of Hearing Aids

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Assistive listening devices will make a helpful difference in your child's education, day-to-day functioning, and communication. The clarity, consistency, and completeness of the input (i.e., what the child hears, noises, vibrations, etc.) determines the richness of the output (i.e., outward expressions of communication) (Miller, 2012). According to Dr. Miller, if the child hears unclear sounds (due to hearing loss), the child's communication may be less clear (i.e., muddy in = muddy out). Children with hearing loss have a reduced ability to hear language, have less exposure to spoken language, and as a result, require three times the exposure to learn new words and concepts (Miller, 2012). It is important for a child to consistently wear hearing aids. Sounds, voices, and words sound differently with hearing aids than without hearing aids. Inconsistent use of hearing aids increases the time it takes to learn new words and concepts because the same words/sounds sound different with and without hearing aids.



Here are some tips and tricks to make hearing aid use a routine part of your child's day:

1. Incorporate hearing aid use into your daily routine; put hearing aids into the child's ears during the same time of day, before the same activities each day. For example, put hearing aids into a child's ears before story time.
2. Gradually increase the amount of time the child is required to wear hearing aids (e.g., add one or two activities per day) until the child wears hearing aids for the entire day.
3. Be positive when putting hearing aids on and praise wearing of hearing aids.
4. Be neutral when removing hearing aids.
5. Stay in charge of hearing aid removal, tell the child, "One more minute."
6. Every time your child takes the hearing aid

out, put it back in.

7. Distract younger children to build up the time wearing the aids.
8. Reward older children for wearing the hearing aids.
9. Make the hearing aids fun and provide the child with some control: allow the child to choose the color of the hearing aids, add stickers to the hearing aids, choose a cap or headband, etc.



If your child continues to pull the hearing aid out after the initial getting familiar period:

Rule out poor fitting and volume. See a pediatric audiologist for fitting and volume adjustments. (See the section on loss prevention for other ideas.)

Care and use tips that will extend the life of your child's hearing aid.

1. Keep the hearing aids dry and away from heat as much as possible.
2. Replace dead batteries immediately.
3. Clean hearing aids often and as instructed.
4. Do not use hair-spray or other hair products, including hair dryers while aids are in your child's ear.
5. Make sure the



- hearing aids are off and in a safe place when they are not in use.
6. Keep the hearing aids out of reach of dogs and small children.
 7. Do not attempt to repair the hearing aid yourself.

Loss Prevention:

If you are concerned about your child losing his or her hearing aid, there are several options.

1. Some manufacturers have the option of a renewable loss and damage warranty. If the manufacturer does not have this option, check with your homeowner’s insurance to see if loss of a hearing aid is covered.
2. Colored hearing aids and/or colored ear molds make the hearing aid easy to find.
3. If your child’s hearing aid does not fit snugly in his or her ear some possible solutions are: pediatric tone hooks, toupee tape used to secure the aid behind the ear, eyeglasses band to secure the two aids to each other, and Huggie Aids™, head bands, caps, etc.



Examples of headbands and caps to hold hearing aids in place.



4. Several companies manufacture hearing aid clips that attach at one end to the hearing aid and the other end to your child’s clothing. These clips and cords come in a variety of colors and shapes (e.g., dinosaurs, cows).



Hearing Aid Clips

Some resources for hearing aid accessories:

- adcohearing.com
- Eyewearstraps.com
- Otocool.com
- Hannaandersson.com
- Silkawear.com
- Hearbands.homestead.com
- Meandmybow.com



References

My Baby’s Hearing, Hearing and Amplification, (n.d.) *Hearing Aid Choices*. Retrieved September 9, 2006, from www.babyhearing.org/HearingAmplification/AidChoices/practical.asp

Miller, D. (2012, May). *The importance of full-time hearing aid use and how to achieve it*. Presented at the 20th Annual Nevada Dual Sensory Impairment Project Parent Conference. Reno, NV.

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