

Hearing & Amplification

Hearing Aid Choices

What Are Assistive Devices For Young Children?

As parents look towards the future, a major goal for their child is increased independence. Parents wait excitedly for their child's first steps, but independence in communication is also an important step. Many assistive devices are available for people with hearing loss to increase their independence in a variety of communication situations.

Telephone Devices

Talking on the telephone seems to be almost a universal step in independence for children. However, even with well-fit hearing aids, some people with hearing loss require extra amplification in order to hear well on the telephone. Telephone amplifier devices can be chosen that work with a person's hearing aid or independently from it.



For some people with more severe hearing loss, listening and understanding voices on the telephone is difficult. The use of a TTY (telephone typewriter) or a wireless messaging and paging system provides telephone access through typed messages. As children learn to read and write, a TTY or wireless messaging system can provide increased independence in communicating with friends and family.



TV Devices

For young children the best option for TV listening is a personal amplifier (either FM or infrared) that routes the sound directly from the TV to the child. As children learn to read, TV closed captioning can also provide additional information.

Alerting Devices

These devices are used to ensure that the child is made aware of important events that occur in the home such as the doorbell ringing, a knock at the door, a ringing telephone, the smoke and fire alarm or alarm clock. Even with hearing aids, some children may not be able to hear these important sounds. In addition, it may be important to alert children to certain events when they are not typically wearing their hearing aids (e.g., while asleep). Older children need an awareness of these events as they start to stay home on their own and increase their independence. Devices are available to provide either visual or vibratory signals to the child with hearing loss.



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