

The Developing Child with Unilateral Hearing Loss: WHAT TO DO - CHOICES

WHAT TO DO to help your child's future? If your child has two perfect ears no one will know about the hearing loss unless you tell them. If he or she wears a hearing aid then everyone will see that your child is not perfect. Most people do not understand that a hearing loss in one ear can cause significant learning problems in about ½ of these children. Now you know that "he will get by just fine" may not be true at all for your child. 	WHAT TO DO – Advocate! The most important thing to do is to advocate for your child's needs. Some physicians and audiologists may not be aware of the research we have about the potential learning consequences to 1/3 to 1/2 of children with unilateral hearing loss. We do not know how to predict which children will be effected – it could be <u>your</u> child. You may prevent issues from developing by helping your child now! 
WHAT TO DO – Test & Retest! Since one out of every four children with unilateral hearing loss develops hearing loss in the better ear it is critical for your child to have his or her hearing checked by the audiologist regularly. • Every 3 months to age 1 year • Every 6 months from 1-3 years • Get prompt medical care for suspected ear infections • Teach him to avoid loud noise! 	What are your real choices? a. Do what you can to help prevent listening, learning and social problems by allowing your child to hear his or her best – every day, in every situation. He has a <i>right</i> to hear and to learn like other children. 
What are your real choices? b. Hope that he will get by, realizing that language, self esteem, and behavior are likely to be affected by the hearing loss. Will he still "be all that he can be"? Probably not, but maybe that is acceptable to you. 	What are your real choices? c. Wait and see if he will be affected, even though this will lose learning time that can never be made up. Children who wait to get hearing aid(s) until closer to school age typically do not adjust very well (see b). WHAT WILL YOU DO? 

SUGGESTED FOR HOME VISIT 3