

- Read to your child daily.
- Communicate always – Every moment is an opportunity to build vocabulary, develop language and create bonds.
- Expose your child to printed language, through books, signs, packaging or labels.

Auditory:

- Use amplification consistently, during all waking hours.
- Call attention to environmental sounds and identify them.
- Play games or sing songs that involve listening and language (e.g. Sing “Old McDonald” or play “Simon Says”).

Frequently Asked Questions

How important is amplification?

“If your goal is to have your child have the best listening and verbal language skills possible by the time they start school, then hearing aids must be worn all waking hours from the time they are very young. If your baby or child wears hearing aids only four hours each day, it will take six years to give them as much listening experience as a young child with normal hearing accumulates in one year. The number of hours per day your child is able to listen and catch language effectively will strongly affect their verbal language and learning readiness by school age.”

<http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/HEARING-AIDS-What-When-Why-How.pdf>

Will sign language delay verbal communication?

“The evidence is overwhelmingly in support of the notion that sign has the potential to facilitate oral language development that is faster, more organized, and more durable.” - Shari Robertson, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (The Effects of Sign on the Oral Vocabulary of Two Late Talking Toddlers Shari Robertson, Indiana University of PA, ASHA 2004)

Why is reading difficult?

English and sign language are two different languages. An individual who is Deaf might be able to communicate effectively, but reading or writing in English may be difficult as it is a second language. Deaf or Hard of Hearing children might also struggle with letter-sound relationships and connecting them to words they may not hear.

Resources & Contacts

See these resources for speech/language milestones, suggestions for what you can do at home, and more:

<http://www.asha.org/public/Early-Detection-of-Speech-Language-and-Hearing-Disorders/>

<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/>
<http://identifythesigns.org/>

<http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/resourcesfor-parents-of-children-with-hearing-loss/>

For more information or specific questions about your child, please contact:

Illinois School for the Deaf
 Evaluation Center
 217-479-4287
www.illinoisdeaf.org



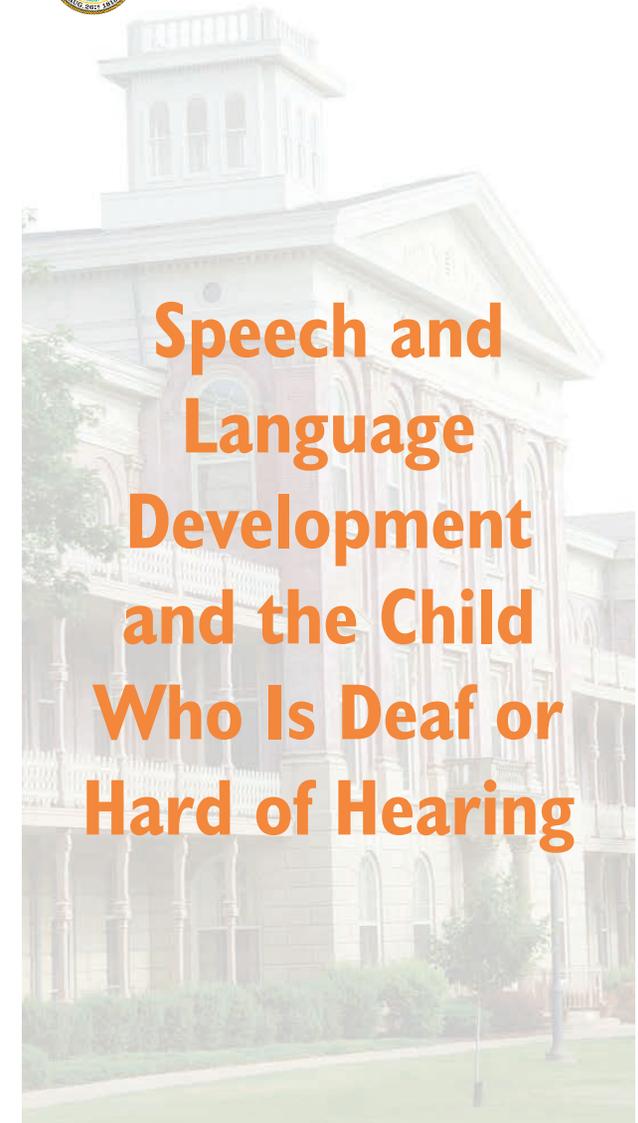
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DHS 5107 (N-08-16) Speech and Language Development and the Child Who Is Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois. FM #17-0250 500 copies 



