



Hearing loss every day

Hearing loss cannot be seen, but the challenges it brings are very real. Constant additional effort and a great deal of concentration are required to listen and understand what is being said. It is demanding for children and adolescents, and it may lead to fatigue at certain times of the day. It is important that their family and friends be understanding and patient.

Children with hearing loss sometimes respond by isolating themselves or withdrawing from conversation, which may have an impact on their socialization.

Communication challenges

It is important to encourage children to have contact with others and face the challenges they encounter. Supporting them in new experiences without alleviating their difficulties will improve their independence and sense of competence.

Good communication promotes self-esteem, interpersonal skills and the family unit.



Brochure developed by:

Marie-Hélène Beaudet, Audiologist
Noémie Lavoie, Audiologist
Marie-Pier Pelletier, Audiologist
Justine Ratelle, Audiologist

In collaboration with:

Julie Desgagné, Special Educator
Rachel Desrochers, Speech Therapist
Julie Gagné, Speech Therapist
Karine Gagné, Psychologist
Christel Paquin-Lanoix, Speech Therapist





This document is intended for children and adolescents with temporary (e.g. otitis) or permanent hearing loss, as well as for their family and friends.

Daily communication is important, as it is at the heart of interpersonal relationships.

Understanding what is being said is dependent on several factors, including hearing, attention and language (understanding of words, phrases and instructions).

There are different strategies to facilitate communication. The strategies described in this brochure are useful to everyone, but they are essential for anyone with hearing difficulties.

Remember that good communication involves actions!

Applying these strategies will give you the power to foster good communication.



Being patient and taking the time to listen to the child is key.

Useful tips for family and friends

- Gently get the child's attention before speaking.
- Come closer and face the child. Do not speak from another room or with your back turned.
- Make sure your lips and face are visible and well lit. Avoid covering your face or chewing gum, which makes reading lips more difficult.
- Use short, simple sentences.
- Speak naturally, slowly and clearly.
- Do not exaggerate pronunciation. Do not shout.
- Use gestures (e.g. nodding or shaking your head, waving, eating, sleeping) or point. Feel free to use facial expressions.
- If your message does not come through, it is better to reformulate it than to repeat it word for word.
- Encourage the child to ask questions if he or she does not understand.
- When in a group setting, speak one person at a time.
- Keep background noise to a minimum (e.g. turn off the television). If necessary, find a quieter area for speaking with the child.
- Take the time to situate the conversation to give the child some context. Use images or hand gestures as needed.



Useful tips for adolescents

- Tell the person you are speaking with that you have hearing loss. He or she will be more patient and understanding.
- Come closer to the person speaking with you and position yourself so you can see his or her face and lips.
- If possible, turn down any background noise (e.g. turn off the radio, close the door). If necessary, find a quieter area to talk.
- If you do not understand, ask specific questions (e.g. "I'm sorry, I didn't catch that. What's your dog's name?") instead of just saying "What?" or "Huh?," in which case the person will repeat everything.
- Instead of pretending that you understood, tell the person you are speaking with if you didn't.

Noisy environments (e.g. restaurants, malls, cafeterias) make communication more difficult.

Choose quieter areas.