


## Social Communication Issues and Belonging in the Classroom

Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss

Course #  
SSCHL – 13-003


**Karen L. Anderson, PhD**  
Supporting Success for Children with  
Hearing Loss



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### Information About the Presenter


- **Karen L. Anderson, PhD:** Audiologist 30+ years
  - Educational audiologist and pediatric audiologist 30+ years
  - EHDI state leadership/coordinating DHH early intervention
  - Extensive writing and availability of checklists / handouts
  - Director, Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss



Karen Anderson PhD

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### Introduction



- **Presentation 60 minutes**
- **10 assessment questions –**
  - Can take test twice; pass = 80% score or better
  - Once you pass you choose to receive any of:
    - Certificate of Participation acceptable to fulfill most state or local credential requirements
    - Downloadable form to request Listening and Spoken Language Specialist (LSLS) CEUS from AG Bell (your name will be reported to AG Bell)
    - Downloadable form to assist you in procuring ASHA CEUS (CEUs not directly available from SSCHL)

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### Introduction

- **There will be no question/answer session.**
  - Email specific questions or comments to:  
**[webcast@successforkidswithhearingloss.com](mailto:webcast@successforkidswithhearingloss.com)**  
Include course number in subject line of your email.
- **Your question will be briefly addressed within 30 days of receipt.**

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### Downloads to accompany this webcast

You are encouraged to print or download these resources to your computer. They will be available for you to access until you proceed to the assessment following your completion of the course.

- The Pragmatics Checklist & Interpretation
- Summary of Pragmatic Development & Theory of Mind
- How to be Cool
- The Peer Relationship Scale
- Self-Assessment of Communication – Adolescent
- Significant Other Assessment of Communication - Adolescent

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### Purpose of this Webcast

**This course:**

- Most of social communication and 'rules for getting along' are learned incidentally, via overhearing in many situations.
- This webcast will discuss social skill issues, identification of pragmatic language delays and how psychosocial development impacts child acceptance of hearing devices along with specific approaches to addressing these issues.

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## Learning Objectives


- 1 The participants will be able to describe social skill expectations and strategies for improvement and tracking social communication performance.
- 2 The participants will be able to describe how psychosocial development impacts student behavior and hearing aid use.
- 3 The participants will be able to describe 3 materials to use and two strategies to address student feelings of fitting into the mainstream classroom.

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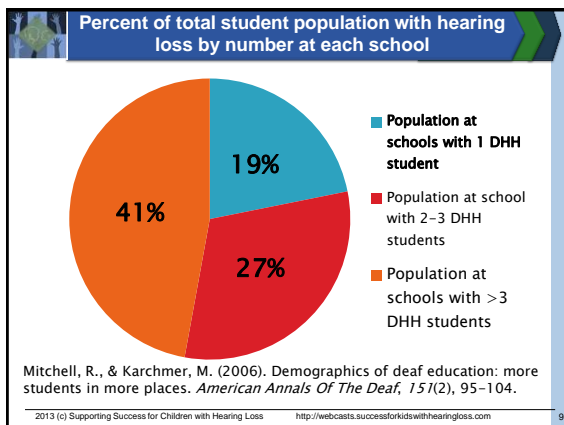
## Complex and inter-related with language learning and identity...

### Social Skill Development

*What are the rules you are supposed to follow in making a friend? What are you supposed to say, and what are you not supposed to say? What is a joke, and what is not? When are you supposed to talk, and when are you supposed to listen? When do you look at a person and when do you not? Should you tell what you know, and say what you are interested in, or should you keep it to yourself?*




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## What do we know about social competence and children with HL?

- ▶ Children with hearing loss were found to make more social initiations in a regular preschool program than a SpEd preschool setting.



Weisel, Most, & Efron, (2005). Initiations of Social Interactions by Young Hearing Impaired Preschoolers. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*. 10:2, 161-170.

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## What do we know about social competence and children with HL?

- ▶ Social competence with typically hearing peers was greater for a single DHH child integrated into a standard preschool classroom and lower for children placed with a group of DHH.




