

# Advice for helping children with hearing loss.

Many children can go through periods of hearing loss and this can have an impact on their speech and language development. The severity of hearing loss can vary significantly and you will need to discuss strategies with your speech and language therapist for your individual child. Below are some general strategies that can be used to help children with hearing difficulties.

Get down to your child's level and be face to face with them. This will allow them to see your mouth and the shapes it's making as well as seeing your facial expressions. Not only can this help them to understand but it can also help your child learn how to make their speech sounds.

Hearing levels can vary throughout your child's life and therefore if you have concerns it's always best to get it checked out, even if hearing tests have been clear previously.

Try to use simple gestures and signs to support what you are saying. This ensures that if your child has not heard the word they can look at the sign to help them to understand what's been said. For example, using the gesture for "drink" when asking if they would like a drink.



The earlier hearing loss is identified and treated the less impact it will have on your child's speech and language development.

Always try to talk slowly and in a clear voice (e.g. not muffled). Talking quickly can be difficult for children even without hearing difficulties to understand. It may be useful to also try not to speak in a high pitch as the higher sounds can often be the ones affected by hearing loss.

It's important to get advice as soon as possible if you have concerns regarding your child's hearing. Children learn to talk by copying sounds and words and hearing difficulties can have a significant impact on a child's ability to learn their sounds and words.



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