State of Illinois
 Department of Human Services



Speech and Language Development and the Child Who Is Deaf or Hard of Hearing

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What is Included in Speech/Language Development?

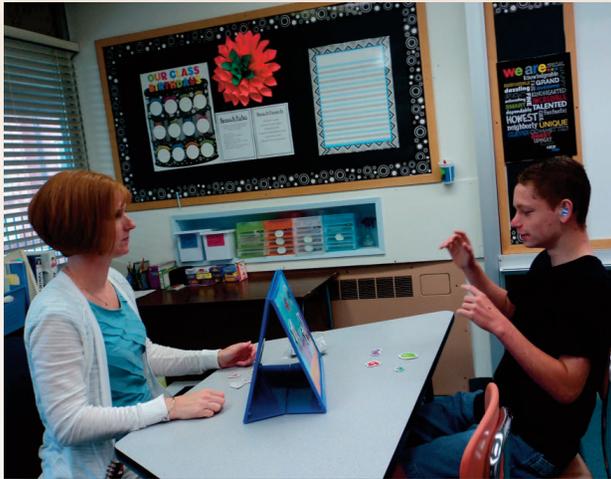
Speech/Articulation: How a child says or pronounces sounds, words, sentences.

Expressive Language: How a child communicates their wants and needs, using words, signs, and/or body language.

Receptive Language: How a child understands what is said, signed or conveyed through gestures.

Audition/Auditory Skills: How a child makes use of the hearing they have.

Pragmatics: The social rules of language, including things such as starting/ending conversations, conversational turn-taking, and asking questions.



"If all my possessions were taken from me with one exception, I would choose to keep the power of communication, for by it I would soon regain all the rest."

~ Daniel Webster



How Can Hearing Loss Impact Speech and Language Development?

Depending on the child's degree of hearing loss and access to language, the following are general effects of hearing loss on speech/language:

Speech/articulation: A child may not hear all the speech sounds in words or sentences, resulting in them not producing all the sounds when speaking. They also might not be able to hear their own voice to monitor their speech. This combination often leads to their speech being hard to understand. This is referred to as speech intelligibility.

Receptive language: A child might have limited access to words and the structure of English grammar. This could result in difficulty in areas such as reading, understanding multi-step directions, and vocabulary development.

Expressive language: A child might have difficulty expressing themselves easily and might struggle to develop vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills.

Auditory skills: A child may not be able to hear word endings, small words, and speech patterns that hold meaning and are important to language, such as verb tense (ex. "-ed" at the end of a word).

Helpful Information

Accessible communication: Accessible communication or language means a language that is available and can be received by the child. The language could be verbal (spoken) or visual (signed or cued). The communication mode chosen by the family should be used at all times, even when not directly interacting with the child. This is critical because much language development occurs incidentally while children are observing others.

Success with speech/language development is dependent upon early implementation and consistent use.

Support for speech/language development can be obtained from licensed Speech-Language Pathologists, audiologists and early intervention professionals.

Exposure to Deaf role models can also assist with language development and can help children cultivate more positive attitudes towards deafness and increase their levels of confidence and self-esteem.

How to Encourage Development at Home:

Speech:

- Be a good model; Speak clearly with normal rate and volume.
- Be sure your child can see your mouth when you are speaking.
- Acknowledge and praise attempts at communication.
- Encourage consistent use of amplification. This is a crucial factor in speech development.

Language:

- Use the child's language level when interacting, but expand upon what they express (e.g. Child says, "Doggy!" Mom, "Yes, there's a big dog!").