

Children and Hearing Loss

TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS



Hearing loss can cause long-lasting problems for young children. Children with hearing loss can have trouble learning speech and language, doing well in school, or getting along with other children. Early identification of hearing loss can prevent some of these difficulties.

When might a child develop hearing loss?

A child may be born with a hearing loss or a hearing loss might develop some time after birth. These losses may be temporary or permanent.

A child might have a hearing loss if...

- he or she does not speak as much or as clearly as other children of the same age.
- he or she has a syndrome that is connected with hearing loss.
- he or she was born prematurely or had to stay overnight in the hospital because of some type of sickness.

Hearing loss might lead a child to...

- be impulsive or do things without thinking.
- have a hard time paying attention.
- daydream often.
- have difficulty with following directions.

- play alone often.
- become frustrated easily.

What should I do if I think a child has a hearing loss?

- Talk to the child's family about why you have concerns.
- Give information about Tennessee's Early Intervention System to the child's family.
- Give information about the Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center to the child's family.

What should I do for a child with a hearing loss?

Make the room quieter:

- Move the child farther from noise (e.g., heating and cooling systems, hallways, playground noise).
- Put tennis balls on the feet of chairs.
- Put carpet on the floor.
- Add or close curtains.
- Put corkboards or cardboard egg cartons on walls.

Make it easier for the child to hear you:

- Sit or stand close to the child when talking to him or her.
- Make sure the child is looking at you when you talk.
- Speak clearly but do not shout.
- Look at the child while you are talking and do not cover your mouth.
- If the child does not understand what you say, try saying it again with different words. For example: Change "Please clean up," to "Please put your crayons away."
- Use objects or pictures to help the child know what you are going to talk about. For example: Point out your snack area before you say, "We have a special surprise for snack today."

Please see reverse for resources.



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RESOURCES

Who We Are and Who We Serve

The **Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC)** works with and for people with disabilities and their family members, service providers and advocates, researchers and policy makers. It is among only a few centers nationwide to be a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, a *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center, and a Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Training Program. The following are some of the ways the Center's programs and staff can assist families, educators, and other service providers.

Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center

The Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center for Otolaryngology and Communication Sciences is dedicated to serving persons with diseases of the ear, nose, throat, head and neck, and hearing, speech, language, and related disorders. As a part of one of the nation's leading academic health systems, the Center restores health and the ability to communicate to thousands of people every year through patient care, professional education, and clinical research. The Center is comprised of Vanderbilt's Department of Otolaryngology and Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences. Contact (615) 936-5000, Audiology Clinic (615) 936-5070 or 615- 322-4327

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder is a free statewide phone, web, and print referral service in English and Spanish. It connects the Tennessee disability community with service providers and resources. Its website database has over 3,000 agencies searchable by Tennessee county and service. Pathfinder is a project of the VKC, TN Council on Developmental Disabilities, TN Department of Health, and the TN Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Contact www.familypathfinder.org, (615) 322-8529, toll-free (800) 640-4636.

Two Easy Ways to Take Part in Research

The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center serves families through research studies. StudyFinder is a searchable database that lists current VKC studies, including ASD research. Studies seek people of all ages with and without developmental disabilities. See kc.vanderbilt.edu/studyfinder, (615) 936-0448. Research Match is a secure place for volunteers and researchers to connect. Once you sign up and get added to the registry, a researcher will contact you if you're a possible match for the research study. See www.researchmatch.org.

Other Resources

- **Tennessee's Early Intervention System (TEIS)**
TEIS links a family with supports and services to help them work with their child, birth through 2 years of age, who has a disability or a developmental delay. There are 9 district offices across Tennessee. <http://tn.gov/education/teis/eligibility.shtml>
- **National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders**
www.nidcd.nih.gov
- **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**
www.asha.org
- **Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center**
http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Clerc_Center/Information_and_Resources.html
- **Boys Town National Research Hospital – Genetics and deafness**
www.boystownhospital.org/knowledgeCenter/articles/Pages/The-ABCs-of-Genetics-and-Children-Who-Are-Deaf-and-Hard-of-Hearing.aspx

Contact the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center

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