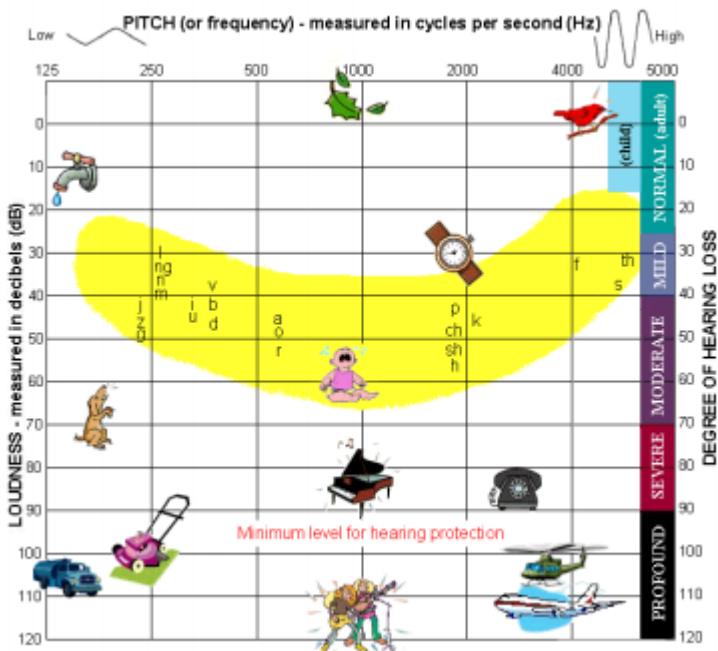


Mild Hearing Loss



Communicating with your child
General information for parents and carers

Children develop their communication, learning and social skills through normal everyday activities.

The impact of hearing impairment

◆ Hearing impairment can impact on a child's development in a variety of ways, particularly on speech and language development. A child may not hear all sounds clearly. This may then be reflected in the child's speech, written work, and confidence. For example, they may completely mishear the sounds t, th and s, and other sounds may be muffled.

◆ Children with a mild hearing loss may not pick up incidental speech or conversations, and so may not experience reinforcement of language and vocabulary.

◆ A delay in the development of speech and language may cause some hearing impaired children to fall behind their peers academically at school. With very early diagnosis of hearing impairment and your support, the risks of speech and language delay can be greatly minimised.

All children with a mild hearing impairment should be able to achieve their full potential socially, emotionally, and academically given appropriate sound quality.

How to help your child

Here are some useful tips on how to communicate effectively with your child to support his/her speech and language development.

* Attract your child's attention before speaking so that he/she is ready to focus on what you are saying.

* Position yourself near to your child when speaking, ideally no further than 2 metres apart.

- * Make sure your child can see your face clearly at all times so he/she can watch your lips. Position yourself at your child's eye level if possible.
- * Ensure your face is well lit and that you stand with your face towards the light. (Never stand with your back to a window as the 'glare' can make seeing your face impossible!)
- * Speak clearly and naturally. Avoid shouting or speaking too slowly as this distorts lip patterns.
- * Use facial expression, body language and any other visual clues to reinforce meaning.
- * Give your child time to process what has been said and to respond.
- * For hearing impaired children, background noise makes listening much more difficult, so turn off other unnecessary sound sources if possible e.g. TV, radio etc
- * Following group discussions can be difficult, so point out who is talking and repeat others' spoken contributions.
- * If your child wears a hearing aid, check daily that the aid is clean and well maintained in order to ensure optimum performance.
- * Reinforce new vocabulary and concepts as often as possible.
- * Let your child know when there is a new topic of conversation.
- * Make allowances for the fact that lip-reading, and processing information gained requires extra concentration and children often tire more easily.
- * If you are not sure whether your child has understood what you have said, ask him/her to repeat the instructions or information given. Rephrase or use different vocabulary with the same meaning

* Try to set aside some quiet time together each day, without other distractions, so that you can relax and enjoy communicating with your child.

* Support, respond to and praise all your child's attempts to communicate. Encourage family and friends to do the same and together aim to build your child's confidence.

Specialist Teachers for Hearing Impairment (ST HI)

Role:

- provide support and advice to parents, carers, early year's settings, schools, and colleges.
- work with children and young people (CYP) with bilateral moderate, severe, or profound hearing loss.

The needs of children with unilateral or mild hearing loss can be met by settings and schools implementing strategies set out in Best Practice Guidelines (Early Years) or Mainstream Core Standards (schools). Therefore, ST HI do not normally work with CYP with these losses.

STLS HI Contact Details

Telephone advice can be provided by the Co-ordinators for Hearing Impairment

East Kent—Jo Clarke: 07825 380152

jclarke@valence.kent.sch.uk

West Kent—Sue Holder: 07825 013351

sholder@valence.kent.sch.uk

General information and advice are available from the National Deaf Children's Society helpline:

0808 800 8880 or the website www.ndcs.org.uk