Most, Ingber, and Heled-Ariam, (2012). Social Competence, Sense of Loneliness, and Speech Intelligibility of Young Children with Hearing Loss in Individual Inclusion and Group Inclusion. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*. 17:2, 259-272.

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## What do we know about social competence and children with HL?

- ▶ Poorer speech intelligibility was related to a higher perceived sense of loneliness by the single DHH children in a standard preschool
- ▶ Authors recommended emphasis on speech intelligibility when single students with hearing loss are placed in a standard preschool setting.




Most, Ingber, and Heled-Ariam, (2012). Social Competence, Sense of Loneliness, and Speech Intelligibility of Young Children with Hearing Loss in Individual Inclusion and Group Inclusion. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*. 17:2, 259-272.

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## What do we know about social competence and adolescents with HL?

- ▶ Spoken English increased class participation and emotional security with hearing peers
- ▶ Mainstreamed students were better adjusted with typically hearing students
- ▶ Partially integrated students were better adjusted with DHH peers
- ▶ Segregated students had lowest level of social adjustment
- ▶ Perceived social competence for mainstreamed students was predicted by adjustment with both deaf and hearing peers.



Musselman, Mootial, & MacKay (1996). The Social Adjustment of Deaf Adolescents in Segregated, Partially Integrated, and Mainstreamed Settings. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*. 1:1 Winter, 57-62.

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## Social Skill Expectations

Social skills include:

- Rules of conversation
- Responding to social cues
- Saying hello and goodbye
- Cooperating by taking turns
- Responding appropriately to questions
- Being sensitive to the feelings of others
- Making eye contact
- Smiling
- Being polite



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## Social Skill Expectations

Social skills include:

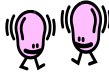
- Problem solving
- Supporting others by giving them attention and helping
- Having interesting things to say
- Reinforcing and acknowledging other's comments
- Controlling aggression and other inappropriate behaviors



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## Socialization – more than making friends

In his theory of cognitive socialization, Vygotsky believed that cognitive development and learning was dependent on sharing through language and continual cooperation among learners.




Kindergarten teachers say that about 20 percent of children entering kindergarten do not yet have the necessary social and emotional skills to be "ready" for school.

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## Pragmatics & Children with HL


- Pragmatics = changing language according to the needs of a listener or situation; following rules for conversation or storytelling
- Pragmatic difficulties increase risk for social and emotional deficits (Ketelaars, et. al 2009) and for victimization (Contii-Ramsden & Botting, 2004)
- Children who are deaf or hard of hearing use more directive and less informative communicative functions than their normally hearing age-matched peers (Day, 1986; Nicholas, 2000; Nicholas & Geers, 1997)



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## New information on Pragmatics

- Study by Christi Yoshinaga-Itano et al., supported by US Department of Education (EHDI conference, March 2012)
- Administered The Pragmatic Checklist (Goberis, 1999) to
  - 109 children with normal hearing
  - 126 children with hearing loss of all degrees.
  - All children cognitively normal, English-speaking
- 45 items completed by parents – skills are:
  - Not present
  - Preverbal
  - 1-3 words
  - Complex language



[http://ehdimeeting.org/2012/Users/Uploads/pdfs/sps\\_17ChristineYoshinaga-Itano.pdf](http://ehdimeeting.org/2012/Users/Uploads/pdfs/sps_17ChristineYoshinaga-Itano.pdf)

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### New information on Pragmatics

- Children in age groups were determined to have "mastered" a skill with use of complex language when 75% of age group achieved skill.

Children with normal hearing

- 44% (20 of 45) of the items were mastered using complex language by 3 years of age
- 95.5% (43 of 45) of the items were mastered by 4 years of age
- 98% by 5 years
- 100% by 6 years

**Most pragmatic skill learning occurs between ages 3-4**



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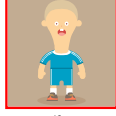
### New information on Pragmatics

