

Hearing Impairment Conductive Hearing Loss

© 2007

Conductive Hearing Loss occurs when there is a problem in the outer and/or middle ear and results in the sounds being unable to reach the inner ear. Ear infections, glue ear, excess wax, fluid behind the ear or ear malformations are possible causes of conductive hearing loss. This type of hearing loss can sometimes be treated medically; however other children may require hearing aids. There may be symptoms if conductive hearing loss, including general distress, crying, pulling or rubbing the ears, discharge from the ear canal, apparent disobedience to directions, inattentiveness or frequent colds, teething problems etc. More than one of these symptoms is generally present before a conductive hearing loss is suspected.

Effects on Developmental Areas

Social and Emotional Development

- May experience difficulties in socialising due to language delays and inability to understand some conversations
- May lack confidence in initiating and participating in social interactions
- Difficulties in hearing may arise in noisy, social interactions

Physical Development

- Hearing problems due to ear infections may cause associated problems with balance
- Balance may affect ability to co-ordinate gross motor skills

Language and Communication Development

- Language development may be delayed
- Speech sounds may be unclear
- May speak with a nasal or flat tone

Cognitive Development

- May be effected by lack of ability to interact in some experiences and language delays

Hearing Impairment Inclusion Strategies

Each child diagnosed with **Conductive Hearing Loss** will be different and individual. It is important to gain information from the parents as to what characteristics of **Conductive Hearing Loss** their child displays. It is important to work closely with the parents as well as any additional support specialists e.g. therapists who may be involved with the child. It is also important to gain an understanding from the parent as to what is the most important aspect of their child attending your service. What is it that parents hope to gain from using your service? The following inclusion strategies are just some examples which may be applied to support the inclusion process. This list is only the start and it is dependant on a variety of factors such as environment, length of time child is in care, child's interest, likes, dislikes and skills already achieved. The strategies are divided into developmental areas however some strategies overlap and assist in a variety of developmental areas.

Social and Emotional Development

- Plan group experiences that encourage social interactions and can be played with and without auditory cues.
- Provide experiences that help children to feel safe and secure and don't involve excessive risk taking.
- Encourage peer initiated experiences through inviting other children with similar interests to engage in co-operative play.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in experiences in small groups or with one other - such experiences provide greater security and help to build children's confidence.
- Build children's self esteem through positive and supportive interactions which encourage them to participate actively in the program.
- Support and encourage children's friendships with others.
- Maintain a supportive environment with visual stimulation.
- Avoid creating an environment that is too 'busy' or overcrowded.

Health and Safety Issues

- Be aware of hearing aids and whether children are able to get water in these.
- Try to cut down the noise levels of the room.
- Be aware of grommets or tubes and how these may affect participation in experiences that include water play.

Language and Communication Development

- It is important to keep listening and talking to the child.
- Check with the parent how close you need to be to enable the child to hear.
- Use the same words and sentences you would use with all children.
- You may need to speak loudly to the child but do not exaggerate your mouth movements.
- Be aware of how the child communicates and how much the child can hear in various situations.
- Ensure the child can see your face clearly when you are talking and encourage other children to do the same.
- Speak clearly to child.
- Gain the child's attention first, before speaking or making requests.
- Ensure children clearly understand messages and repeat when necessary.
- Clearly explain new experiences to the child and support this learning through step by step instructions teamed with visual and auditory information.

Suggested Modified Activities

Music:

- Children with hearing impairment may not be able to hear the music however they can still feel the beat. Use drums or move in time with the music.
- Sit child on your lap and move and clap in time with the music.
- Older children can also dance in time with the music.

Dramatic Play:

- Include a traditional home living area in home corner (this can foster a sense of security).
- Use play props with additional pictures and symbols to support understanding.

Art:

- Provide additional cues such as pictures and symbols to reinforce rules. For example, a symbol of a brush in a pot with a large tick beside it helps the child to understand where the brush is meant to be.
- Have 3 dimensional art materials available.

Transitions:

- Use symbols or pictures in sequences for the child to know what will happen next.
- Keep the routine consistent.
- Use visual signs to warn child of changes e.g. lunch time.
- Demonstrate what is going to happen.
- Label things in the room e.g. chair, table, easel with pictures/words/symbols.

Story time/Group time:

- Choose books and stories that depict familiar sights.
- Choose sensory/touch books for the child to feel.
- Use props when reading/telling a story e.g. puppets.
- Use felt boards to reinforce the story being told.
- Provide the book often to allow the child to preview the story.

Reference

Umansky, W. and Hooper, S. (1998) *Young Children with Special Needs* Third Edition New Jersey, USA:Prentice-Hall

Deiner, P.L. (1993) *Resources for Teaching Children with Diverse Abilities - Birth through Eight*. Harcourt Brace:

Brannnelly K. "Ideas for Inclusion & Programming Tips" Carata 2000

Disclaimer

Inclusion Works! provides information to Children's Services upon request. The information provided is obtained from a number of sources e.g. library, other services, resource books and Internet. The information provided is not intended to, nor does it, constitute medical or other advice. Persons access this information assume full responsibility for its usage. Acknowledgement of source of information is required if passed onto a third person.