

Accommodations in the Classroom for the Student with Unilateral Hearing Loss

- Teacher inservice is important. Provide teacher with [Relationship of Hearing Loss to Listening and Learning Needs – Unilateral Hearing Loss](#) It is also helpful to ask the teacher to wear one noise protection ear plug (purchase at drug stores or hardware stores) and demonstrate listening from various parts of the classroom, with and without noise, with back turned and from different seats in the classroom.
- Allow student to change seat locations to direct the normal hearing ear toward the primary speaker. Seating in the rightmost (for good left ear) or leftmost (for good right ear) row is suggested so student's better hearing ear will almost always face the teacher. Student should be encouraged to turn in his or her seat to face a classmate who is speaking.
- Allow student to close the classroom door if he/she is bothered by hall noise.
- Teacher should summarize key points spoken by classmates so that this information is accessible to the student.
- Trial period with a personal FM system to enhance reception of the teacher's voice, typically in the student's better hearing ear or placement in a classroom with a sound field amplification system (amplifies what the teacher says for the whole class) is warranted. Pre/post testing with the [Listening Inventory For Education](#) will assist in determining the student's need for and benefit of assistive amplification.
- Educational monitoring is warranted. Teacher completion of the [Screening Instrument For Targeting Educational Risk](#) in October, January and May will allow the student's function in the classroom in comparison to peers to be easily monitored.
- If amplified, student should be involved in regular amplification monitoring and should receive instruction in how to become his/her own 'Technology Specialist'.
- Student will benefit from being in contact with other students who have typical hearing in only one ear as a source of mutual support. Facilitated contact through chat rooms, skype, penpal, or face-to-face formats is strongly suggested so that the student does not feel as isolated in the issues faced due to unilateral hearing loss.
- Teacher should be aware of the potential impact of unilateral hearing loss on socialization and behavior and provide support when natural opportunities occur to help the student to fit in and be seen as a valuable group member.



Learning Challenges

Learning issues are largely due to missing incidental speech that occurs in the environment. Even though a child hears typically in one ear, whenever there is noise or the speaker is at a distance the child will miss part of what is said. It is



recommended that children with some usable hearing in their worse ear begin to wear a hearing aid in their poor ear starting in infancy. This will provide more 'balanced' hearing and allow the child to pick up incidental language around them, thereby preventing some/all of the possible language delays and behavior/social issues. Waiting to amplify the poorer hearing ear until school age (child is in kindergarten or older) may be too late as their brain will take considerable time to learn how to use the information to localize sound and listen in noise. Until that happens, the child may report that the hearing aid actually makes it more difficult due to amplification of all noise along with speech. Don't wait!

Learning challenges include difficulty learning sound/letter associations in typically noisy kindergarten and grade 1 settings, feeling 'out of step' due to missing parts of directions and the inability to hear/understand what peers are saying in the classroom unless they are close and it is relatively quiet.

[Hearing Loss in One Ear](#)– This information briefly reviews why parents of young children should be concerned about unilateral hearing loss, what they should watch for, and what they should do.