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Children with hearing loss

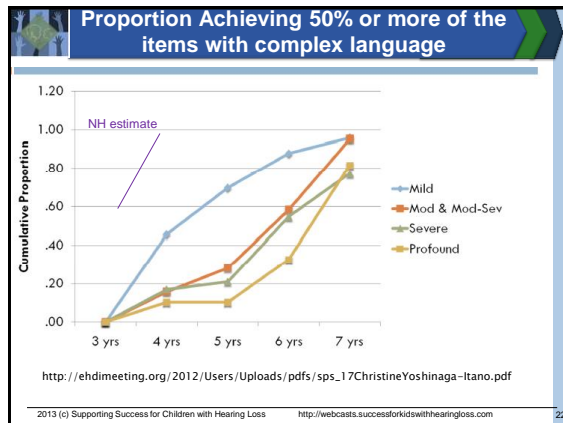
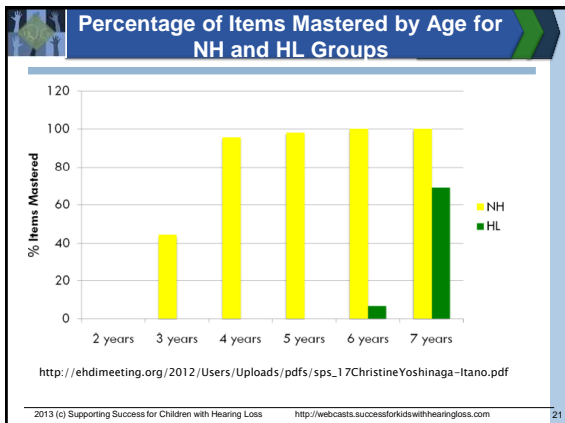
- 6.6% (3 of 45) of the items were mastered using complex language by 3 years of age
- 69% (31 of 45) of the items were mastered by 7 years of age

**At age 7 the average child with hearing loss had the pragmatics skills of a 3 1/2 year old**




[http://ehdimeeting.org/2012/Users/Uploads/pdfs/sps\\_17ChristineYoshinaga-Itano.pdf](http://ehdimeeting.org/2012/Users/Uploads/pdfs/sps_17ChristineYoshinaga-Itano.pdf)

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### Items not Mastered by age 7

- Provides information on request
- Repairs incomplete sentences
- Ends conversations
- Interjects
- Apologies
- Request clarification
- Makes promises
- Ask questions to problem solve
- Asks questions to make predictions
- Retells a story
- Tells 4-6 picture story in right order
- Creates original story
- Explains relationships between objects-action-situations
- Compares and contrasts

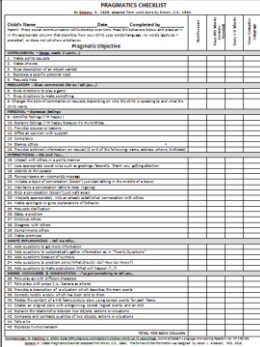


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### 45 Pragmatics Questions

Research found children who are deaf or hard of hearing are significantly older when demonstrating skill with complex language than their normal hearing peers.




[http://ehdimeeting.org/2012/Users/Uploads/pdfs/sps\\_17ChristineYoshinaga-Itano.pdf](http://ehdimeeting.org/2012/Users/Uploads/pdfs/sps_17ChristineYoshinaga-Itano.pdf)

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### Interpreting the Results of the Pragmatics Checklist

- Checklist is intended for age 3-5 but for DHH it could be used through age 7.
- Normative results on Interpretation form can establish existence of delays.
- If you haven't assessed pragmatics with students who are DHH you have overlooked important areas of need!



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### Case Example

Sam has used hearing aids since he was 5 months old. He is starting kindergarten (age 5:4). He seems very active and is able to communicate with other kids. The language testing you have indicates that he is within the average range for receptive/expressive language.

You've requested that the family complete THE PRAGMATICS CHECKLIST.

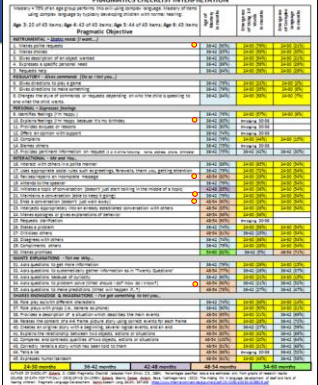
Results: Parents score child as using complex language in 36 of the 45 skill areas. He uses 1-3 words on #: 1, 10, 18, 21, 22, and 34.

