

Webinar for Professionals: Perspectives on a Listening and Spoken Language Approach to Supporting Children with Unilateral Hearing Loss

May 2022

Resource for Teachers of the Deaf: What to Include in an In-Service Training for Mainstream Classroom Teachers

In addition to the host of topics typically covered in a training session with mainstream classroom teachers, take the following considerations into account for supporting students with unilateral hearing loss. Although you may be familiar with these recommendations from working with students with bilateral hearing loss, they are also applicable and imperative to include for those with unilateral loss as well.

Planning the In-Service Training

- Invite as many specialists to the training as possible, including those who may have the student during a future quarter or semester. Many times, specialists only see the student occasionally and may think they “get by just fine” without following through with accommodations.
- Include all relevant professionals in discussions about all accommodations used by the classroom teacher, such as SLPs, OTs, PTs, etc.
- Make transitions between grades, schools and support teams as seamless as possible for students and families. This could include:
 - visiting the new school with your student before classes begin
 - inviting future school team members to a spring meeting before the transition
 - making sure the student has a trusted “go-to” person in the building for daily issues who can contact you if needed. This individual must have a solid understanding of the student’s needs and how their hearing loss will affect their day.

Focus on Localization/Background Noise Challenges in the Classroom and at School

- Encourage teachers to identify unfamiliar sounds as they occur (e.g. if a sound comes from the hallway and the student appears to look around as if trying to place it, let them know what it was if possible).
- Be strategic with the student’s seat placement in all rooms/spaces where they spend time
- Consider:
 - The student’s stronger ear and the direction it faces (ideally toward teacher and majority of peers)
 - Sources of background noise
 - Surrounding peers (some peers are noisier than others)

School Safety Concerns

- Ensure the student understands what they need to do in each situation including fire drills, lockdown scenarios, etc.



- For younger students, it may be helpful to individually practice drills and scenarios before they occur during the year with the full class.

Technology in the Classroom

- If using a Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) system where the transmitter is worn by the teacher, discuss how scarves, necklaces, accessories, shirt pockets or other garments may hinder the signal/create background noise. Any additional noises will compete with the teacher's voice for your student's attention and students with unilateral hearing loss can be easily distracted.

“Interruptions” Allowed

- Encourage teachers to always call on students with unilateral hearing loss when they raise their hand, even during “hands down” lessons. Or, if the teacher prefers, give the student a different hand signal for notifying the teacher of issue. Students may need to adjust their equipment or to change their seat.

Field Trips

- Depending on the age of the student, identify the parent/caregiver/staff member who will be responsible for the student's equipment.
- Remind teachers to bring extra batteries and to ensure the equipment is charged the night before the trip.