

QUESTIONS A PARENT MIGHT ASK ABOUT A HEARING AID

Why should my child wear his hearing aid at home?

1. A hearing aid helps your child use any remaining hearing he may have - his "residual hearing". Almost every deaf child can hear sounds in some degree, and the hearing aid allows him to capitalize upon this residual. At the very least, the aid makes him aware of sound; for many children it also can become a very valuable tool in the understanding of spoken language. However, if a child does not learn to use his residual hearing, and continue to use it - if wearing an aid does not become a habit for him - it will become less and less of a help. Just as if you do not walk on your legs for many days, they become very weak through disuse; listening skills too, can deteriorate from lack of practice.
2. Your child needs to become accustomed to listening to the voices of his family and friends - to practice his listening skills in a variety of "everyday" situations which are meaningful for him.
3. The hearing aid helps him listen; and the more he listens, the more your voices will mean to him. This does not mean that he will suddenly be able to "hear" or understand everything you say. However, if he is aided by the patterns of

thing you say. However, if he is aided by the patterns of sound from your speech, as amplified through his hearing aid, he will be better able to pick up what he sees on your lips when you talk to him.

4. He needs to learn to tell the difference between normal background "noise" and meaningful speech sounds - between the vacuum cleaner and a call to dinner, between a danger signal (a honking horn) and a friendly greeting ("Hey, Charlie!"). This he can learn only through practice and, again, the hearing aid gives him more signals upon which to practice.
5. Hearing aids are not just for help in the school learning situation, but they are just as valuable, if not more so, at home. If your child thinks his hearing aid is "just for school", he will not continue to wear it after he graduates from school and goes to work. He may then miss much information which he could receive through his hearing and which would help him get along better on the job and in his community. Your assistance now can help him understand the importance of wearing his hearing aid in places other than school.

What can I do to encourage my child to wear his hearing aid?

1. Be sure it is working properly so he is hearing clear sounds and not listening to distortion. Distorted sound is annoying and

distracting and can make the aid very unpleasant to wear.

2. Explain the importance of his hearing or being aware of environmental sounds and speech. (In order to be aware of speech, he needs to use his hearing aid).
3. Tell your child that listening and understanding, as well as lip reading, can be improved if he wears his hearing aid.
4. Make it a pleasurable experience for him. If there is an excessive amount of noise around him, he will not want to wear his aid. You should avoid unnecessary background noise which can have no direct meaning for your child. For example, the rumbling of fans and air conditioners can make it difficult to use a hearing aid, as can a radio or T.V. which is playing all the time.