Refer to THE PRAGMATICS CHECKLIST INTERPRETATION.



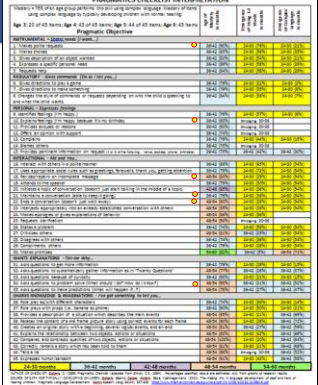
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- At age 5 all but item 30, makes promises, should be mastered.
- ANY item that is identified for use of only 1-3 word responses would indicate a delay.
- Areas of concern relate to communication repair and rules of conversation.



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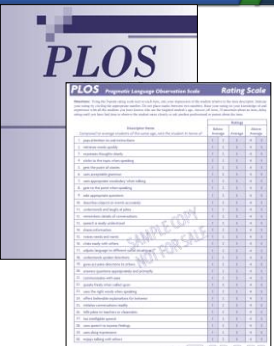
- If Sam was entering preschool as a 3-year-old the responses to items 1, 10, and 21 would still be of concern.



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### Pragmatic Language Observation Scale

- Teacher completed
- 25 items
- 5-10 minutes
- NORMED on 994 typical students
- For grades 3-12
- Good to augment results of language assessments and classroom observations



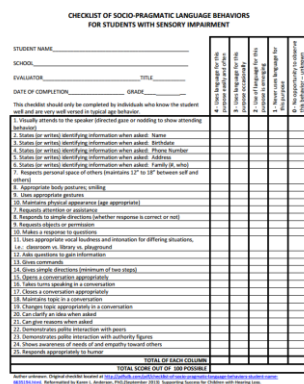
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### Summary of Pragmatic Development & Theory Of Mind hierarchy

Social skills – part of the comprehensive student assessment

Data can come From Checklists Or Systematic Classroom Observations

Example not normed



<http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Checklist-of-Socio-Pragmatic-Language-Behaviors.pdf> 30

## Minnesota Social Skills Checklist

**3 areas:**

- self-concept/self-esteem
- Friendship
- social interaction

2 pages per age group  
 Preschool (age 3-6 years)  
 Grades K-2  
 Grades 3-5  
 Grades 6-8  
 Grades 9-12

Not norm referenced. For gathering information only.

Grades K-2	Enter the date for each social skill or the appropriate level: 1 Observed rarely 2 Observed sometimes 3 Observed
<i>* I am filled if not observed at this time</i>	
<i>Completed by typical peers at the same grade level. Do not enter a hearing loss student or student with a hearing loss.</i>	
<b>SELF-CONCEPT/ESTEEM</b>	
Identifies things they are good at	
Willing to try new things or take risks	
Recognizes praise and confidence in their skills and accomplishments	
Identifies self as being confident and strong	
Recognizes behavior of confidence and strength	
Identifies behavior of confidence in high-achieving, confident and disinterested	
Identifies behavior of others (like, no matter)	
<b>FRIENDSHIP</b>	
Identifies qualities of a friend (understanding, caring, and sharing)	
Expresses and shares feelings with friends	
Understands the specific role of different friendships	
Initiates activities or projects with friends	
Understands the importance of sharing	
Accepts constructive criticism	
Accepts responsibility and apologizes when necessary	
Identifies how other people feel	
Comprehends and accepts a group decision	
Begins to understand the relationship between actions and consequences	
Uses self-control strategies (time feelings, counting, deep breathing and such) when applying	
Recognizes complex physical nonverbal cues of others	
Identifies body language (looks away, says his, says "I" statements, asks for attention)	
Identifies nonverbal cues and nonverbal cues (group activities)	
Uses language to assert self appropriately (includes needs, says no politely)	
Understands the difference between harmful teasing and joking with peers	
Recognizes appropriate versus inappropriate (name tags, name band and does not accept)	
Identifies and accepts consequences	

Minnesota Social Skills Checklist for Students Who are Deaf/Blind or Hearing/Deaf/Blind

<http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Minnesota-Social-Skills-Checklist-for-Students-who-are-Deaf-Blind-or-Hearing-Deaf-Blind.pdf>

## Which type of 'social'?

- ▶ **Social cognition** – being able to read feedback from people's faces to help you know if you should regulate your behavior
- ▶ **Social skills** – doing things that are socially acceptable, being a friend to others, etc.

