

HEARING IMPAIREMENTS: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Get the student's attention and face the student when speaking. Students with hearing impairments use nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language, to figure out what is being said by the teacher.

If the student reads lips, be sure to face the student, speak clearly, and keep her hands away from her face. The student is going to be watching the teacher's lips so the teacher needs to speak clearly so the student can understand what she is saying. Also, if the teacher's hands are covering her face the student will not be able to read her lips. Try **not to stand in front of windows** because there could be a shadow around the teacher's face that would make it difficult for the student to use his or her visual sense to identify what is being taught.

If the student has an interpreter, still speak to the student. Talk to the student because it shows him or her respect and because the student needs to learn how to interact with you in case the interpreter is not there one day.

Use visual aids as much as possible. Students with hearing impairments have to use their other senses even more to compensate for their hearing loss.

Write down all assignments, changes in the schedule, and any other important information that the student needs to know in the classroom. The student needs to be clear about what assignments are due when and any other schedule change, for example, in the classroom so that the student is on the same page as the other students in the classroom.

When using films, videos, or other forms of visual media make sure that the captioning is used so the student can read what is being said in the film or video.

When the student is working in a group, have classmates sit in a horseshoe shape so that the student can see everyone. If the student can see all of the other students, then it will be easier for that student to figure out who is talking and what that person is saying.

During class discussions involve the student with a hearing impairment in the discussion and allow him or her a little extra time to ask questions or answer questions. The student with a hearing impairment should be treated as any other member of the class and should be included in discussions.

Seat the student close to the chalkboard as well as away from any noisy places, such as the door. A student with a hearing impairment needs to be as close to the teacher as possible and needs to be seated away from noisy areas in order to have the best chance of hearing the teacher. If the student wears a hearing aid, then any noise in the classroom is heard as louder than it really is because hearing aids increase all of the sounds in the classroom. If the student is hearing a lot of classroom noise, then he or she is not hearing the teacher clearly.

Erase things on the board after the topic is finished so that the student can easily see what is being discussed at a specific time. If there are many different topics on the board,

the student might get confused about what topic the teacher is talking about during the class. It is helpful to have only the notes for the topic that is being discussed on the board.

If the student wears a hearing aid, know how to care for it. You may want to have the student bring in extra batteries for the hearing aid as well as learn how to change the batteries in the hearing aid.

Have a plan ready in case of emergencies, such as a fire. Come up with a plan so that the student with a hearing impairment knows what is going on and knows what to do in the situation. The teacher could write the word fire on the board or simply have the student line up first and follow the teacher.

Additional Resources:

Lukomski, J. A. (2002). Best practices in program planning for children who are Deaf and hard-of-hearing. In Thomas, A. & Grimes, J., Best practices in school psychology IV. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Mackall, P. (2004). Interactive whiteboards enhance the learning experience for Deaf, heard-of-hearing students. *T.H.E. Journal*, 31, 64-66.

<http://www.as.wvu.edu/~scidis/hearing.html> Strategies for Teaching Students with Hearing Impairments.

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/hearimpair/needs.htm> Hard of Hearing and Deaf Students: A Resource Guide to Support Classroom Teachers.

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/human/pubs/nc13.html> Caring for Children with Special Needs: Hearing Impairments.

http://frc.ccc.co.us/pub_index.cfm?cid=8776 Teaching Students with Hearing Impairments.

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