

Communication Strategies for Children with a Hearing Loss

Communication Strategy		Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use of visual aids to supplement verbal instruction (For those children who are working on a total communication, ASL, cued speech or signed English).	Visual materials are used to enhance the learning environment. Visual aids can include but are not limited to sign language, pictures, manipulatives, real objects in the environment, books, etc. Visual aids are important when using the sandwiching strategy described below.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategies to obtain attention: Using contrasting phrases (e.g. “up-up-up” and “doooooown!” rather than “up” and “down”)	e.g. “up-up-up” and “doooooown!” rather than “up” and “down,” “oooooopen” and “close!” rather than “open” and “close.”. Pattern perception detection is trained so that the child can HEAR the distinct difference in how many syllables and the duration of sounds and make associations from the sound to the object. (Examples can include aaaah for an airplane vs. quack quack quack for a duck, or “Stand uuuuuuuup vs. Sit down!”)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extended wait time	Using extended wait time to allow children ample opportunity to process what they’ve heard and respond back: Pausing after you say something or a sound is heard to allow the child adequate time to process what was heard and then respond. Some parents and professionals find it useful to count to ten in their heads to ensure a long enough wait time for children. Children should also be encouraged to give themselves time.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Auditory bombardment</p>	<p>Offering repeated opportunities for your child to hear a target sound, word, or phrase. This is a great strategy for building your child's vocabulary. (e.g. When teaching the word cow, you might model, "What a big cow! That cow has horns and a bell. The cow's chewing grass! Listen, the cow will say, moo!")</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Sandwich technique</p>	<p>Present the target word or phrase first through listening alone. If the child does not demonstrate understanding, you can add a visual or tactile cue. Always follow this up with the target word or phrase again through listening alone. (e.g. "Do you want more milk?" If the child does not demonstrate an understanding, you might say, "Do you want more milk?" while signing the word "milk." Then say, "Ok, I'll give you more milk!")</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Self Talk</p>	<p>Narrating what you are doing as you do it so that your child is exposed to increased vocabulary throughout the day. (e.g. "I'm pouring you some milk. I'm pouring more and more!")</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Use of parentese and rich language</p>	<p>Also known as "motherese." This refers to the natural way that adults change their pitch, intonation and vocabulary when they're talking to young babies. This is the use of a sing-song voice which is more appealing and interesting for babies to listen to.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Repetition and Redundancy</p>	<p>Children with hearing loss require at least three times as much exposure than typically hearing children to learn new words and concepts due to the reduced acoustic bandwidth caused by hearing loss. They need more repetition and redundancy to learn the vocabulary and language concepts than do their hearing peers. Repetition of known words allows for listening for meaning as well as for correct articulation.</p>

<input type="checkbox"/>	Sound Awareness - sound on and off	<p>Sound on and off: Sound awareness is when the child notices sound in the environment. You can model sound awareness by pointing to your ear and saying, "I heard that!" Show the child the source of sounds around the home. The child may signal sound awareness by becoming quiet, shifting his eyes, changing his sucking pattern, turning his head, etc. Reinforce this behavior by telling her, "Yes, you heard that!" Point to your own ear when you exclaim "I heard that, did you hear that?"</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiate use of Auditory Loop	<p>Using the auditory loop needs to include training in audition, auditory sequencing, processing and wait time, auditory memory, auditory closure and auditory confidence. A child should be able to hold the number of critical elements in their auditory memory that correspond to their chronologic age.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn to Listen- Sounds for Detection	<p>For children using hearing prostheses, among the many activities that can facilitate listening to sounds are Sound-Object Association activities. This type of activity involves associating a sound with a referent, an item such as a transportation vehicle or animal or with a routine meaningful action. Young babies seem to first become familiar with frequently heard sounds before they understand words and before they speak words. A learn to listen sound box can be created by the practitioner or parent to have familiar items available for different activities. A list of learn to listen sounds is available online.</p>

<input type="checkbox"/>	Discrimination, Association, Imitation	<p>Work with the child first on detecting sound. You can use the Ling 6 sound test regularly to determine if the child can hear the distinct 6 sounds which represent all of the hearing frequencies. Train the child to listen and wait and drop an object in a bucket when he/she hears a sound. Once this is mastered, begin to work on discrimination and association by using the strategies listed regarding learn to listen sounds. Work on imitation by covering your mouth and having the child listen and imitate the 6 sounds, once they can imitate the sounds, you can eliminate the object in the bucket activity and you can note any omissions and substitutions.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiation of Sign Instruction	<p>Sign language instruction should begin soon as possible. Use classes, videos, apps, books, etc. to work on sign skills. Discuss the options with families and make a decision if they will use ASL, Signed English, Total Communication or Cued Speech.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maximizing the Listening Environment	<p>Reduce background noises like appliances, air conditioners, dishwashers, TV, music, etc. Close windows if necessary. Suggest reducing noise from siblings, pets, etc. Position child within critical listening distance (6-12 inches is optimal). Position speaker close to child's microphone if using an oral/aural approach. For manual communication modalities, try to have child in front of windows and not facing a window to reduce glare. Stay within optimal visual field to pick up all signs.</p>