- ▶ Tell the difference in child behavior through observation during social interaction.
- ▶ Children with hearing loss are typically delayed in BOTH skill areas.
- ▶ Different skill sets needed for each area.

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## We need to teach children with hearing loss:

- Vocabulary for varying emotions beyond happy, mad, sad!
- What the emotion looks like on the face
- What the emotion and facial expression or posture tell us about how others are feeling
- Or how others are pleased/displeased with our behavior

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## Have only a minute with the classroom teacher? Questions to ask about each student:

How does the student compare with class/age peers in his/her ability to:

1. Apologize
2. Negotiate with peers
3. Avoid problems with others
4. Face up to the influence of a group
5. Cooperate/share in a group

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## Social skills training is needed

- Hearing students have been found to be more socially mature than students with hearing loss in public schools\*
- Children with hearing loss especially need attention to social skills
  - They do not pick up socially appropriate behavior as well or at the same rate as hearing peers
  - They miss out on environmental cues that inform hearing children and help them regulate their behavior (incidental learning)

Kluwin, Stinson, Colarossi, 2002, Social Processes and Outcomes of In-School Contact Between Deaf and Hearing Peers. Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education.

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## How can we shape social skills?

**MODEL** – Use good social skills yourself, role-play with the child, provide the words for what he's feeling

**TEACH** – Explain what the child should do, be aware of, wait for, think about – don't assume he knows!

**WATCH AND SUPPORT**

- Reinforce good social behaviors – be specific about what s/he did well!

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### Get a Clue materials

#### 5 card packs to improve social communication



5 card packs to improve Social Communication

**Get a Clue**

1. Show me three girls' faces on the background, and look at each of the girls one by one. Which one of them is the girl who has a friendly expression on her face in the photo?
2. Look at the girl in the first circle on the right side of the page. Look for 'hand-drawn' and 'hand-drawn' is correct. What does it tell you about her face? Is she happy?
3. Look at the girl in the last circle. Are they talking together or are they not talking?

Ages 6 - 16

All that glitters is not gold.

**Faces and Feelings cards**      **"In other words" cards**

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### Promoting Social Inclusion

**Social Inclusion: How to Make it Happen For Students with Hearing Loss**



A Workbook for School Counselors  
Clarke Watson Services

© Gordon Williams, Ph.D., M.Ed., LSW  
Wiley J. Demann, M.Ed.



**Promoting Social Competence**

"Poke in" social skill and communication repair development into role-playing and content review activities.


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### In Summary, to improve social competence:

- Specifically teach how to recognize and interpret different emotional states in others
- Address pragmatic skill development aggressively
- Actively address social skill development



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### Belonging in the Classroom:

#### Addressing Emotional Issues Related to having a Hearing Loss

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### How do we benefit from social groups?

- ▶ Element of identity – who you believe you are is defined by what groups you are a member of (family, grade, class); adds to our self-esteem
- ▶ Cooperation – by being in a group we learn to cooperate and work in teams within the group, all of which is facilitated by language use
- ▶ Developing friendships, varied levels of relationships
- ▶ Learning from others, pleasure from helping others, meaningfully empathizing with others
- ▶ All contribute to more positive feelings about school and eagerness to engage in classroom activities
- ▶ Early rejection by peers is associated with persistent academic & social difficulties

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### Psychosocial development


Psychosocial development occurs in stages. Stages are characterized by:

**Age 0-1: Trust vs Mistrust:** Inconsistency teaches that the world is undependable, unpredictable, dangerous


Need to 'bond' with hearing aids now  
Consistent, effective communication at home

**Age 2-3: Seeking autonomy:** develop a sense of being able to handle many problems on their own

Support independence (Me do!)  
Expect them to 'speak for themselves'  
Work toward being able to put on devices




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Imagine being a 9 months old and crawling. You see a houseplant in the corner of the room and want to explore what it is. Mommy is on the other side of the room. As you start to crawl toward the plant, she sees where you are going and says “no, no – we don’t touch plants.” Her voice isn’t angry. You know the words no-no and she has now linked no-no to the plant. You consider other places you can crawl.

