

Monthly Update

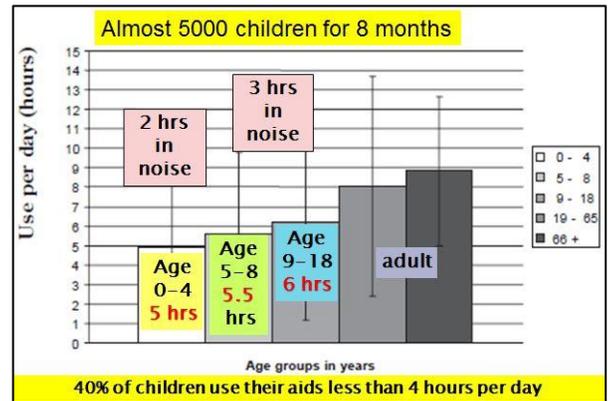
Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss November 2013

Karen L. Anderson, Director

November is here already! School routines are in place and students are learning new skills. Maybe some of your students/children are struggling a bit in the classroom and it is time to consider doing some functional assessments. Remember the variety of freely downloadable functional assessments available on this [website](#)! I have so enjoyed my speaking engagements in New Hampshire, Kansas, Michigan, and soon in New York and Connecticut. Your passion and interest in improving the futures of children with hearing loss is a great source of energy and excitement!

Let's make a difference!

The [2010 Phonak data logging study](#) found that only 10% of children (infants through 18 years) wear their hearing aids full time (all waking hours). Also, 40% of children wear their hearing aids only an average of 4 hours per day. Children using hearing aids miss out on overlearning and incidental learning because hearing aids don't effectively 'reach' beyond 3-6 feet (detection yes, comprehension not likely). This impacts learning of subtle social and pragmatics skills. The results of the data logging study indicate, on top of the inherent overhearing problems with hearing aids, the average child is only receiving about 1/3 of the hours of auditory input as a typical hearing child. This will clearly impact their ability to learn language at the same rate as their age peers. The critical period to develop the auditory brain is in the first 2 years of life and cannot be made up at a later age.



Achieving full time use of hearing aids in early childhood is usually a challenge for families. A young child goes through various stages of exploration and independence that results in periods when keeping hearing aids on their heads may be a struggle. We need to provide better support to families to help them achieve full time hearing aid use. **If we can support families and change just this one thing - consistent hearing aid wear - we will change the future outcomes of thousands of children with hearing loss!**

