

The Developing Child with Unilateral Hearing Loss: WHAT TO DO – GET HELP!

Hearing in only one ear IS a big deal Children with issues related to hearing loss in only one ear do <u>not</u> outgrow them by school-age. Children with unilateral hearing loss are at 10 times the risk for school problems as those with 2 good ears. 1/3 – 1/2 of children with unilateral hearing loss repeat a grade or require special education services in school. We do not know what predicts problems! 	There is help! Get help. Most states provide services to families of infants and toddlers (to age 3) who have unilateral hearing loss. These early intervention services would include someone coming to your home and/or the child's day care to talk about the child's hearing needs and what can be done to help learning. They may also help you find out how to obtain a hearing aid trial. 
Work to 'keep the language cup full' Families are a child's first and most important teachers. Early intervention teachers can help families to learn how they can communicate with children in ways to really stimulate language learning during everyday activities. Some families use simple signs with their very young children to boost early language growth – you may find this fun too.  	Track how your child's language is growing At least every 6 months your early intervention teacher will check how your child's language is growing. Ask for a list of typical vocabulary to hang on your refrigerator as a reminder. An example: MacArthur checklists at https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/resources-for-professionals/early-intervention-for-children-with-hearing-loss Remember, children with normal hearing in one ear can develop language at a normal rate until 15-18 months.  
Behavior and social rule learning The early intervention teachers can also help you to teach proper behavior to your child – consistency and being sure the child really understands is the key! Describing and role playing social interactions can start very early and really help a child's self esteem and understanding by the time he or she starts school. 	Help when trying a hearing aid Most people have not used hearing aids or ever seen one on a young child. Early intervention professionals typically include teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing or speech language pathologists who can help you learn how to accomplish daily hearing aid wear. They can also help you to watch for improvement in listening behavior. Do the ELF with the help of the EI teacher. 