Contrast this with not being able to hear Mommy tell you no-no. You continue to crawl toward the plant. She sees you disregard her warning and may tell you no-no again. You are now farther away and can’t hear her voice at all. Suddenly Mommy picks you up. She has an angry face and voice. You don’t know what you did wrong and you’re scared.



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## Psychosocial development

Psychosocial development occurs in stages. School age stages are characterized by:

**Age 4-6:**

- Begin completing tasks for a purpose and may feel guilt or frustration if they do not produce the desired result. Sense of judgment develops
- Typically Theory of Mind is developed within this period and child has the perspective to recognize that not everyone wears hearing technology and misses information due to hearing loss.




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## Psychosocial development

Psychosocial development occurs in stages. School age stages are characterized by:

**Age 7-11:**

- Eager to complete tasks and accomplish more complex skills.
- If they are not meeting adult/class expectations they may feel inferior (“I can’t”)
- If a child feels inferior they may procrastinate, struggle to start work or give up, knowing “it won’t be good”




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## Psychosocial development

Psychosocial development occurs in stages. School age stages are characterized by:


**Age 12-19:**

- Concerned with how they appear and trying to reconcile who they think they are with who they believe society/their group wants them to be.
- When the adolescent has balanced the perspective of “What have I got?” with “What am I going to do with it?” he has established his identity
- Wanting to be ‘normal’ is...normal!



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## The stages of facing loss



- ▶ Denial – I don’t need hearing aids
- ▶ Anger – I hate my hearing aids, hate people coming around because I have a hearing loss
- ▶ Bargaining – If I pretend I don’t have a hearing loss and hide my hearing aids then I will be the same as my peers
- ▶ Depression – Just leave me alone
  - Sometimes students who continue to use devices go through depression in response to feeling left out by their peer group or “weird”


Discontinuing device use is a strategy to resolve these issues.

Stages are an emotional response that isn’t rectified by rational arguments.

Students KNOW they do better with their devices.

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## PREVENTION IS THE KEY



Ingredients important for success

- ▶ “Bonded” with their hearing devices
- ▶ Support from home for device wear

What can be done at school?

- ▶ Inservice class peers (Preschool – grade 1)
- ▶ Practice responses to “What are those things?”
- ▶ Ongoing conversations from school entry!!!
- ▶ High expectations for responsibility/advocacy

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**Children's Peer Relationship Scale**  
Elementary School Survey

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How do you feel about school?

I like school.  
 School's okay.  
 I don't like school.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you have good friends in school?

I have some good friends in school.  
 I have one good friend in school.  
 I don't have good friends in school.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you have a best friend?

I have a best friend.  
 I sort of have a best friend.  
 No one is really my best friend.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

4. How do other kids feel about you?

Mostly, other kids like me.  
 Sometimes, other kids don't like me.  
 Other kids don't really like me.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**For Grades K-6**

**Conversation Starters!**


- How do you like school?
- Do you have good friends in school?
- Do you have a best friend?
- How do other kids feel about you?
- What do you do after school?
- Do the other kids tease you about your hearing loss?
- Do you know other kids with hearing loss?
- What do you think about your hearing devices?