Hearing Device Retention Accessory Information				
Hearing aid retention accessories not included below were rated as less effective. More information on current results can be found at http://www.hearingaidretention.com/hearing-aid-on . Ratings based on the results of the Children's Hearing Aid Retention Survey completed by 286 parents (Anderson & Madell, 2012).				
Ear Gear	Caps	Safe-N-Sound	Wig / Toupee Tape	Oto / Critter Clips
 <p>Pros: Shields ears from cold, wind, and noise. Provides extra protection from mechanical damage and prevents hearing aids from being pulled off by children. These caps have a soft inner lining to keep ears warm. A hypoallergenic fabric is used to ensure comfort for the child to wear. Spandex allows maximum comfort of device wear. prevents and assists in hearing from children, also alternative method to connect child to internet and print in wearing hearing aids. Use with hearing aids, cochlear implants and BMEAs for individuals of all ages. Models can attach to use on hearing devices.</p> <p>Cons: Some difficulty putting, because caps must be removed and then reattached.</p> <p>www.gear4hearing.com</p> <p>#1 Rated</p>	 <p>Pros: Effective at discouraging toddlers from pulling hearing aids off. Available in multiple colors. Some Anderson and Hearing Therapy caps are custom and have the child's name on the front of each and the hearing aid. Silicone caps have more grip points and feature a secure under-the-ear band. The silicone also has a "locking" feature so that the child can't pull the hearing aid off. Should be independently putting hearing aids on by age 3. Use with hearing aids, cochlear implants and BMEAs. Use in various colors.</p> <p>Cons: None in our survey or southern states.</p> <p>www.a2hearing.com www.hearingaidretention.com www.hearingaidretention.com</p> <p>#2 Rated</p>	 <p>Pros: Easy to install. One size fits all hearing aid and cochlear implant models. Features unique ear covers in many different colors to increase child's interest and help with wearing hearing aids. Option with benefits can be effective for younger hearing child - speaking into the hearing aid, while not causing discomfort when removed by parent. Used by children of all ages. Models can attach to use on hearing devices or be used with earplugs. Works with hearing aids, cochlear implants, and BMEAs.</p> <p>Cons: Not suitable for children who may not be able to hold hearing aids in place. The hearing aid may become loose and cause a slight discomfort.</p> <p>www.gear4hearing.com</p> <p>#3 Rated</p>	 <p>Pros: Specifically made for use on all sizes. Attaches to both hearing device and hair. Must require tape on a regular basis to maintain security.</p> <p>Cons: Good short-term strategy. Together not enough to keep a tight fit. Requires frequent adjustment of the hearing aid. Not suitable for children who are not able to hold the hearing aid in place. Not suitable for children who are young or very active. Use on all hearing devices.</p> <p>Cons: The tape discourages child from pulling the hearing aid off. Not suitable for children who are not able to hold the hearing aid in place. Child conditions to the tape being used. Not suitable for children who are not able to hold the hearing aid in place. Not suitable when it is removed. If used frequently, tape can be expensive over time.</p> <p>www.hearingaidretention.com</p> <p>#4 Rated</p>	 <p>Pros: Low cost, easy to install solution. One size fits all hearing aid models and cochlear implants. Clips come in many colors, and some models are available with ear anchors on the back of the clip - encouraging small children to wear their aids. Used by children of all ages wearing hearing aids, cochlear implants or BMEAs.</p> <p>Cons: Breaks easily (not very durable). Clips attach to hearing aid and not to hair. Security level varies due to one-size-fits-all for all hearing devices. The hearing clip has three teeth and may pinch child's skin. Clip has small contact, and can cause damage to device.</p> <p>www.hearingaidretention.com</p> <p>#5 Rated</p>

I feel very passionate about this need and over the last 2 years, have teamed with New York pediatric audiologist, Jane Madell, to gather information on strategies. In February 2012 we sent a survey to families and pediatric audiologists. We received an incredible response from 286 family members and 101 audiologists. We've worked to include developmental reasons for taking off hearing aids, strategies for keeping them on, and rating information on available hearing aid retention accessories into **3 brochures that are now freely available for download and distribution by YOU** to your contacts in pediatric audiology, early intervention, Guide by Your Side support providers and parent support groups. Brochures are divided into age groups: **0-12 months, 12-24 months and 2-5 years**. The [Strategies for Keeping Hearing Aids on Young Children](#) page also contains links to the actual survey results and findings of an acoustic transparency study.

One strong finding of the survey results was that pediatric audiologists are out of touch with the effectiveness, durability, safety and ease of use of different hearing aid retention accessories. The results of what experienced parents reported is found on each brochure. Although these accessories are NOT the full answer and other behavioral strategies are also useful, the accessories can be very helpful in getting a child, and parents, through especially challenging stages of hearing aid use.

To encourage trying an accessory and because it was rated highest I have worked out an agreement with [Ear Gear](#). From now through the end of December if you use the Coupon Code SSCHL12 you can get a **20% discount** off of the purchase of any one Ear

Gear style. Encourage kid's feelings about how 'cool' their ear computers are with different colors of Ear Gear. See if having a hearing aid retention accessory on hand will help with consistent hearing aid use and certainly, consider trying the different options that were rated as effective by parents.

