

USING YOUR COMMUNICATION REPAIR STRATEGIES AT SCHOOL

WE ALL experience communication breakdowns sometimes, especially if it is noisy or we are distracted by thinking, doing, looking or talking about something else. When you know that you missed something, **ask yourself these questions:**

- a. Does it seem important for you to know this information? You often can tell this by how serious or hurried everyone else is acting. If the information does not seem like it was important, you can wait and see what the teacher says next. *BE PREPARED to use a communication repair strategy!* It may have been important after all and you will only get more confused.
- b. Do you have time to figure it out before the class settles down and the teacher is ready to start?
 - i. What do you usually need or do at this time of day?
 - ii. Is it written on the board?
 - iii. Can you get a clue from seeing what the student next to you is doing?
 - iv. If you ask the student next to you what the teacher said, will you be able to hear the answer?
- c. If the teacher is about ready to start and you still don't know, what can you say or do?
 - i. Do you have a signal system set up with your teacher to let her know that you did not understand and that she needs to say it again? Your teacher/therapist could help you and your teacher figure this out.
 1. You can raise your hand like other students would do. Because you will miss more information than other students because of your hearing problem you may feel self conscious doing this too many times in a short period.
 2. You and your teacher can agree early in the school year on a different kind of signal. It could be a certain way to sit. It could be a something like a bright colored post-it note you put on the corner of your desk.
 3. Your teacher could allow you to ask a student next to you to repeat what was said. This is okay sometimes, but you need to advocate for yourself throughout your life so that you get the information you need from the speaker (teacher, boss, etc.) without always turning to other people for help.
 - ii. Did you hear enough of what the teacher said to use your communication repair skills (addition strategies)?
 1. "Mrs. Larson, what was the page number?" This shows you were listening but just missed a little bit.
 2. "Mrs. Larson, it's noisy and I didn't hear the page number. Can you say it again please?" This will let your teacher know that she gave out important information to the class while it was noisy. You were probably not the only student who did not hear the page number.
 - iii. If you did not hear any of the words and cannot figure out any part of what was said you could ask for the teacher to repeat louder, clearer or more slowly (revision strategies).
 1. "Could you say that again please?"
 2. "Maria used a quiet voice when she answered, could she say it again please?"

