

Role Comparisons: Supporting Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Example Activities / Responsibilities X = primary role, O = secondary role, i.e., providing relevant information, daily carryover, etc. * = appropriate if specialty training for educating students who are DHH has been received	Educator of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing	Educational Audiologist	Speech Language Pathologist*	Special Educator	Educational Interpreter
Observe classroom and school environments to evaluate communication access issues	X	X			O
Educate school staff about impacts of hearing loss and use of hearing technology	X	X	X*		O
Inservice classroom teachers about required daily monitoring of amplification	X	X			
Appropriately select, set, validate, manage implementation of hearing assistance technology		X			
Gather information to determine if amplification is fit optimally	X	X	X		
Teach student about use of amplification and troubleshooting malfunctions	X	X			O
Participate in eligibility evaluations, IEP and 504 initial and review meetings to address access to classroom communication, social interaction, self-advocacy and education needs	X	X	X		X
Perform basic technology checks and respond to student reports of amplification malfunction	X	X	X*		X
Perform formal and informal assessment of access to classroom communication (i.e., FLE)	X	X			
Collaborate regarding expressive/receptive preferences/abilities of students accessing via CART, interpreters, transliterators, auditory, etc.	X	X			X
Assess classroom acoustics; make recommendations to improve school listening environments	O	X			
Assessment of academic, communication, social self-concept issues related to hearing loss, including full evaluation identifying continuing areas of need when 'grades become okay'	X		X		
When possible, distinguish learning issues related to hearing status from learning or performance issues due to other conditions beyond just the hearing loss/deafness	X			O	O
Use audiologic and performance data to recommend appropriate access technologies/services	X	X		O	
Lead discussion of the Communication Plan/Special Factors, communication effectiveness (required access) per ADA in Team meetings	X	O			
Develop data-based IEP plans; modify goals and objectives based on gathered progress data	X		X	X	
Act as liaison between student, teachers, parents, administrators to address ongoing student needs	X			X	
Develop expanded core skills including self-advocacy, communication repair, hearing loss impacts	X		X*		
Teach hearing loss prevention and the importance of limiting noise exposure	X	X			
Facilitate regular interactions between students with hearing loss for self-identity, advocacy, etc. to provide emotional support to children who are deaf or hard of hearing (including facilitation through technologies such as chat, Skype, etc.)	X	X			
Develop high expectations of auditory/oral skills requiring intensive intervention as necessary (including, or especially, for students with cochlear implants)	X*		X*	O	O
Development of sign language or manual communication skills when deemed beneficial	X*		X*		X
Development of communicative competence within social, linguistic, and academic contexts (often requiring specific teaching of skills beyond what it taught in general education)	X		X*	X	
-Develop pragmatic language skills, morphology, syntax, expressive/receptive vocabulary	X		X	X	
-Address social skills development, response to teasing, impact of self-concept on performance; especially as it relates to rejection of amplification devices (or prevention)	X				

-Address gaps in (pre)literacy skills including phonological awareness auditorily or visually	X			X*	
-Develop comprehension abilities via use of context, morphology, figurative language	X		X	X	
-Preview/review content vocabulary, making connections to enhance global knowledge base	X		X	X	
Teach to specific delays in the performance/comprehension of math, reading, writing	X			X	
Deliver modified instruction of all academic areas (consultative or in 1:1 settings)	X				
Plan/provide general education teachers with appropriate teaching strategies	X				
Monitor development in growth of skills targeted by specialized instruction regularly	X		X	X	
Address transition, including self-determination and advanced advocacy problem-solving	X			X*	O
Oversee the use/performance of interpreters, CART providers, captionists, automated speech-to-text captioning, accommodations as appropriate	X				
Support families of children with hearing loss including informing them of the child's abilities and limitations in hearing, education, social skills, use of amplification, etc.	X	X	X		

NOTE: Some of these activities are best achieved by collaboration among two or more of these team members. This does not reflect staffing to meet comorbid learning issues.

This is meant as a general comparison only. Differing professional skill levels and varying district requirements will influence perceptions of roles and responsibilities.

Possible issues considered based on the individual child which help to illustrate the importance of involving a teacher for the deaf/hard of hearing:

- Is there just one communication mode? More than one? Combinations of methods?
- How do the parents communicate with the child? How does the child communicate outside of school or with friends? Expectations for hearing technology?
- When was the child's hearing loss identified and amplification fit? Is hearing technology functioning? How many hours per day is it in use?
- How well do staff members recognize the impact of the hearing loss? Do they think the student 'hears just fine' despite data and performance illustrating otherwise?
- How does the student access inferential learning? What strategies are in place to ensure adequate exposure to information learned by others inferentially?
- Who are the student's current peers? (hearing children? deaf or hard of hearing oral children? cueing children? deaf or hard of hearing signing children?)
- Has the student's ability to access information in the preferred mode of communication been measured objectively? How does access compare to peers?
- How does this student access information in noise? How does this student access information in a room with poor acoustics? Strategies used?
- What type of technology does this student use? Hearing aid? FM system? Cochlear implant? Teletypewriter (TTY)? Note-taking systems? Real time captioning?
- What is the back-up plan when communication breaks down, including malfunctioning equipment and/or absent/inadequately trained service providers?
- Is the student's skill level in the chosen mode(s) of communication adequate for grade-level achievement? What data has been gathered so this is known?
- Has the student's sign language or oral skill level been assessed adequately/appropriately? Are expressive abilities as effective as class peers?
- What kind of interpreter does this student need? Oral? ASL? Signed Exact English (SEE)? other? How do we know that the communication needs have been met?
- How well have we assessed the student's functional hearing (beyond the audiogram)? Who performs the FLE (Functional Listening Evaluation) and how often?
- How are tests administered in the classroom? Orally? In writing? What accommodations are provided during testing. How do we know that they are effective?
- Has communication inaccessibility created learning deficits that have been compounded year after year? How is the student's program specifically closing this gap?
- Is the underachievement/lack of access a reflection of the staff's lack of proficiency, training, or knowledge in the child's communication mode or language?
- How well is the child's educational program supported outside the classroom and at home? Are there outside services being received by the student/family?
- Does the student have peers to communicate with directly? Is the student isolated (possibly depressed) and, if so, could academic performance be affected?
- What is the student's emotional state? Self-concept? Stress level? Have we taken into consideration the "fatigue factor"? Strategies for 'listening breaks'?
- Are there other learning differences or secondary conditions to consider? Are these multiple learning issues and their impact being adequately addressed?
- Is the student's communication mode effective in providing the best access to instructional information? Does collected data show this?
- Does the student need assistive technology to better access communication/curriculum at school? At home for better access to language to boost skill development?
- Is the educational plan formulated for appropriate grade-level achievement? Is it remedial as necessary without compromising in-class instructional time?

References:

Roles of SLPs and TODs <http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Roles-of-SLPs-and-TODs.pdf>
Roles of Ed Auds and TODs <http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Roles-of-Ed-Auds-and-TODs-EAA-Position-Statement-2015.pdf>
Roles of Itinerant DHTs https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24261922_Roles_and_Responsibilities_of_Itinerant_Specialist_Teachers_of_Deaf_and_Hard_of_Hearing_Students
Supports and Services for DHH in Consideration of IDEA: <http://handsandvoices.org/pdf/SpecEdLaw.pdf>