Information from IDEA - assessment/eligibility

IDEA requires the school to fully evaluate each child referred in all areas related to the suspected disability. This means using "*a variety of assessments tools and strategies to gather relevant **functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent***" (3CFR.300.304(a)(1)).

As I travel around the country speaking to different groups, I repeatedly hear that eligibility decisions are being based solely on academic status. Clearly, per the statement from IDEA above, **it is unlawful NOT to consider the areas of functional performance in which children with hearing loss typically have needs**. This would include pragmatics, social skills, and - more broadly - indicators of the ability to fully participate in the classroom. For a child with hearing loss, the skills to repair communication breakdowns and self-advocate for themselves are necessary if full participation in the classroom is to be realized. Considering the results of normed academic and language tests alone does not comprise a complete assessment. The majority of students with hearing loss have access to verbal communication issues and not learning disorders. Assessing them to identify a learning disorder and not attending to functional performance that indicates the adverse learning effects of access to communication issues does not result in a complete, or appropriate, eligibility evaluation.



Further, Section 300.101(c) provides that a child is eligible to receive special education and related services even though the child is advancing from grade to grade. It is implicit from paragraph (c) of this section that a child should not have to fail a course or be retained in a grade in order to be considered for special education and related services. A public agency must provide a child with a disability special education and related services to enable him or her to progress in the general curriculum, thus making clear that a child is not ineligible to receive special education and related services just because the child is, with the support of those individually designed services, progressing in the general curriculum from grade-to-grade.

Refer to the [IEP Issues and IDEA Law Information](#) webpage for more details (under Eligibility for Specialized Instruction, services and supports). Another excellent resource is [Educational Advocacy for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing](#).

Assessing Social Skill Performance

IDEA requires that both academic and functional information be considered when identifying or planning for the needs of a student with hearing loss. Although social skills are part of the [expanded core curriculum](#), it has been a challenge to gather functional assessment information on social skills. Some new options have now been added to the *Supporting Success* website to help you gather functional assessment data on the social skills your child or students. Unfortunately, social skills checklists do not seem to have cut off scores that would result in child not passing this type of screening checklist. Instead, there is an expectation that most items will be answered positively. If there are more than a couple that are negative, these areas should be discussed by the team to strategize how to help the child to learn these skills. All of these checklists can be found at: <http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/tests/tests-by-other-authors>



1) **The Social Attributes Checklist**. Only one-page long with 24 questions, this is a checklist that a preschool or kindergarten teacher could fill out once she has observed the student for a month or more in the classroom and during social interactions.

2) **Social Skills Checklist (PreK/Elementary)**. This is also a teacher-rated checklist but it is much more in depth than the Social Attributes Checklist. It contains items in the categories of: Social Play & Emotional Development; Emotional Regulation; and Communication Skills, each with a subset of items. One of the strongest contributions of this checklist is the breadth of skills to consider that comprise appropriate social skills in getting along with peers. Whether used as an actual checklist or as a means to discuss the child's functional performance during a team meeting, the Social Skills Checklist (PreK/Elementary) should be a valuable addition to your functional assessment portfolio.

3) **Social Skills Checklist (Secondary)**. This is very similar to the checklist for PreK/Elementary. It requires rating in the following areas: Conversational Skills (verbal & nonverbal); Problem Solving; Understanding Emotions; Compliments and Flexibility. The items are the same as from the PreK/Elementary checklist but the younger skill items have been deleted.

Want to help?

A group of individuals are working to create a Pediatric Minimum Speech Test Battery (PMSTB) for cochlear implant evaluations. Rene` Gifford, PhD, from the Vanderbilt University Cochlear Implant Program is heading up this effort. If you have an hour to donate and would like to participate, you can sign up at the following web address <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1B-rPyysFJXCjuatn4KGnijnlBQPRhN9uwsYZ7smMG-s/viewform>



New Resources

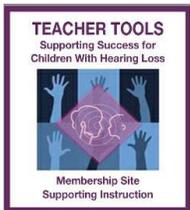


Families and Professionals

In addition to the social skills checklists above, new information has been added on the **importance of smiling to infants** as a precursor to social and interaction development. My thanks to Janet Trychin, early interventionist in Pennsylvania, for her insights on the importance of supporting families to smile and make eye contact with their infants often.

