

What can I do to ensure that my child with a hearing loss understands what I am saying?

These tips will help you communicate with your child:

1. Be sure you have your child's attention before you begin to speak. It is easier for your child to speechread (lipread) when looking directly at you.
2. Look directly at your child while you are speaking. Eye contact and good visibility are important for speechreading.
3. Speak in a normal tone of voice – don't yell. Don't speak too quickly or too loudly. Move your mouth in a normal manner.
4. Use appropriate facial and body gestures to help your child understand what you are saying.
5. If your voice is not loud enough, move closer. Get down to your child's level.
6. Try saying the same thing another way if your child misunderstood you. Saying the same words over and over won't help if your child can't understand them – try using different words. Use pictures, or visual cues, too.
7. Move to a quiet place to talk, or turn off any distracting noise. A quiet, well-lit room where your child's visual, auditory, and attentive skills are at their best will make communication easiest for both of you. Trying to listen when there is background noise is one of the most difficult tasks for children with hearing loss.
8. Ensure that your child is wearing hearing aids or glasses, if prescribed. If your child can't see well or isn't using the hearing aid, communication will be more difficult.
9. In hospital (for staff and parents): Clear and effective communication is very important on the hospital ward and in outpatient clinics. The child may already be anxious about the surroundings. Medical procedures can be even scarier if the child hasn't heard you coming or leaving, or has not understood your explanation of a procedure. Always make sure the child understands what is going on, if possible.

Contact information:

Audiology Department

Room K2-192

Hours: 8:30 to 4:30

(604) 875-2112

website: <http://www.bcchildrens.ca/Services/ClinicalDiagnosticFamilyServices/Audiology/default.htm>

Communication Strategies

*Developed by the health care professionals
of the Audiology Department with
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4480 Oak Street Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3V4

604-875-2345

www.bcchildrens.ca