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**Self identity and having a hearing loss**

- ▶ Study of hard of hearing teens ages 11, 13, 15 compared to peers
- ▶ 56% did not identify themselves as having a disability
- ▶ May identify themselves as having 'a hearing problem' but not disability.
- ▶ Those who identify themselves as having a hearing disability are **more likely to report feeling lonely or alone** than those who do not self-identify.
- ▶ There is a necessity for individuals who are hard of hearing to establish an identity distinct from those who are culturally Deaf but also accommodates their particular needs
- ▶ Research supports the need for networks to promote the identity of mainstreamed young people with hearing loss

Kent, B. (2003). Identity issues for hard of hearing adolescents aged 11, 13 and 15 in mainstream setting. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education* 8(3), 315-324



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**Be a COACH!**



I'm your DHH Teacher = You have Learning problems



I'm your DHH Coach = You are 'playing' fine but could use some fine-tuning to 'play' your best


Focus on specific skills  
Watch for improvement in performance and confidence  
Provide emotional support for 'players' self-talk for success

PARADIGM SHIFT!

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**Develop a sense of 'group'**

- Bring students together to talk about their hearing loss, challenges and feelings. They can 'teach' each other about their hearing loss and share/support challenges with peers/school.
- Ask "What do you think other kids with hearing aids do/feel/try?" Get questions written down, share them with older students and bring replies back to younger students.
- Talk about how other students you serve are challenged, how they handle it.



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**Identity**

If a student identifies himself as part of a group of individuals with similar 'differences' who are managing to do okay in MS/HS then there is less emotional need to be like everybody else in the immediate peer group.

The student can identify with the 'doing okay and feeling good about themselves' DHH group.

Real connections with older DHH students are important in this transition!

Also critical to involve non-DHH friends as the student develops an understanding of who they are in their peer group.

Have conversations that support growth in identity by better understanding "What have I got?" with "What am I going to do with it?"

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**So far we...**

- ▶ Recognize that children may go through feelings of loss at different times in their development
- ▶ Accept the importance of actively involving the student so that s/he can feel part of a group of 'successful students with hearing loss'
- ▶ Empower the student's to be their own Technology Specialist

What else is needed to support social/emotional growth and acceptance?


Active conversations about perceptions and feelings!



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## Start talking about middle school in Gr 4

- ▶ “When kids get to middle school they want to be like everyone else. Why could that be hard for you?”
- ▶ “Kids in middle school and high school also want to be seen as special individuals who are cool. How do you see yourself as special?”
- ▶ “Do you believe other kids think you are cool?”
- ▶ “What do you think ‘cool’ is?” This is a crucial discussion for navigating “What have I got?” and “What does society/the group want me to be?”



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## HOW TO BE COOL!

Developed by kids! Here is a sample:

- ▶ Don't care so much what others think of you.
- ▶ Be aware of how you come off to others.
- ▶ Don't be afraid of being different, whether that means standing up for yourself, defending someone else, or taking interest in something that no one else does.
- ▶ Be a good conversationalist.
- ▶ Feel good about yourself.
- ▶ Speak up.
- ▶ Be yourself.




<http://www.wikihow.com/Be-Cool>  
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## Discussion suggestion: Your tricky hearing loss

Pretend your hearing loss is in the chair next to you:

- ▶ How big is it?
- ▶ What does it look like?
- ▶ If it were someone you knew, would you describe person?
- ▶ Will it ever go away?




A great way to develop insights and for students to view the perceptions of other students with hearing loss!

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## Aim to connect on emotional issues, especially grades 4-6

- ▶ Have conversations with tweens that support growth in identity by better understanding “What have I got?” with “What am I going to do with it?”
- ▶ Continue to integrate ‘cool’ values into your discussions with the student.
- ▶ “When you get to middle school it might be harder for you when you want to be like everybody else.
- ▶ “Your hearing friends may see you differently than you see yourself. Let's see what a friend says.”



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### SELF ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION-ADOLESCENT (SAC-A)<sup>®</sup>

Judy Elkayam, Au.D. and Kris English, Ph.D.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify problems you may be having because of your hearing loss. We will talk about your answers. This conversation may help us understand the effect the hearing loss is having on you. It may also give us ideas to help you manage those problems. The information you give will not affect your grades in school.