- **Families:** Information on infant smiling has been added to the <http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/communication-whatever-fits-your-child-and-family> page
- **Professionals:** Information has been added to the <http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/resources-for-professionals/ei> page

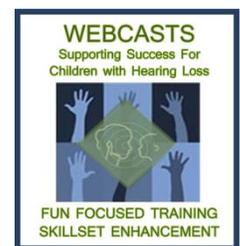
Thanks to the 120 teachers who are already Teacher Tools Members!



Designed specifically for teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing - whether itinerant, resource or center-based - these resources are inexpensive and of high quality. Go to the [Teacher Tools Membership website](#) for more information. You can join anytime throughout the school year and access all materials that are posted by the 10th of each month from September through April. For **November and December**, Teaching Tools will focus on ways to use rating scales to teach intensity. The activities will focus on Language Skills by looking at ways to build a student's repertoire of descriptive words and determine appropriate word choice. Listening Skills will address auditory discrimination skill development.

Webcasts are back!

This professional development option is better than ever! Thanks to those school districts who have purchased group viewing for the professional development of your staff. The [Group Webcasts](#) can now be purchased online. There are substantial discounts for purchasing multiple webcasts for one year. Once you purchase, you will receive the webcast links and downloads for each presentation that will be good for three views until June 30th. When presenting a webcast to a group, you need to allow time to load/check the webcast at least the day before. These are very large files and may need to buffer (pause) as they load, depending on the speed of the internet at your school.

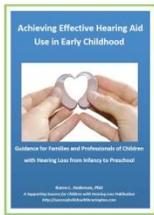


The content was wonderful!!! At the location I was at we had some great discussions. I believe the other sites experienced the same. We had TODs, SLPs and a few Audiologists....all at one table, with one focus- it was awesome!

New webcasts are up on the [Webcasts to Support the Success of Children with Hearing Loss](#) website. The following new webcast will be available for view by mid-November.

- [Social Communication Issues and Belonging in the Classroom](#) Presenter: Karen Anderson
- Planned for December: [FM Basics and Beyond](#) Presenter: Lisa Cannon

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS



With the focus of this Monthly Update on social skills and consistent hearing aid wear, the following products are highlighted:

- [Social Inclusion: How to Make it Happen Workbook](#)
- [Promoting Social Competence](#)
- [Achieving Effective Hearing Aid Use in Early Childhood](#) (infancy through transition to preschool)

Register for the next INTERACT-AS webinar on 11/13 at 4:30 CT

Webinars offer a great opportunity to have the developer of Interact-AS describe this speech-to-text translation software, see him demonstrate it and ask the questions that are pertinent to your situation or student. I always learn from these webinars! [Register HERE](#) for the November 13th webinar.

The Summary of [Key Points for a Successful Trial Period and Interact-AS Success Stories](#) and [Interact-AS Success Stories](#) may be a good place to start if you haven't heard much about this accommodation technology.



SOCIAL MEDIA



Thanks too to all our [Facebook fans](#) for the wonderful support. Please share the [page](#) with your friends and family, and stay tuned in the next few weeks because we'll provide you with great tips on how to make the holidays more meaningful and fun for kids with hearing loss.

THANKS

We hope that you find SSCHL information and products helpful as you work with children who are deaf or hard of hearing or their families. I am thrilled that 12,000 of you per month are taking advantage of these resources to support the children with hearing loss in your life! I welcome your communication and encourage you to submit suggestions for resources you need and how we can grow to better support the success of children with hearing loss. – Karen

<http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com>

Karen@successforkidswithhearingloss.com