

Guidelines for the Classroom Teacher Serving the Hearing-Impaired Child

Classroom Seating: Hearing-impaired children should be assigned seats away from hall or street noise and not more than 8 feet from the teacher. Such seating allows the child to better utilize residual hearing, the hearing aid, and visual cues (speech reading, gestures, etc.). Flexibility in seating – movable desks and group arrangements - all enable the hearing-impaired child to observe and actively participate in class activities.

Look and Listen: Even children with minimal hearing loss function much better in the classroom if they can both look and listen.

Check Comprehension: Consistently ask children with hearing losses an occasional question related to the subject under discussion to make certain that they are following and understanding the discussion. Many hearing-impaired children smile and nod “yes” when they do not understand.

Rephrase and Restate: Encourage hearing-impaired children to indicate when they do not understand what has been said. Rephrase the question or statement since certain words contain sounds that are not easily recognized either by speech/ reading or aided listening. Most hearing-impaired children have delays in language development and may not be familiar with key words. By substituting different words, the intended meaning may be more readily conveyed.

Pre-tutor Child: Have older hearing-impaired children read ahead on a subject to be discussed in class so they are familiar with new vocabulary and concepts, enabling them to more easily follow and participate in classroom discussion. Such pre-tutoring is an important activity that parents can undertake, especially with younger children.

Involve Resource Personnel: Inform resource personnel of planned vocabulary and language topics to be covered in the classroom so that pre-tutoring can supplement classroom activities during individual therapy.

List Key Vocabulary: Before discussing new material, list key vocabulary on the whiteboard. Try to build the classroom discussion around this key vocabulary.

Visual Aids: Visual aids help hearing-impaired children by providing the associations necessary for learning new things.