Please circle the most appropriate answer for each of the following questions. Select only one answer for each question. If you usually use hearing aids or cochlear implants, answer each question in a way that describes your experiences without the technology.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Technology Use**

I usually do/ do not use hearing aid(s)      I usually do/ do not use cochlear implant(s)

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**Hearing and Understanding at Different Times**

1. Is it hard for you to hear or understand when talking with only one other person?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always

2. Is it hard for you to hear or understand when talking with a group of people?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always

3. Is it hard for you to hear or understand TV, the radio or CDs?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always

4. Is it hard for you to hear or understand if there is noise or music in the background, or other people are talking at the same time?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always

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### SIGNIFICANT OTHER ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION-ADOLESCENT (SOAC-A)<sup>®</sup>

Judy Elkayam, Au.D. and Kris English, Ph.D.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify the problems your friend may be having because of a hearing loss. Your friend and I will review your answers and compare them to the answers your friend gave on a similar questionnaire. Some of the things your friend and I talk about may help us understand the effect the hearing loss is having. Our discussion may result in new ways to help your friend manage the problems caused by the hearing loss. The information you give us will not affect your friend's grades in school.

Please circle the most appropriate answer for each of the following questions. Select only one answer for each question.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_


**Hearing and Understanding at Different Times**

1. Is it hard for your friend to hear or understand when talking with only one other person?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always

2. Is it hard for your friend to hear or understand when talking with a group of people?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always

3. Is it hard for your friend to hear or understand TV, the radio or CDs?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always

4. Is it hard for your friend to hear or understand if there is noise or music in the background, or other people are talking at the same time?    1 = almost never    2 = occasionally    3 = about half the time    4 = frequently    5 = almost always



Provides a neutral 3<sup>rd</sup> thing to talk about. 80% who went through the SAC-A and SOAC-A experience rated it positively even if their behavior was unchanged.

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## Teen Brain ≠ Adult Brain

- Teens have different decision-making strategies than adults - linked to brain anatomy and physiology different from adults. Adults cannot force teens to make adult-like decisions.
- Teens are prone to thinking errors:
  - Supersizing** – looking at things in a way that makes them seem bigger than they really are
  - Black & White** – only good or bad, all or none
  - Negativity** – focusing on the negative side
  - Fortune Telling** – making predictions about what will happen without enough evidence
  - Blaming** – others are at fault for things that are their responsibility



**Emotional responses often override reason**

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- Behavioral contracts to wear amplification may be successful in the short term
- Contracts do not help the teen work through feelings of being different and reconciling how to belong, find their place in the world and ultimately make appropriate management decisions regarding their hearing loss.
- Adults can provide opportunities to facilitate maturation of cognitive and emotional development
  - by identifying what their perceptions and beliefs are
  - before challenging them to grow in their own understanding
  - of how they want to be and how to get there.

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## Common themes expressed SAC-A:

- Inherent isolation of hearing loss:** feeling left out of conversations; others just can't understand what it's like to have a hearing loss; futility of talking about it with friends as frustration still occurs
- Identity and self-concept:** difficulty being the only one in school with hearing devices; preference for being with other students with hearing loss and support staff because they understand; challenges finding a social niche; easier to be viewed as deaf but missing information sometimes rather than hearing 'perfectly'

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## Common themes expressed SAC-A:

- Cosmetics** and other hearing device issues: hate having to explain to people; seen as being different
- Problem solving:** classroom can be easier than social situations; need for assistive devices; challenge of rapid speech, whispering, person turning away, background noise
- Self-acceptance:** blaming others for communication difficulties; desire for normal hearing; downplaying need for accommodations when challenged by teachers ("just forget it"); something just to deal with; being unique.

**Talk about these issues; brainstorm ways to deal; provide language and practice!!!**

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## SUMMARY: Supporting the student's sense of belonging can include...

- Strengthening social skills via work on pragmatics and social cognition (emotions, etc.)
- Acknowledging psychosocial development
- Recognizing possible feelings of loss
- Involving the student in a group of successful students with hearing loss
- Actively building perceptions of 'cool'
- Discussing perceptions and feelings of having a hearing loss; brainstorming challenges
  - Student alone, with DHH peers, with NH peers



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Thank You  
for listening!

Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss

Email any questions on the content of this presentation to [webcast@successforkidswithhearingloss.com](mailto:webcast@successforkidswithhearingloss.com). To receive a response, put **CE-SSCHL-13-003** in the subject line.